



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 119th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 171

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2025

No. 150

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 15, 2025.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEPHANIE I. BICE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

NATIONAL ARTS IN EDUCATION WEEK 2025

(Ms. BONAMICI of Oregon was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. BONAMICI. Madam Speaker, “Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me.”

Madam Speaker, like many of you, I grew up singing that song. We sang it at camp, on holidays, and in school. It has no genre. It has been performed by country, soul, gospel, and Latin rock artists like Carlos Santana, Pat Boone, Johnny Mathis, Gladys Knight, Nat King Cole, and Mahalia Jackson.

Here is its history. It was written back in the 1950s for a group of teenagers from different religions and racial and economic backgrounds. They were brought together in California at a workshop designed to create friendship and understanding through education.

The teens said that singing helped them to create a climate where they would have world peace and understanding.

I have been thinking about that a lot this past week, especially in the context of education. This is National Arts in Education Week. It is a time to celebrate and recognize the importance of arts education.

Maybe you wonder why, Madam Speaker.

There are many reasons, and here are three:

Students do better in school when they have arts education.

Arts education inspires creativity, which is important for economic growth and innovation.

Importantly, the arts help heal, and students and our Nation need healing.

First, scores of studies over several years show that students do better in all subjects when they have arts education. Unfortunately, arts education is often seen as an extra, or it is cut because it is not included in the national test scores, but that is very shortsighted.

Arts education has a remarkable and positive effect on students' academic, social, and emotional outcomes, including higher test scores, more compassion for others, and fewer disciplinary problems. It also keeps students interested in school, improves attendance, and increases graduation rates.

Arts education benefits every student, even in preschool. A recent study shows that students in an arts-integrated preschool show three times the growth in vocabulary compared with a similar program without the arts. That is something to celebrate.

Second, arts education will prepare students for the jobs of today and tomorrow. Many people talk about the four Cs of job skills for the 21st century: collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking. I will add a fifth: confidence.

I visited Quatama Elementary School, an arts-integrated STEAM school in my home State of Oregon, where two sixth-grade students explained how they made a stop-motion animation film about cell division. Now, that was very impressive, and they were very confident. With more technology and artificial intelligence, students will need skills to observe, analyze, question, and consider multiple perspectives. It is not just answering questions, it is knowing what questions to ask. These skills are all enhanced with arts education.

There are millions of jobs in arts and culture sectors across the country. Madam Speaker, when you listen to music or watch a TV show or a movie or play a video game, those are all created by artists. However, collaboration, creativity, communication, critical thinking, and confidence help in any career and in life.

Finally, the arts heal, and we need that now. The brain research is there; the arts improve health and well-being.

A few years ago I met two students at Aloha High School in Oregon. They were in a music class. They were high school students, and I asked them what they liked about the class. They told me they had both lost family members during COVID, so they wrote a song about it. They said that when they sang, it made them feel better.

In fact, the former Surgeon General, Vivek Murthy, said that music is medicine, and research continues to show the healing power of the arts.

The VA runs a successful arts therapy program for veterans with PTSD. World-renowned soprano, Renee Fleming, recently released “Music and

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H4269

Mind', a new book about harnessing the arts for health and wellness. It is full of examples, stories, and research.

For today's children and young adults who will be tomorrow's leaders, I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the bipartisan Arts Education for All bill. For those keeping track, it is H.R. 2485, and to fully fund the Every Student Succeeds Act, especially title I and title IV-A.

This is so students do better in school and become creative, critical thinkers. It is so our economy can thrive because the next generation will know how to collaborate, communicate, and come up with new ideas and new ways to solve problems. It is also so young people and people of every generation can learn more about each other's ideas and culture, and we can work on healing.

UNITED STATES CAPITOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY RECOGNIZES PATRICK McHENRY

(Ms. FOXX of North Carolina was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize a dear friend and former colleague, Patrick McHenry.

This week, the United States Capitol Historical Society is recognizing Patrick as a recipient of the Freedom Award.

The award serves to recognize and honor individuals and organizations that have advanced greater public understanding and appreciation for freedom as represented by the U.S. Capitol and Congress.

Madam Speaker, there is no question in my mind that Patrick McHenry deserves this award and continued praise for his service to the Nation and to North Carolina.

I congratulate Patrick on this recognition for his patriotism, for being a wonderful role model, and for his overall service to the Nation.

May God continue to bless Patrick, and may He continue to bless his wonderful family.

GREATER SANCTION PRESSURE ON RUSSIA

(Mr. HILL of Arkansas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, in 1958, former Prime Minister of Great Britain, Harold Macmillan, paraphrasing a remark from Winston Churchill 4 years earlier, left us with the great expression: jaw-jaw is better than war-war.

It is because of our great power that our rivals seek to end the American way of life through direct or gray zone war attacks or by cyber or economic destruction, and we certainly should routinely jaw-jaw with those great powers about our possible shared objectives and deep concerns.

However, in the instance of Czar Putin, he has never been interested in

jaw-jaw. He is a creature of his KGB upbringing. There was no jaw-jaw with the Chechens in 1999, and there was no jaw-jaw with the Georgians, only tanks, in 2008. There was no jaw-jaw, only propaganda, corruption, and death in Putin's approach to Ukraine during President Obama's administration.

Under President Obama, Putin conducted his overt and covert actions in Ukraine with some 10,000 Ukrainians killed in the fighting, including 2,000 civilians, yet Obama and his European allies simply looked down at their shoes. In 2014, Putin took Crimea without firing a shot. He is a disgrace to the rich, cultural history of the Russian people, and he has thoroughly corrupted a false and bordering-on-insane historic narrative regarding his threats and ambitions in Ukraine.

America, as the instrumental force inside the transatlantic alliance, remains ready to stand shoulder to shoulder to back this European resolve. This is something that neither Obama nor Biden would do. They simply took the easy way out by agreeing to whatever the weakest European voice was at the time.

This European attitude of: Here, let me hold your coat, has plagued and frustrated all American Presidents from Eisenhower to Trump. Jack Kennedy famously called out their unwillingness to pay for their own defense stating how wrong it was to let the Europeans live off the fat of the land in American economic and military security.

□ 1210

Madam Speaker, here is what needs to happen now. The United States and our European allies must agree that we will not support the immoral importation of Russian oil and gas. Europe has affordable, effective alternatives.

The United States and our European allies should work through sanctions and other forms of economic statecraft to communicate firmly and consistently to large non-European buyers of Russian oil and gas that the time to act is now.

Congress should act by immediately passing Congressman ZACH NUNN's bipartisan PEACE Act. This proposal would finally kneecap Russia's energy revenues, which still total some \$200 billion per year. This would impose secondary sanctions on the country, including on Gazprom and Rosneft.

It passed out of my committee, the Financial Services Committee, by a vote of 53-1. It would be the first intensive sanctioning of the Russian banking industry since the invasion.

Under Congressman NUNN's PEACE Act, the U.S. would take Russian sovereign assets that have been immobilized and let the Ukrainians use them to purchase defensive weapons.

Congress should also fully consider, debate, amend, and pass the sanction legislation offered by Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, which has 84 cosponsors, and its companion bill in the House spon-

sored by Congressman BRIAN FITZPATRICK.

The President should, as a part of a newfound backbone in the G7, fully implement the REPO Act, which I worked on diligently with former Foreign Affairs Chairman MICHAEL McCaul and Senate Foreign Relations Chair JIM RISCH. This measure, signed into law in 2024, puts direct and immediate heat on Russian sovereign assets held outside the country.

Here again, we need the Europeans to step forward. In the spring of 2024, the Council of Europe actually fully supported this idea with a 100 percent vote.

Congress should also authorize funding for the U.S. Geological Survey to fully review all Soviet-era geological surveys of Ukraine, both in the contested Donbas region, as well as free Ukraine, and provide Congress and the administration with an up-to-date assessment of the strategic minerals available for Ukraine's further economic development.

The time for action is now. Apparently, Putin needs more unified pressure to convince him that, in fact, jaw-jaw is better than war-war.

Let's not look back with regret that Congress did not act in the face of Putin's corrupt, catastrophic, and contemptuous regime that laughs in the face of his European neighbors and our American President.

HONORING JULIE TAGEN

(Mr. RASKIN of Maryland was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, on the occasion of her retirement, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary public service of Julie Tagen, who served over the last 9 years in a succession of critical posts for me: as my chief of staff, as my staff director when I was the ranking member of the House Oversight Committee, as my staff director when I was the ranking member on the House Judiciary Committee, and always as a cherished friend, a trusted adviser, and an active constituent.

A native of Philadelphia, who unfortunately never recovered from her love of Philly sports teams, Julie is a graduate of the University of Maryland. She is a devoted Terp, a lover of the Eastern Shore, and a true-blue Marylander.

She has had a dazzling career in politics and public service. A Capitol Hill veteran of 20 years, she has been a powerful force for good on the Hill who has always worked to bring our government closer to the needs and the values of our people.

I first met Julie in 2016 when I was running for Congress in Maryland's Eighth District. I was fortunate that Terry Lierman, who was chief of staff to STENY HOYER, introduced me to Julie from Silver Spring, and off we went.

I will never forget the long hike that Julie and I took through Rock Creek

Park as we discussed her storied career in public life working for former Congressman Alan Grayson, the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, the Democratic National Committee, Howard Dean, the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, and the Human Rights Campaign.

For this freshman Member of the House from Maryland in 2017, Julie quickly amassed a top-tier team and got our House office up and running. With my amazing district chief, Kathleen Connor, Julie saw my office through good times and bad, legislative victories and government shutdowns, the COVID-19 pandemic, the January 6 insurrection and the second impeachment trial, through sickness and through health, and all of the public and private trials and traumas of our days.

Julie has great political instincts and amazing historical awareness. She is unflappable. She is understated, and she is always kind. She has a marvelous sense of humor. She is quick to laugh. She always finds the time to help a friend or colleague in need, and she has been a mentor to generations of junior staffers. Countless young, eager public servants have sought her out for advice and insight. She has taken many of them under her wing and connected them with different ways to serve on Capitol Hill and our people in the government.

Finding someone like Julie is a very special thing on Capitol Hill. She can get almost anybody in Washington on the phone, but she always makes time for all of our constituents in Maryland's beautiful Eighth District.

I will miss her daily compassion, her wisdom, and her excellent advice. I will miss her irrepressible love for Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band. We went to several concerts together.

I know Julie has many new adventures ahead of her and many great battles to fight with her amazing wife, Dee, and their two fantastic kids, Carly and Natasha.

On behalf of the people of Maryland's beautiful Eighth Congressional District, on behalf of all of the members of Team Raskin past and present, I thank Julie Tagen for her remarkable service to our country, our Congress, our people, and our democracy. We wish her Godspeed in all of her projects ahead.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH AGENDA

(Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on the importance of the National Defense Authorization Act that I proudly supported on the House floor just last week.

This bill will implement President Trump's Peace Through Strength agenda by restoring our military's lethality and accountability. Components of the

NDAA will bring an end to the dangerous, leftwing ideologies that have been incorporated into our military. For far too long, woke-ism has been prioritized in our military. This bill signals the change that once again puts our servicemembers first.

Additionally, the NDAA secures made-in-America military equipment to provide our troops with the best tools that are made by hardworking American hands, not by foreign companies. This bill tackles our Nation's weak supply chains and diminishing manufacturing by bringing American industries back to the table.

This legislation will save billions of taxpayer dollars by reducing inefficient and unnecessary funding for defense programs. The NDAA builds on efforts started in the Working Families Tax Cuts Act to stimulate our economy and to bring jobs back home.

□ 1220

ADDRESSING MISLEADING ADVERTISING FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, President Trump took executive actions last week to address misleading prescription drug advertisements.

This action will direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to ensure that full and accurate information is available on the risks associated with prescription drugs. It works to prohibit pharmaceutical companies from promoting drug usage over lifestyle changes.

This will also eliminate the inappropriate intervention between a patient and the patient's doctor. Unregulated prescription drug advertising often misinforms the public about a drug's full risks and potential benefits.

This initiative by President Trump delivers on a promise to put Americans first by promoting a high degree of transparency. I strongly support President Trump's action to address this issue to ensure that patients can once again rebuild their trust in the American health system.

HONORING CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF FAYETTE VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Fayette Volunteer Fire Company of McAlisterville in Juniata County, Pennsylvania, for their 100 years of service.

The selfless spirit of the officers and members has characterized the company since it was founded in the summer of 1925. Whether responding to calls, participating in training, or sponsoring fundraising, these incredible volunteers engage at the highest level of commitment.

A faithful observance of duty has been the keystone of the Fayette Fire Company's mission. These initiatives will continue to positively influence current and future members.

On behalf of everyone in the 13th Congressional District, I congratulate the Fayette Fire Company of Juniata

County on its 100th anniversary and express my personal thanks for their distinguished legacy of community service.

RECOGNIZING 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF WILLIAMSBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the milestone anniversary of the Williamsburg Public Library in Blair County, Pennsylvania, as they celebrate 75 years of service.

The methods that Blair County residents use to access information have changed since the library system was established in 1950. However, the mission of the library system remains the same: to provide materials and information services for lifelong learning, enrichment, and reading.

It has often been stated that libraries aren't about the books but about the people. Nowhere is that perspective more clearly evident, in form and function, than in the Williamsburg Public Library.

On behalf of everyone in Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I congratulate the residents of the borough of Williamsburg on this incredible milestone and express gratitude to the library team for their enduring commitment to promoting the joys of lifelong learning through reading.

CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF CHARLIE KIRK

(Mr. LARSON of Connecticut was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, first and foremost, I rise today with our deepest condolences for the family of Charlie Kirk.

Violence of any kind, especially violence that we have seen in this country way too often, should never be condoned. Whether it is the Kirk family or the families of the kids who were shot in Colorado, it is gut-wrenching and sorrowful that our Nation continues to go through this plague of gun violence.

Madam Speaker, it has been 13 years since Sandy Hook in my home State of Connecticut. It is long overdue for Congress to have a vote. Universal background checks are a commonsense way that we can deal with this, and I see no reason why we can't pass this as a Congress. Frankly, I believe that we should ban assault weapons, as well.

Hopefully, people in this body will come to their senses and have Congress take a vote, at a minimum, for the families who were impacted and for our future. That is all that is required of us.

Again, our hearts go out to the Kirk family and, certainly, the families of the students at Evergreen High School in Colorado.

DEMANDING ANSWERS FROM DOGE

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise this morning because Democrats have introduced a resolution of inquiry to get the information

from the whistleblower who has talked about what happened to the more than 300 million Americans who depend on Social Security. This impacts all 435 congressional districts.

Madam Speaker, you have 161,000 Social Security recipients in your district. I know that you do not stand for having their personal information gone through, looked over, and utilized for anything that was unintended, let alone having been taken from its secure position in Social Security and stored in a cloud that no one from the Social Security Administration has access to. That makes everyone's information vulnerable.

Democrats are calling for DOGE to come before the Committee on Ways and Means so that they can tell the American people, number one, why they needed to look at their personal data to begin with and, number two, what they are doing with it and why they took it from a secure location.

No one on DOGE has been vetted by the United States Senate or Congress. None of them are accountable for what they are doing. For the President to allow them to have access to every American's personal data is an outrage.

Democrats and Republicans should join together and do our responsibility as a separate branch of government and the branch of government that has control over Social Security to make sure that these DOGE individuals are held accountable.

Democrats demand answers, and I am proud to be joined by RICH NEAL in making sure that, on the Committee on Ways and Means, the committee of cognizance for Social Security, we have DOGE come before us. If they are doing such a great job and are exposing all of this fraud and abuse, why aren't they in front of Congress to tell us about it? Democrats demand that DOGE be held accountable for what they have stolen and put into a cloud.

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 27 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

God of justice and love, You have told us what is good, that we are to love You, O Lord our God, with all our

heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind. This first and greatest commandment is written on our hearts. This day and always may we follow Your law.

But help us to see that to fulfill this law, we are obliged to follow with as much devotion the second law, to love our neighbor as ourselves.

These days, when neighbors are often our opponents, when loving them requires us to set aside our anger, when our own wounds bind our hearts from reaching out, help us to realize that to follow Your law is to reorient ourselves to what it means to love You.

As You have blessed us, sinners that we are, may we bless those who have sinned against us. As we stand in debt to Your mercy, may we show mercy to those who have taken something from us. And as we ourselves have violated Your law, yet You love us. May we love even those neighbors who have deeply offended us.

To Your laws we dedicate our lives, and in Your love may we live them.

In Your merciful name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. 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.

CHARLIE KIRK: MARTYR FOR FREEDOM

(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, a consequence of liberal, hateful bias and bigotry in campus academia is deranged radicalization, leading to violence as "the ends justify the means."

In 2009, David Horowitz, in his book "One-Party Classroom," warned of indoctrination. The solution is mutual respect to disagree, ending liberal discrimination.

Sadly, I have endured liberal intolerance, with no philosophical diversity of faculty, where liberalism is dictated. Yelling "fascism" foolishly 3,000 times by liberals has resulted in the assassination of Charlie Kirk, as he courageously proclaimed God, family, country. He is a martyr for freedom.

President Donald Trump and his supporters are the opposite of fascist, national-socialist. Conservatives implement limited government, expanded freedom, and peace through strength, devolving power from Washington to the people.

In conclusion, God bless our troops as the global war on terrorism continues. Trump is reinstating peace through strength, revealing war criminal Putin lies, insulting Trump, speaking lovely as Iranian-designed Russian drones invade Poland, also Romania Saturday, threatening American troops.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO THE UNITED STATES GROUP OF THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McDowell). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 1928a, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, of the following Member on the part of the House to the United States Group of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly:

Mr. BOYLE, Pennsylvania

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE MEXICO-UNITED STATES INTERPARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276h, clause 10 of rule I, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. CUELLAR, Texas
Mr. CORREA, California
Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ, Texas
Ms. ESCOBAR, Texas
Mr. CARBAJAL, California

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1500

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas) at 3 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 votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

EXTENSION OF SBIR AND STTR AUTHORITY

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5100) to extend the SBIR and STTR programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5100

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF SBIR AND STTR AUTHORITY.

(a) SBIR.—Section 9(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(m)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2025” and inserting “September 30, 2026”.

(b) STTR.—Section 9(n)(1)(A) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(n)(1)(A)) is amended by striking “through fiscal year 2025” and inserting “through fiscal year 2026”.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF SBIR AND STTR PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.

(a) PHASE FLEXIBILITY.—Section 9(cc) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(cc)) is amended by striking “through 2025” and inserting “through 2026”.

(b) COMMERCIALIZATION READINESS PROGRAM FOR CIVILIAN AGENCIES PILOT PROGRAM.—Section 9(gg)(7) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(gg)(7)) is amended by striking “fiscal year 2025” and inserting “fiscal year 2026”.

(c) ACCELERATED AWARDS.—Section 9(hh)(2)(C) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(hh)(2)(C)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2025” and inserting “September 30, 2026”.

(d) PHASE 0 PILOT PROGRAM.—Section 9(jj)(7) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(jj)(7)) is amended by striking “fiscal year 2025” and inserting “fiscal year 2026”.

(e) ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE.—Section 9(mm)(1) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(mm)(1)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2025” and inserting “September 30, 2026”.

(f) INCREASED MINIMUM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.—Section 9(qq)(3)(I) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(qq)(3)(I)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2025” and inserting “September 30, 2026”.

(g) COMMERCIALIZATION ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAMS.—Section 9(uu)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(uu)(3)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2025” and inserting “September 30, 2026”.

(h) DUE DILIGENCE PROGRAM.—Section 9(vv)(3)(C) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(vv)(3)(C)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2025” and inserting “September 30, 2026”.

(i) STTR PARTICIPATION OF MILITARY RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS PILOT PROGRAM.—Section 9(yy)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(yy)(2)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2025” and inserting “September 30, 2026”.

(j) BUDGET CALCULATION PILOT PROGRAM.—Section 9zz)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638zz)(3)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2025” and inserting “September 30, 2026”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELAZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 5100. This bill extends two programs critical for American innovation, the Small Business Innovation Research, SBIR, and the Small Business Technology Transfer, STTR, programs, for 1 year.

I thank my colleagues, Ranking Member VELAZQUEZ and Chairman BABIN and Ranking Member LOFGREN of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology for cosponsoring this bipartisan legislation.

Since the 1980s, the SBIR and the STTR programs have fueled American innovation by providing early-stage funding to small businesses. These investments have led to groundbreaking technologies that grow our economy and strengthen our national defense.

SBIR and STTR programs have been regularly reauthorized by Congress to include many reforms to drive small business. However, the programs will expire at the end of this month, on September 30, just 15 days away.

As my colleagues and I continue to work toward the goal of a long-term reauthorization, one thing has become clear: Time is working against us. We cannot allow these critical programs to expire. Failing to extend these programs would be a disservice to small businesses across the country. Put simply, American innovators cannot operate in uncertainty, and national security cannot afford an innovation gap.

As chairman of the Small Business Committee, I am committed to ensuring these programs remain strong and uninterrupted. H.R. 5100 will allow Congress the additional time to work toward a meaningful long-term and bipartisan reauthorization while also ensuring that small businesses can continue to do what they do best, and that is innovate.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues in the House again for joining me in reintroducing this legislation. Their partnership shows the SBIR and the STTR programs’ strong bipartisan support and our shared commitment to keeping America at the forefront of discovery.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense extension, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5100, a simple bill to extend the

Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs for an additional year.

Over the course of its 40-year history, the SBIR and STTR have been among the Federal Government’s most effective engines for driving innovation. By channeling a small portion of research and development budgets into highly competitive awards, the government is able to utilize our nimble and innovative small businesses to drive forward technological innovation and meet critical agency needs.

These programs have been endlessly scrutinized since their founding, but economic analysis has shown an overwhelmingly successful program with an outsized return on investment for taxpayers.

Unfortunately, the SBIR and STTR programs are set to expire on September 30. If these programs are allowed to expire, agencies would lose the ability to issue new awards, cutting off a vital source of early-stage funding for small businesses. It would also delay commercialization of promising technologies and weaken the United States’ competitiveness with foreign adversaries.

Despite this fast-approaching deadline, negotiations for a comprehensive reauthorization are ongoing, and while I attempted to start the process early by introducing a bill last December, formal negotiations didn’t start until last month.

There are many areas of overlapping priorities between the majority and minority on this bill. We share a desire to lower the barrier to entry for new entrants and bridging the valley of death for the most promising ideas.

However, there are some outstanding issues we are working through that will take additional time. That is why I am grateful to our chairman, Mr. WILLIAMS, as well as Chairman BABIN and Ranking Member LOFGREN for their support for a 1-year extension.

This program has always been bipartisan, and it is imperative that we continue to work together to bridge our differences in a thoughtful manner. A 1-year extension is the most responsible course forward, one that five out of six corners agree on. It gives agencies and small businesses the certainty they need, while giving us adequate time to make the best decisions we can.

While we have heard arguments that this could be added to the NDAA, the timeline simply does not make sense. The programs will expire long before final passage of the NDAA, and doing so will result in a lapse in the program, something that has never happened before.

A 1-year extension does not mean that the work ends. We will continue to be at the table, ready to negotiate and ultimately pass a bipartisan, bicameral comprehensive reauthorization.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes,” and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Babin), my good friend and the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WILLIAMS, my good friend from Texas, as well, for yielding.

The Small Business Innovation Research, SBIR, and Small Business Technology Transfer, STTR, programs are the Federal Government's largest source of funding for small businesses focused on early-stage technology development and commercialization.

They offer small businesses an opportunity to participate in Federal research and development, facilitating the transition of federally funded R&D into innovative products and services. For this reason, these programs are often referred to as America's seed fund, as they invest in research and emerging technology ideas that may be too risky for private sector funding.

These SBIR and STTR programs are funded from set-asides of the extramural research budgets at Federal agencies, providing billions of dollars in awards every year. This substantial investment by taxpayers necessitates diligent oversight by Congress to ensure that these programs are operating efficiently and are protected from theft and abuse by our adversaries, such as the Chinese Communist Party.

The reauthorization Congress passed in 2022 for these programs addressed some vulnerabilities, but more work needs to be done. Both the Small Business Committee and the Science, Space, and Technology Committees are dedicated to addressing these issues and ensuring that taxpayer funds support American small businesses rather than being funneled to foreign adversaries.

While we continue our work, it is critical that we do not allow this vital program to expire. Therefore, we have introduced this 1-year extension of SBIR and STTR programs and encourage all Members to vote "yes" on this bill.

I look very much forward to working with Chairman WILLIAMS, Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ, Chairwoman ERNST, Ranking Member MARKEY, and Ranking Member LOFGREN to get a full reauthorization completed and through Congress as soon as possible.

□ 1510

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by reminding everyone that this is a bipartisan program that has never seen a lapse in its over 40-year history. The House is taking the responsible step of extending this program for a year to give us time to negotiate a longer-term reauthorization.

I appreciate the partnership of Chairman WILLIAMS and of my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Chairman BABIN and Rank-

ing Member LOFGREN, for keeping this vital source of capital for our Nation's most promising innovators alive. I look forward to continuing discussions in the coming weeks and months to reach a bipartisan agreement.

Allowing this program to lapse is simply not an option. I encourage all of my colleagues to support this common-sense measure.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and I urge my colleagues to support this common-sense legislation to continue uplifting small business innovation across America.

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

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 5100, a bill that I cosponsored along with the Chair of the Science Committee, Representative Babin, and the Chair and Ranking Member of the Small Business Committee, Representatives WILLIAMS and VELÁZQUEZ. Like my colleagues, I am a strong supporter of the SBIR and STTR programs and it is my priority to see these programs continue without disruption.

For more than 40 years, and Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR), and later its companion program the Small Business Technology Transfer Program (STTR), have been contributing to U.S. leadership in technological innovation through support for small business research and development.

My home state of California has long been one of the Nation's leading states for science and technology. Because of our rich and diverse culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, our small companies—across sectors—have successfully competed for SBIR/STTR funds since the programs' inception. In 2022, California companies won a total of \$887 million in SBIR/STTR awards. I celebrate the success of California's small businesses. But more importantly, I celebrate the return on investment (ROI) that benefits the entire Nation. While estimates vary depending on the scope and methodology of each study, the studies I have seen report a ROI of at least 10:1. That is a remarkable win for the taxpayer for a relatively small investment.

While the Small Business Administration administers the overall program, it is the science agencies themselves that solicit and fund SBIR/STTR award proposals. As the Ranking Member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, I am familiar with the diversity of our Federal scientific enterprise and the vast differences in missions and needs across our science agencies, including the Department of Defense (DOD). So, it is no surprise to me that over the lifetime of the SBIR/STTR programs, each agency has evolved the particulars of their individual programs to align with their specific needs. That also applies to how they approach risk assessment in their due diligence programs. While clear, standard definitions are an important goal that I share, an agency like NSF is rightfully going to assess and mitigate risk differently than an agency like DOD.

It is with that context in mind that I have serious concerns about the INNOVATE Act as currently proposed by the Chairs of the House

and Senate Small Business Committees. Even DOD itself has flagged significant concerns. I do support a long-term comprehensive reauthorization of the program, and I am committed to taking a serious look at where the program has challenges and needs good governance updates. I am also committed to discussing the opportunities to continue to strengthen the outcomes of the program, including by doing more to attract new entrants across the Nation. I have instructed my staff accordingly and they have been at the table for more than a month negotiating in good faith with staff from the other committees. However, we remain far apart on certain key issues and simply need more time to work through them. At the moment, we don't even have agreement on the fundamentals. What I do not accept is a repeat of the 2022 process, in which one corner out of six effectively dictated the process and rammed through a bill that narrowly reflected only their priorities and completely omitted Science Committee priorities, among others.

That is why I am encouraging all of my colleagues, in the House and the Senate, to support a clean one-year reauthorization of the SBIR/STTR programs. We must be allowed time to engage in the kind of thoughtful deliberation and debate that the public and the stakeholders expect from us before we enact monumental changes to a program that has been an undisputed success for more than 40 years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5100.

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.

MIRACLE ON ICE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 452) to award 3 Congressional Gold Medals to the members of the 1980 U.S. Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team, in recognition of their extraordinary achievement at the 1980 Winter Olympics where, being comprised of amateur collegiate players, they defeated the dominant Soviet hockey team in the historic "Miracle on Ice", revitalizing American morale at the height of the Cold War, inspiring generations and transforming the sport of hockey in the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Miracle on Ice Congressional Gold Medal Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The United States Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team competed at the 1980 Winter

Olympics, officially the XIII Olympic Winter Games and known as the 1980 Lake Placid games, from February 13 to 24, 1980, in Lake Placid, New York.

(2) Team USA, comprised of collegiate players, defeated the defending Olympic champion the Soviet Union 4-3 on February 22, 1980, in the final round of the 1980 Winter Olympics men's ice hockey tournament.

(3) The 1980 United States Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team roster included—

- (A) Bill Baker (Grand Rapids, Minnesota);
- (B) Neal Broten (Roseau, Minnesota);
- (C) Dave Christian (Warroad, Minnesota);
- (D) Steve Christoff (Richfield, Minnesota);
- (E) Jim Craig (North Easton, Massachusetts);
- (F) Mike Eruzione (Winthrop, Massachusetts);
- (G) John Harrington (Virginia, Minnesota);
- (H) Steve Janaszak (Saint Paul, Minnesota);
- (I) Mark Johnson (Madison, Wisconsin);
- (J) Rob McClanahan (Saint Paul, Minnesota);
- (K) Ken Morrow (Flint, Michigan);
- (L) Jack O'Callahan (Charlestown, Massachusetts);
- (M) Mark Pavelich (Eveleth, Minnesota);
- (N) Mike Ramsey (Minneapolis, Minnesota);
- (O) Buzz Schneider (Grand Rapids, Minnesota);
- (P) Dave Silk (Scituate, Massachusetts);
- (Q) Eric Strobel (Rochester, Minnesota);
- (R) Bob Suter (Madison, Wisconsin);
- (S) Mark Wells (St. Clair Shores, Michigan);

and

- (T) Phil Verchota (Duluth, Minnesota).

(4) The "Miracle on Ice" United States and Soviet Union final round game aired on tape delay on Feb 22, 1980, from Lake Placid and drew 34,200,000 average viewers. The match is remembered as a "miracle" as collegiate ice hockey players defied expectations in defeating a Soviet team that won 4 consecutive gold medals dating back to 1964.

(5) Team USA defeated Finland 4-2 in its final game to win the gold medal, its first gold medal since 1960 in men's ice hockey.

(6) Herb Brooks, the last player cut from the 1960 United States Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team that won gold at Squaw Valley, guided the 1980 team to its historic gold medal. Known as a motivator, Brooks molded a team built around hard work, belief in oneself, and belief in teammates. He reminded his team when they played the Soviets, "you were born to be hockey players, everyone one of you . . . and you were meant to be here".

(7) The tournament occurred at a time when the United States was struggling with rampant stagflation, high gas prices, hostages held in Iran, and increased tensions with the Soviet Union whose invasion of Afghanistan led to the boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics.

(8) The Miracle on Ice was a turning point for ice hockey in the United States. The game was named the greatest sports moment of the 20th century by Sports Illustrated.

(9) The historic win brought ice hockey to the front-page of newspapers everywhere, and forever opened the door to the National Hockey League for players born in the United States. The impact of the event was far-reaching and is still being felt today.

(10) Since 1980, interest in the United States in the sport of ice hockey has increased exponentially. Registrations with USA Hockey have increased by nearly 400 percent since 1980 from 136,000 to over 564,000, and the number of National Hockey League players from the United States has increased from 72 in 1980 to 245 in 2024.

SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDALS.

(a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the award, on behalf of Congress, of 3 gold medals of appropriate design to the members of the 1980 United States Olympic

Men's Ice Hockey Team, in recognition of their extraordinary achievement at the XIII Olympic Winter Games where, being comprised of amateur collegiate players, they defeated the dominant Soviet hockey team in the historic "Miracle on Ice", revitalizing morale in the United States at the height of the Cold War, inspiring generations, and transforming the sport of ice hockey in the United States.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall strike gold medals with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Secretary.

(c) DISPOSITION OF MEDALS.—Following the award of the gold medals under subsection (a)—

(1) one gold medal shall be given to the Lake Placid Olympic Center in Lake Placid, New York, where it shall be displayed and made available for research, as appropriate;

(2) one gold medal shall be given to the United States Hockey Hall of Fame Museum in Eveleth, Minnesota, where it shall be displayed and made available for research, as appropriate; and

(3) one gold medal shall be given to the United States Olympic & Paralympic Museum in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where it shall be displayed and made available for research, as appropriate.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medals struck under section 3, at a price sufficient to cover the costs thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

(a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—Medals struck under this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

(b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under this Act.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 452, a bill that awards three Congressional Gold Medals to the members of the 1980 U.S. Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by thanking Congressman STAUBER and

the numerous original sponsors for getting this important bill to the floor today.

"Great moments are born from great opportunity." With those words, Coach Herb Brooks rallied the young, underdog U.S. hockey team during a dark chapter of the Cold War, a time when Americans faced nuclear threats, economic uncertainty, and a crisis of confidence.

The Soviet Union's hockey team had dominated for decades, beating the U.S. in their last 12 matchups, including a crushing 10-3 exhibition win just 3 weeks earlier. No one expected the Americans to win.

However, on February 22, 1980, in Lake Placid, Team USA shocked the world, defeating the Soviets in a stunning upset.

It wasn't just a hockey game. It was a symbolic victory for democracy, resilience, and national pride.

Just days later, they claimed Olympic gold for the United States.

These 20 young men reminded a shaken Nation that its greatest moments weren't in the past. They were still within reach.

Mr. Speaker, the players of the 1980 U.S. Olympic Ice Hockey Team are deserving of these Congressional Gold Medals as the highest recognition of national appreciation for their determination, courage, and patriotism.

My hope is that what this team achieved on that ice in 1980 will continue to inspire Americans today and for generations yet to come.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill. I even remember where I was at that very moment.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of concurring in the Senate amendment and passing H.R. 452, the Miracle on Ice Congressional Gold Medal Act, sponsored by our friend, PETE STAUBER.

This bill was considered on the floor of this House, and I was pleased to manage it on the Democratic side, back on April 28. We sent an excellent bill over to the Senate, and for the first time ever, the Senate actually improved a House bill. Now, it is appropriate for us to concur in their amendment, pass the bill, and send it to the President.

Today, we vote to honor the legacy of the 1980 U.S. Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team and their victory that inspired a country at the height of the Cold War.

This legislation awards three Congressional Gold Medals. Each of these gold medals will be displayed at different locations for community members and visitors to commemorate for generations to come. These locations are the Olympic Center in Lake Placid, New York; the Hockey Hall of Fame Museum in Eveleth, Minnesota; and the Olympic & Paralympic Museum in Colorado Springs.

The victory we are recognizing today took place on February 22, 1980, when

the U.S. hockey team heroically defeated the Soviet Union 4–3 at the Lake Placid Winter Olympic Games.

The talented yet untested U.S. team was initially deemed the underdog. Many of them were young college players and had only played together for a few months.

Leading up to the game, the U.S. players took part in a 7-month training program designed to confront a Soviet team considered to be the best conditioned hockey team in the world. However, through steadfast determination and grit, the U.S. team won.

Even decades later, when our country is facing political division and economic difficulties, I hope these events can serve as a reminder that we can overcome great challenges.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the sponsor of this bill and urge my colleagues to support the passage of this measure.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, normally, when you come up to talk about a bill, you raise the podium here and put your papers down. Mr. Speaker, when you talk about the 1980 Olympic game, I don't need any notes. I don't need any recollection.

"Eleven seconds. You've got 10 seconds. The countdown is going on right now! Morrow, up to Silk. Five seconds left in the game. Do you believe in miracles? Yes!"

Friday, February 22, 1980, the game started at 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, 4 p.m. Central Standard Time, where I was a bantam hockey player, playing in the Pine Valley Ice Shelter. We had one of our parents come out of the locker room, "We beat the Russians. We beat the Russians," because it was on tape delay.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud for this body to pass this. As my colleague, Mr. SHERMAN, said, it is also coming from the Senate. It came from the Senate.

The fact of the matter is, as Chairman WILLIAMS says, it was more than a hockey game. It was the height of the Cold War. The United States needed that lift, and those American heroes gave us that lift.

Those 12 Minnesotans gave us that lift. Coach Herb Brooks from the University of Minnesota gave us that lift. All of those players standing on that gold medal platform on Sunday, February 24, all of them on that small platform, gave America the lift.

A couple of weeks ago, I had dinner with some of the members of the gold medal team. Captain Mike Eruzione said this to me: Pete, that hockey game gave me life. Had we not won, I was going to be either a firefighter, police officer, or go into the military, but that game changed my life. I made a lot of money. This Congressional Gold Medal will be the cherry on top for our team.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their unwavering support to get this across the finish line. It was 40-plus years since they did that, and 3 weeks, 2½ weeks before these games, the Soviets dominated them at Madison Square Garden.

□ 1520

Mr. Speaker, named after Coach Herb Brooks, we call them Herbies. Blue line back, red line back, far blue line back, and far goal line back are Herbies.

Who do you play for? Who do you play for? Team USA. That name on the front of the jersey meant more than the name on the back—USA.

Dare I say, Mr. Speaker, we in Congress have to do that same thing. Who do we play for? Who do we play for? The United States of America.

I thank my friend and colleague from upstate New York, Representative ELISE STEFANIK, because she was originally going to carry this bill. Mr. Speaker, she let me carry it.

After a conversation with her, I said: ELISE, Minnesota is the State of Hockey. Herb Brooks comes from the State of Hockey. There were 12 Minnesotans. There was Duluth hometown hero Phil Verchota. There was Mark Pavelich, John Harrington, Buzz Schneider, and Bill Baker. The list goes on and on from our great State of Minnesota.

ELISE STEFANIK said: Pete, you have made a great statement. Carry that bill.

Representative STEFANIK has no idea what it means to me to be able to deliver this bill with my colleagues across the House floor. That game meant more to this country than those heroes realized. Yes, it was just a hockey game, but it was a hockey game that we needed to win at that moment at that time for this great Nation.

Remember, Mike Eruzione scored with 10 minutes left. The Soviets were just pressuring us. What did Coach Herb Brooks say up and down the ice? He said: "Play your game. Play your game."

They were the best conditioned. They were a team. Nobody was going to win that game other than the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, hockey is a great game. I know that my good friend and colleague, Chairman WILLIAMS, thinks, probably rightfully so, that baseball is America's pastime. For anyone who comes from Minnesota, hockey is America's pastime. We banter back and forth. I actually think he is right, but give me some grace.

To my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, to KEVIN CRAMER and CHUCK SCHUMER, who delivered this across the aisle in the Senate, I think and believe that we in America, especially with the events that have happened recently, that name on the front of our jersey means more than the name on the back. On the front of our jersey, it says: "USA."

Those college kids on that Friday had no idea of the impact they were

going to have across this great Nation. Those men went on to do great things. Some went on to win Stanley Cup championships, such as Kenny Morrow; my hero, Neal Broten, from Roseau, Minnesota; my hero, Mark Pavelich, from Eveleth, Minnesota; and my other hero, Phil Verchota, from my hometown of Duluth. It was integrity, honesty, hard work, dedication, and the will to win.

Mr. Speaker, the name on the front of our jersey, USA, means more than the name on the back. I am thrilled to be able to vote on this piece of legislation. These Olympic heroes deserve this because, as Captain Eruzione says, it will put the cherry on top of their accomplishment. It is the highest honor we can give.

As was alluded to earlier, the Olympic Center in Lake Placid is going to have a Congressional Gold Medal. The United States Olympic & Paralympic Museum in Colorado Springs will have a Congressional Gold Medal. Yes, the United States Hockey Hall of Fame Museum in Eveleth, Minnesota, will have a Congressional Gold Medal.

Mr. Speaker, I am excited about this opportunity. Hockey is a great game. This changed the history of our country. We can never forget what it meant to us.

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

Mr. Speaker, I have never heard a speech on the floor of this House spoken with such enthusiasm. As a Los Angeles Dodgers fan, I do have to disagree. America's pastime remains baseball. We will see that at 10:10 eastern time, when the Dodgers defeat the Philadelphia Phillies tonight.

This legislation honors the members of the 1980 U.S. Men's Olympic Hockey Team, whose hard-fought work and commitment reignited a country at the height of the Cold War. In recognizing this victory, I hope their legacy will continue to inspire us.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to reiterate the importance of the 1980 United States Olympic Hockey Team uniting during such a challenging and turbulent period in American history. Their unforgettable victory solidified the Nation's legacy of excellence both on the ice and on the global stage. We owe these men a debt of gratitude for transforming and shaping the landscape of American hockey over the past four decades.

I thank Congressman STAUBER for his leadership and his speech. It was very good. I thank all of my colleagues in advance for supporting this measure.

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 Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the

rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 452.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WATER RESOURCES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REVIEW ACT

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3427) to require the Comptroller General of the United States to review all clean water-related technical assistance authorities of the Environmental Protection Agency, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3427

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 “Water Resources Technical Assistance Review Act”.

SEC. 2. GAO REPORT ON CLEAN WATER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall initiate a comprehensive review of all covered technical assistance.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The Comptroller General shall include in the review required under subsection (a) the following:

(1) A description of all covered technical assistance available to States, Tribes, local governments, and non-governmental organizations, including—

(A) the regions and populations that are served through the provision of technical assistance; and

(B) a summary of the activities and actions carried out through covered technical assistance during the 5-year period preceding this Act.

(2) A comprehensive review of how the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, through the Water Technical Assistance initiative (known as “WaterTA initiative”), identifies, selects, and partners with technical assistance providers to support communities, including—

(A) a description of the criteria, evaluation process, and contracting mechanisms used for selecting such providers;

(B) a description of the extent of coordination with State, Tribal, and regional partners in the selection and deployment of such providers;

(C) a description of how such providers are matched to meet the needs of local communities, including any pre-engagement scoping activities or community consultations;

(D) a description of how such providers identify communities in need of technical assistance, including economically distressed communities, and conduct outreach to such communities;

(E) a description of the scope and types of assistance delivered through such initiative; and

(F) a list of communities that received technical assistance support through such initiative, including the type and cost of assistance received by each such community and a summary of the outcomes associated with the provision of such assistance.

(3) An analysis of any duplication of covered technical assistance available through multiple programs of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(4) An evaluation of how the provision of covered technical assistance builds capacity in com-

munities to access other water infrastructure programs carried out by the Administrator.

(5) An assessment of the needs of economically distressed communities eligible to receive assistance under a clean water infrastructure program carried out by the Administrator that are not addressed through covered technical assistance.

(6) An evaluation of how the Administrator carries out covered technical assistance in coordination with other Federal agencies providing technical assistance related to water infrastructure.

(7) An evaluation of how covered technical assistance supports communities in understanding, identifying, and implementing alternative and cost-effective technologies and features of treatment works that achieve long-term savings and improved outcomes in addressing water quality challenges.

(c) REPORT.—Upon the completion of the review conducted under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate a report containing—

- (1) the findings of such review; and
- (2) any recommendations to improve covered technical assistance.

(d) PLAN FOR COMPLIANCE.—Not later than 90 days after the Comptroller General submits the report required under subsection (c), and annually thereafter for a period of 5 years, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate a plan detailing any actions the Administrator has taken to comply with the recommendations contained in such a report.

(e) COVERED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “covered technical assistance” means a technical assistance authority, initiative, or program of the Environmental Protection Agency that is related to clean water infrastructure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TAYLOR) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. FIGURES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

1530

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material in the RECORD on H.R. 3427.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, my bill, H.R. 3427, the Water Resources Technical Assistance Review Act, would instruct the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, to conduct a study reviewing the EPA’s technical assistance programs.

Access to clean and safe water should not be determined by where you live, Mr. Speaker. During my time in Congress, I have heard from elected officials across southern Ohio about the difficulties they face navigating the Federal grant process due to budgetary constraints, insufficient time, and lack

of technical expertise. This bill would change that by helping Appalachian regions get connected to resources they need to join the modern economy.

The EPA established technical assistance programs to connect rural communities like those in my district and across the United States with experts to help them navigate the Federal funding process to obtain water infrastructure.

Unfortunately, some of these technical assistance programs have failed to provide adequate assistance, hindering communities from obtaining critical water infrastructure funding.

My bill would direct the GAO to conduct a comprehensive study reviewing how the EPA identifies, selects, and partners with technical assistance providers, and provide recommendations on how the EPA can improve these technical assistance programs.

Once concluded, the EPA must submit a plan to Congress on how it intends to reform its technical assistance programs, helping connect communities with necessary resources to build and repair critical water infrastructure.

I am proud to lead legislation that helps alleviate the struggles that rural communities face in obtaining the infrastructure needed to survive. When water infrastructure ages well past its intended lifespan, Congress should support and advocate for programs that help rural communities, not leave them behind.

I thank my friend and colleague, Representative FIGURES, for joining me in this effort, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this legislation to help communities across the United States receive the assistance they need to obtain water infrastructure.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3427, as amended, a bill which I am co-leading with my colleague from Ohio (Mr. TAYLOR). I thank Congressman TAYLOR for his leadership on this issue and for recognizing the importance of this issue.

This bill directs the Government Accountability Office to review the technical assistance programs created to help underserved, rural, and Tribal communities obtain critical investment for their water infrastructure needs.

In March, the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment heard testimony from witnesses across the country on how these programs are critical to economically disadvantaged communities and rural communities.

Without the seed money and discretion provided by EPA, many underserved, rural, and Tribal communities simply do not have the staff, the resources, or the capacity to even apply for Federal assistance when it is available.

Unfortunately, in its fiscal year '26 budget request, the administration proposed to virtually eliminate funding for clean water-related infrastructure projects, but it also proposes to cut the Technical Assistance for Treatment Works Grant Program by over 60 percent.

These cuts ignore the water infrastructure needs of our most vulnerable communities, which includes a large part of the communities that I have the privilege of serving in Alabama. Rural communities, Tribal, and economically distressed communities in every State need this sort of assistance.

The message from the administration to these communities is: We will no longer help you meet your critical infrastructure needs. You are on your own.

I don't think that should be the case. Mr. Speaker, many of the communities that I have the privilege to represent historically have been passed over for critical infrastructure investments, and they need these investments, communities like Prichard, Alabama, and Greenville, Alabama, who are struggling with clean water issues and infrastructure issues as we sit here today.

The technical assistance provided by the EPA to be able to affordably meet their basic clean water and drinking water needs is something that they must have.

This GAO study will help identify how EPA implements the technical assistance programs established in the Clean Water Act, as well as any essential services for economically distressed, rural, and Tribal communities that continue to go unmet through these programs.

My hope is that these findings will, again, demonstrate how critical clean water infrastructure and technical assistance investments are to struggling American communities, especially to our rural communities.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 3427, as amended. I urge my colleagues to do the same, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3427, the Water Resources Technical Assistance Review Act, is a good government bill that would help ensure that the EPA technical assistance programs effectively connect rural communities with experts to help them access water infrastructure funding. It is a step toward equal opportunity for areas that have long been denied it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support from all of my colleagues on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TAYLOR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3427, 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.

COURTHOUSE AFFORDABILITY AND SPACE EFFICIENCY ACT OF 2025

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3426) to amend title 40, United States Code, to limit the construction of new courthouses under certain circumstances, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3426

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 "Courthouse Affordability and Space Efficiency Act of 2025" or the "CASE Act".

SEC. 2. REDUCING COSTS RELATED TO COURT HOUSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 33 of title 40, United States Code, as amended by this act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 3320. Reducing costs related to court houses

“(a) LIMITATION ON NEW COURTHOUSES.—The Administrator of General Services may not commence construction of any new courthouse if—

“(1) construction has not begun on or before the date of enactment of this section; or
“(2) the design and construction of the new courthouse fails to comply, at a minimum, with the courtroom sharing requirements described in subsection (b).

“(b) COURTROOM SHARING REQUIREMENTS DEFINED.—The term ‘courtroom sharing requirements’ means—

“(1) in courthouses with 10 or more active district judges, 2 courtrooms per 3 active district judges, except such courthouses may contain not less than 9 courtrooms for active district judges;

“(2) in courthouses with 3 or more bankruptcy judges—

“(A) 1 courtroom per 2 bankruptcy judges;
“(B) 1 courtroom for emergency matters; and

“(C) if there is an odd number of bankruptcy judges, the number of courtrooms required pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall be rounded down;

“(3) in courthouses with 3 or more senior district judges, 1 courtroom per 2 senior district judges; and

“(4) in courthouses with 3 or more magistrate judges—

“(A) 1 courtroom per 2 magistrate judges;
“(B) 1 criminal duty courtroom; and

“(C) if there is an odd number of magistrate judges, the number of courtrooms required pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall be rounded down.

“(c) UNITED STATES COURTS DESIGN GUIDE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Design Guide for courthouses shall be updated to incorporate courtroom sharing requirements to the maximum extent practicable.

“(d) UTILIZATION.—If a new courthouse will add capacity in the inventory of the General Services Administration, existing space in the same courthouse complex must be fully utilized or relinquished from the inventory of the General Services Administration.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 33 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“3320. Reducing costs related to court houses.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TAYLOR) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. FIGURES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material into the RECORD on H.R. 3426, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3426, the CASE Act, limits the size of courthouses, by directing the General Services Administration, or GSA, to only build new courthouses that accommodate courtroom sharing.

Specifically, the CASE Act codifies the judiciary's current courtroom sharing policies for magistrate, senior, and bankruptcy judges.

For large courthouses, the legislation also directs there can only be two courtrooms for every three district court judges.

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, on a bipartisan basis, has conducted oversight of the Federal courthouse construction program across multiple administrations.

Historically, courthouses have been significantly overbuilt, costing the American taxpayers billions of dollars to build, operate, and maintain. In 2010, the GAO, Government Accountability Office, found that courthouses built from 2000 to 2010 were overbuilt by 3.56 million square feet, costing an additional \$800 million in addition to \$51 million annually to operate and maintain.

Despite oversight, and even at one point a moratorium on authorizing new courthouses, the courts issued an updated courthouse design guide in 2021 that did just the opposite of consolidating the judiciary's space.

A GAO review of the updated design guide revealed the changes in the design guide actually increase space in courthouses by 6 percent and will cost the taxpayer 12 percent more. The Government Accountability Office found one of the key driving forces in the overbuilding of courthouses to be the overprojection of future judges.

Proposals for new courthouses are driven not by building condition, security, or even the need for more space for current judges, but by the court's projection of future judges. The court's own methodology for prioritizing the need for a new courthouse, for example,

relegated security concerns to just 10 percent of a weighted formula, but in contrast courtrooms and chambers account for 50 percent.

In reality, the courts' projections have been shown to be wrong. As a result, the taxpayer pays for space that sits vacant.

The CASE Act directs GSA, which builds and owns Federal courthouses, to only design and build courthouses that strictly comply with courtroom sharing requirements.

The committee has reported out similar language in the past and a hearing before the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management earlier this year on courthouses reinforced the need for this legislation.

H.R. 3426, as amended, also incorporates reasonable revisions recommended by the courts.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SHREVE) for his leadership on this legislation and the gentlewoman from D.C. (Ms. NORTON) for working on this bipartisan bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 3426, the Courthouse Affordability and Space Efficiency Act of 2025, or CASE Act.

I thank my colleague from, I almost want to say Louisiana because of his familial ties to the naming of Shreveport, but my across-the-hall neighbor in the Cannon Building, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SHREVE), I thank him for his leadership and support on this issue.

This bill develops space-sharing guidelines to prevent overbuilding of new Federal courthouses. As a former Department of Justice staffer and a former Federal law clerk myself, I have had the privilege to see many beautiful courthouses and courtrooms across this country, and so I have seen how empty and underutilized many of those spaces are.

By implementing these standards into the design guide for Federal courthouses, the GSA will be able to reduce construction costs and ensure that existing spaces in courthouse complexes are being fully utilized.

Over the last 45 years, the GAO has compiled a large body of work on Federal courthouse construction, much of it at the request of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

GAO has found that the judiciary has requested and received courthouses that are larger than the size authorized by Congress, more expensive to build, and more expensive to operate than Congress was aware of.

The judiciary has tried, however, to meet the concerns of Congress over the last several years. Recently, the judicial conference revised its courtroom allocation planning assumptions. New courtroom construction projects are to

be designed to facilitate courtroom sharing for senior district judges, magistrate judges, and bankruptcy judges.

□ 1540

There is still some cause for concern. This legislation, by establishing sharing guidelines for active district court judges, will certainly help.

I support this legislation because this is about making the American taxpayer dollar go further and making more sensible investments. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SHREVE).

Mr. SHREVE. Mr. Speaker, it sounds like my case in salesmanship is going to be modest with the support that this act enjoys from colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

I am someone who has built a business from the ground up, including several million square feet of space. It is a reality that to construct space is one thing; the carry cost of maintaining it is quite another.

There is general recognition increasingly within this Congress that we have more space than our Federal Government needs. That is certainly the case at the courthouse level in our Federal courthouses and the supporting of office space.

My legislation, the CASE Act, directs the GSA to construct the courthouse space that is necessary and no more. I worked with the U.S. courts on this bill. The resulting legislation is straightforward. It is clearly bipartisan, and it is commonsensical.

The CASE Act codifies the court's sharing policies for our magistrates, seniors, and bankruptcy judges. For the larger courthouses, it limits the number of courtrooms to two for every three judges.

The bill codifies this administration's approach to rightsizing our Federal Government. That is something that we share in common, both sides of the aisle, toward being good stewards of our taxpayer dollars.

The GSA, as was noted, is still forced to build to standards that account for potential judges, despite Congress not having authorized any additional judgeships over the past 30 years. This act is a move toward making taxpayer dollars go further.

I thank my colleague, Ms. NORTON, for joining me on this legislation and for her good work on this issue. I urge passage.

Mr. FIGURES. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 3426, the CASE Act, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing, H.R. 3426 as amended, will rightsizes Federal courthouses, reducing unneeded space and potentially saving the taxpayer billions of dollars.

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure passed reforms to begin the process of rightsizing the Federal Government's real estate portfolio last Congress. This legislation continues that work of ensuring a more efficient use of taxpayer resources.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of H.R. 3426, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TAYLOR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3426, 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.

PROTECTING VETERAN ACCESS TO TELEMEDICINE SERVICES ACT OF 2025

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1107) to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize certain health care professionals employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs to deliver, distribute, or dispense to veterans certain controlled medications via telemedicine under certain conditions, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1107

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. DELIVERY, DISTRIBUTION, AND DISPENSATION OF CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS BY COVERED DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS VIA TELEMEDICINE.

Subchapter III of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section (and conforming the table of sections at the beginning of such chapter accordingly):

§ 1730D. Delivery, distribution, and dispensation of controlled medications via telemedicine

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to section 1730C of this title and subject to the requirements of title II of the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970 (21 U.S.C. 801 et seq.), a covered health care professional may use telemedicine to deliver, distribute, or dispense to a patient eligible to receive medical treatment under this chapter a controlled substance that is a prescription drug as determined under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.) regardless of whether such covered health care professional has conducted an in-person medical examination of such patient if—

"(1) such covered health care professional is—

"(A) authorized to prescribe the basic class of such controlled substance under an active, current, full, and unrestricted State license, registration, or certification; and

“(B) acting in the usual course of professional practice; and

“(2) such substance is delivered, distributed, or dispensed for a legitimate medical purpose.

“(b) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall establish in regulations guidelines and a process for the delivery, distribution, and dispensation of a controlled substance pursuant to subsection (a).

“(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to remove, limit, or otherwise affect any obligation of a covered health care professional under the Controlled Substances Act.

“(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The terms ‘controlled substance’, ‘deliver’, ‘dispense’, and ‘distribute’ have the meanings given such terms in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act, respectively.

“(2) The term ‘covered health care professional’ means—

“(A) a health care professional who—

“(i) is an employee of the Department appointed under section 7306, 7401, 7405, 7406, or 7408 of this title or under title 5;

“(ii) is not a contractor of the Department;

“(iii) is authorized by the Secretary to provide health care under this chapter;

“(iv) is required to adhere to all standards for quality relating to the provision of health care in accordance with applicable policies of the Department;

“(v) has an active, current, full, and unrestricted license, registration, or certification or meet qualification standards set forth by the Secretary within a specified time frame; and

“(vi) with respect to a health care profession listed under section 7402(b) of this title, has the qualifications for such profession as set forth by the Secretary; and

“(B) a health professions trainee who—

“(i) is appointed under section 7405 of this title; and

“(ii) is under the clinical supervision of a health care professional described in subparagraph (A).”

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1107, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1107 offered by Representative WOMACK.

This bill would allow telemedicine prescriptions for controlled substances at VA even before an in-person medical exam.

During the COVID pandemic, VA waived requirements for an in-person appointment. As a result, providers could prescribe controlled substances by telemedicine. This waiver was helpful for continuity of care during the pandemic.

We also realized that many veterans received more access than before due

to this waiver. I cannot tell you how many times veterans in rural areas have told me stories about hours they have to drive to receive care or a prescription from the VA.

Representative WOMACK’s bill would close the loop and modernize the delivery of prescriptions by making the current waiver permanent.

While telemedicine will never totally replace in-person care, the VA must be granted the tools to deliver 21st century healthcare. This bill would remove burdens on veterans who need VA care so they can get it sooner by telemedicine.

I will continue to do whatever I can to ease access to care and critical treatment for veterans living in rural areas of this country. This bill would give VA power to meet the moment and the use of the latest medicine and technology for veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1107, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that we are considering H.R. 1107, the Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act of 2025, as amended. It will enable VA providers to prescribe substances to veterans through telemedicine without first conducting an in-person exam. This bill will make permanent a flexibility that has been extended to VA and non-VA prescribers alike since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The current waiver, which has been extended by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services, is set to expire in December of 2025. This legislation will make permanent VA prescribers’ authority to prescribe controlled substances via telehealth, if and when DEA and HHS end the temporary authority.

Telemedicine has helped VA to greatly increase veterans’ access to a variety of types of care, providing a critical lifeline for veterans, especially those who may have difficulty leaving the house or who live in extremely rural areas.

We can clearly recognize that after the pandemic, we must be open to changing the way we provide care to everyone, especially veterans, to reflect technological advancements, individual preferences, and the necessity of expanding access to care. In fact, telehealth is the industry standard for many providers and categories of care, including many in the VA’s community care network. Veterans should expect nothing less when they receive care from the VA.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1107, which is the Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act of 2025, as amended.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WOMACK),

the sponsor of this legislation and my good friend.

□ 1550

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me time this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of my bill, H.R. 1107, the Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act of 2025.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is pretty simple. I argue that it is a very commonsense bill. Most importantly, it is vital. It ensures that our veterans, whether they live in the heart of our largest cities or in the most rural, remote communities, have uninterrupted access to the healthcare that they have earned.

I thank my good friend Chairman BOST and Ranking Member TAKANO for their support in advancing this bill as one part of the effort to support our veterans.

I also thank my friend Mark Berry, a former adjutant general for the great State of Arkansas and a former State representative, for his advocacy on behalf of our veterans on this issue. Mark brought this to my attention, and I wouldn’t be standing here today without his encouragement.

In 2008, Congress passed the Ryan Haight Online Pharmacy Consumer Protection Act to address the rise of rogue online pill mills and the potential for abuse in prescribing controlled substances. At the time, it was the right step to safeguard public health. Yet, the world of 2008 is not the world of today, and the law has not kept pace with the realities of modern medicine or the unique needs of our veterans.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person requirement for prescribing controlled substances under the Ryan Haight Online Pharmacy Consumer Protection Act was temporarily waived. This flexibility allowed VA doctors and specialists to reach veterans where they are through secure, effective telemedicine. The Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services have continued to extend this waiver. Yet, without further action, it will expire at the end of this year.

My bill would permanently extend the exemption for VA healthcare professionals with the appropriate safeguards so that they can continue to prescribe medically necessary treatments to veterans via telemedicine.

For veterans in our urban communities, letting this waiver expire means longer wait times, fewer appointment slots, and even more strain on an already overburdened VA system.

For veterans in rural America, the consequences are even more serious. Many of these men and women live hours away from the nearest VA provider. For them, the exemption has meant timely care without the cost and hardship of traveling hundreds of miles for a single appointment.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just a matter of convenience. It is a matter of necessity. It is about ensuring that every

veteran, regardless of where they live, has equal access to the care that they have earned through their service and sacrifice to this Nation. Our veterans have given this Nation their best. It is our duty to give them our best in return.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation and to act swiftly to make sure that our veterans never see their care delayed, denied, or diminished because of outdated laws.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, once again, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 1107, Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act of 2025, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1107, 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 title 38, United States Code, to authorize certain health care professionals employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs to deliver, distribute, or dispense to veterans certain controlled medications via telemedicine under certain conditions, and for other purposes.”

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SERVICEMEMBER RESIDENCE PROTECTION ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2334) to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to preempt any squatter’s rights established by State law regarding real property owned by a member of the uniformed services, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2334

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 “Servicemember Residence Protection Act”.

SEC. 2. SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT: TOLLING OF PERIOD OF ADVERSE POSSESSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 206 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. 3936) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) TOLLING OF PERIOD OF ADVERSE POSSESSION.—The period of a servicemember’s military service may not be included in computing a period of adverse possession of such servicemember’s real property.”

(b) WEBSITE.—Not later than 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the

Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall consult with the Attorney General and update the website of the Department of Veterans Affairs and other relevant websites to include information and resources regarding—

(1) how a member of the uniformed services may secure real property while absent for a period of military service;

(2) leasing real property;

(3) landlord-tenant rights and obligations; and

(4) any other relevant information determined necessary by the Secretary and the Attorney General.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2334, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2334, as amended, offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST), my friend and colleague.

This bill would protect servicemembers’ homes from squatters while they are away on Active Duty. Under current law, servicemembers are not clearly protected under various State adverse possession laws. Due to this lack of protection, a squatter might be able to move in and make a claim to that servicemember’s home when that servicemember is deployed.

This is outrageous. We must ensure that servicemembers can return to their homes following a deployment without the worry that someone might be occupying their home and that they will be forced to get into a costly legal battle to get their home back.

Mr. Speaker, it should go without saying that this should not be happening, and I will do what I can to protect our servicemembers.

This important bill would also require the VA and Department of Justice to work together to provide updated information to servicemembers about their rights.

I thank Chairman MAST for bringing this issue to the committee’s attention and championing this legislation. We must ensure that servicemembers’ homes are not occupied by squatters while a servicemember is away serving our great country.

I look forward to continuing to work with the ranking member this fall on a bipartisan piece of legislation like this one that puts veterans’ and service-members’ needs first.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 2334, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 2334, the Servicemember Residence Protection Act, as amended. However, I still have many concerns that the bill, while well-intentioned, does not live up to the promises made by some supporters.

I appreciate the work of the majority to improve this bill during our markup. All of us want to ensure that servicemembers do not return home from serving their country to find trespassers or squatters living in their homes. We also want to ensure that servicemembers who are confronted with this situation have the tools and resources to seek legal relief.

However, I want to be clear that neither the original bill nor the amended text that we are considering today will eliminate the possibility that a servicemember will need to seek judicial or other legal relief to evict a trespasser.

The ability of Congress to legislate a solution to that particular issue is legally difficult. The text of H.R. 2334, based on my amendment in committee, was drafted so as to avoid creating confusion where courts have already ruled in Servicemembers Civil Relief Act cases involving adverse possession by codifying existing legal interpretations of SCRA tolling provisions.

What that means is that many State courts across the country have already found that the SCRA applied to adverse possession and that the period of time while the servicemember was away from their property did not count toward adverse possession. The amended bill simply makes this existing legal interpretation law.

Since acquiring title to property through adverse possession is a long and involved process, in practice, this legislation would likely apply to servicemembers in rare circumstances, such as when an adverse possessor was able to satisfy all the elements of adverse possession, including possession for the lengthy statutory period, which is likely longer than the time that most servicemembers are stationed away from home.

Mr. Speaker, the other type of trespassing case that a servicemember may encounter is a holdover tenant, such as may happen if a servicemember rents out their property while they are away from home.

□ 1600

Now, many of the stories presented to the committee to support this bill were of that type of trespass. A servicemember invited someone to stay at their property while they were gone and then the tenant did not want to leave.

It is important to follow good practices when becoming a landlord, such as using a written legal lease agreement, and this legislation does provide instruction for the Department of Veterans Affairs to work with the Department of Justice to provide resources on

landlord-tenant practices and securing vacant property.

However, nothing in this bill removes the requirement that someone seeking an eviction will need to follow a legal process to do so, which may include seeking assistance from law enforcement or going to local courts. Evicting someone from property requires due process. In addition, the SCRA is not self-enforcing. A servicemember must seek to enforce all of its protections through a legal process.

Ultimately, servicemembers will need to seek legal assistance to deal with trespassing cases. We owe it to servicemembers to provide them with the information and resources to navigate that process.

This legislation, unfortunately, does not bolster access to legal assistance, but I hope the sponsors of this legislation will join us on those efforts in the future.

I will be supporting this legislation today, as it does make some improvements for those servicemembers who find themselves in the rare occurrence of adverse possession. I hope we can do more in the future, but I don't want to give the servicemembers the false impression that this bill will immediately solve the trespassing issues presented to the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the House and the Senate, as well, to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BOST for his work on this piece of legislation and Ranking Member TAKANO for working with the majority on this piece of legislation, the Servicemember Residence Protection Act.

Mr. Speaker, why this bill? Why do this? It is designed to help those servicemembers that are affected by somebody squatting in their home, trespassing, illegally staying in their home, it will help them get those individuals out in a less costly way and a less intrusive way to their life.

Why does all of that matter? Why do any of this? These are servicemembers. I have yet to meet the servicemember that got rich spending their time in uniform. The work that they do is always dangerous. It is very often deadly, and it requires them to be away from home for large amounts of time: whether being away from home is somewhere around the world doing something dangerous or deadly, or whether that work is around the country in training for something that is dangerous and deadly, or whether it is incurring a permanent change of station to somewhere across the country or the globe where maybe they have a home that they have to leave and put it up for sale or they have to rent it out while they are gone. There are a great number of circumstances that af-

fect our servicemembers with their homes when they are not around to be the immediate tenants of their homes.

This piece of legislation comes in to help protect them to make sure that they can get squatters out of their home when these squatters illegally go into their homes, overstay their time in those homes, or whatever it might be.

Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the work, again, from the committee on this. It is a big deal to help our servicemembers in any way, shape, or form that we can to get people illegally out of their homes. It just takes an undue stress off our servicemembers so that they can focus on the missions at hand, which, again, they are dangerous missions. They are often deadly missions. They deserve the right to focus on those missions without worrying about anything else.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the time to speak on this and for working with me, as well.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 2334, the Servicemember Residence Protection Act, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2334, 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.

WOMEN VETERANS CANCER CARE COORDINATION ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1860) to designate Regional Breast and Gynecologic Cancer Care Coordinators to expand the work of the Breast and Gynecologic Oncology System of Excellence at the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1860

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 “Women Veterans Cancer Care Coordination Act”.

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS REGIONAL BREAST CANCER AND GYNECOLOGIC CANCER CARE COORDINATORS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall hire or designate a Regional Breast Cancer

and Gynecologic Cancer Care Coordinator at each Veteran Integrated Services Network (hereinafter in this section referred to as “VISN”). Each Care Coordinator hired or designated under this subsection shall report directly to the Director of the Breast and Gynecologic Oncology System of Excellence (hereinafter in this section referred to as the “BGOSoE”).

(b) ELIGIBLE VETERANS.—A veteran is eligible to receive care coordination provided by a Care Coordinator hired or designated under subsection (a) if the veteran—

(1) is diagnosed with a breast or gynecologic cancer, or has been identified as having a precancerous breast or gynecologic condition; and

(2) is eligible for health care furnished through the Veterans Community Care Program under section 1703 of title 38, United States Code, at a non-Department facility.

(c) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall establish regions for purposes of care coordination provided by Regional Breast Cancer and Gynecologic Cancer Care Coordinators hired or designated under subsection (a). In establishing such regions, the Secretary shall—

(1) assign all Department facilities to an appropriate region under the supervision of the BGOSoE Director and a designated Regional Breast and Gynecologic Cancer Care Coordinator; and

(2) take into account existing VISNs and the specific needs of veterans in each region, including veterans living in rural communities.

(d) DUTIES OF REGIONAL BREAST AND GYNECOLOGICAL CANCER CARE COORDINATORS.—The Regional Breast Cancer and Gynecologic Cancer Care Coordinator hired or designated under subsection (a) shall be responsible for carrying out the following duties:

(1) Ensuring the coordination of care between clinicians of the Department and breast and gynecologic cancer community care providers.

(2) Working with the Office of Community Care of the relevant medical facility of the Department regarding care furnished under such section.

(3) Making regular contact with each veteran based on the veteran’s specific medical needs when the veteran receives care from a community care provider.

(4) Monitoring—

(A) the services furnished to veterans by the Department and community care providers;

(B) the health outcomes of veterans with respect to a cancer diagnosis, including remission, metastasis, and death; and

(C) the data relating to breast and gynecologic cancer care (using relevant databases of the Veterans Health Administration or other Department databases), including—

(i) the demographics of veterans who have breast or gynecologic cancer; and

(ii) the number of veterans being treated for breast or gynecologic cancer.

(5) Providing particular information to veterans with breast or gynecologic cancer, including—

(A) how to seek emergency care at the emergency department closest to the residence of the veteran, including that it is generally advisable for veterans to notify the Department of emergency care received at a non-Department facility within 72 hours of receiving care to facilitate the authorization of payments for such emergency treatment; and

(B) information about mental health resources, including with respect to information encouraging follow-up care for depression.

(6) Documenting certain information on veterans receiving care for breast or

gynecologic care in the electronic health records of the Department, including—

- (A) the documentation of the contact described in paragraph (3);
- (B) the contact information of the breast or gynecologic cancer care community care providers of such veterans; and
- (C) the breast or gynecologic cancer diagnosis of veterans.

(7) Carrying out such other duties as may be determined appropriate by the Secretary.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report containing the following:

(1) A comparison of the health outcomes of veterans who received cancer care at a Department facility and those who received care furnished by non-Department medical providers pursuant to section 1703 of title 38, United States Code, include with respect to the following:

(A) Treatment and types of health outcomes, including (for the most recent three years of available data)—

(i) the number of veterans who were diagnosed with a breast or gynecologic cancer, or precancerous breast or gynecologic condition;

(ii) the percentage of such veterans who have experienced a cancer-related death; and

(iii) the percentage of such veterans who have entered remission for gynecologic cancer.

(B) Timeliness of care furnished under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, including how quickly initial post-diagnosis appointments and appointments to develop a treatment plan are scheduled and provided.

(C) Patient safety associated with such care at Department facilities or community care providers, including the number of errors in medical care that rise to the level of “never events” (such as a foreign body left in a veteran during surgery).

(2) An evaluation of what changes or additional resources are needed to further improve breast and gynecologic cancer care and coordination.

(3) Any other matter the Secretary determines appropriate.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “community care provider” means a health care provider described in section 1703(c) of title 38, United States Code, who has entered into a contract or agreement to furnish hospital care, medical services, or extended care services (other than care related to breast and gynecologic cancer) to veterans under section 1703 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The term “breast and gynecologic cancer community care provider” means a breast or gynecologic cancer care provider described in section 1703(c) of title 38, United States Code, who has entered into a contract or agreement to furnish hospital care, medical services, or extended care services to provide care related to breast or gynecologic cancer to veterans under section 1703 of title 38F, United States Code.

(3) The term “breast cancer” has the meaning given such term by the Director of the Breast and Gynecologic Oncology System of Excellence.

(4) The term “gynecologic cancer” means cervical cancer, ovarian cancer, uterine cancer, vaginal cancer, vulvar cancer, and gestational trophoblastic neoplasia.

(5) The term “non-Department facility” has the meaning given that term in section 1701 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF PENSION.

Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “November 30, 2031” and inserting “September 30, 2032”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1860, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1860, as amended, offered by Representative SYLVIA GARCIA of Texas.

This bill would create coordinators within each of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks to help veterans navigate cancer care. Specifically, this bill aims to improve care coordination for common cancers in women.

No person wants to hear that they have or that their loved one has cancer. Having the resources to navigate such a difficult time can make all the difference in the treatment journey.

VA must give women veterans who have to navigate cancer treatments the highest quality care that we can offer them. Whether it is screening, diagnosis, treatment, or recovery, our women veterans have earned top-notch support from VA every step of the way. More women veterans than ever before are using VA.

My friend, the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS), recently hosted a hearing to discuss improving care for women veterans. This bill builds on our work to ensure this population of veterans has access to the modern care that they have earned.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 1860, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1860, the Women Veterans Cancer Care Coordination Act, as amended, introduced by my colleague from Texas, Representative SYLVIA GARCIA.

Through VA’s Breast and Gynecological Oncology System of Excellence, the VA oncology, surgical, and nursing specialists are already providing world-class care for these types of cancers directly through VA. The System of Excellence also helps connect veterans with care in the community when necessary.

A cancer diagnosis is always a difficult and complicated journey, and, unfortunately, all too common for veterans, in particular.

The VA’s Breast and Gynecological Oncology System of Excellence is well positioned to handle the clinical aspects of coordinating veterans’ cancer treatment, both at VA and its specialists in the community.

However, regardless of where individuals are receiving care, cancer treatment is often very complex and requires veterans to regularly see many different providers for various treatments, as well as different specialized labs and imaging centers.

Veterans may need assistance covering the expenses associated with traveling to receive care at another VA facility or in the community, obtaining medical records from community providers, ensuring that community providers’ claims are paid on time, and accessing mental health services to help cope with the emotional aspects of their diagnoses.

This can be very difficult for patients to navigate, and our veterans deserve the highest levels of support throughout this time.

Representative GARCIA’s bill will strengthen the System of Excellence by requiring VA to appoint regional breast and gynecologic cancer care coordinators to assist veterans in navigating all of these aspects of their treatment. These trained professionals help ensure that patients can access resources available to them and that their providers are always updated on the patients’ latest health updates.

Veterans deserve compassionate, well-coordinated care when dealing with their cancer journey, and I am glad to support this legislation to do just that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1860, the Women Veterans Cancer Care Coordination Act of 2025, as amended.

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

□ 1610

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA), my good friend and author of H.R. 1860. She serves on the House Financial Services Committee.

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding, along with subcommittee ranking member and the co-lead of this bill, Ms. BROWNLEY, and Chairman BOST.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of my bill, the Women Veterans Cancer Care Coordinator Act of 2025. Women veterans are the fastest growing group using VA healthcare services today, and I am proud to say more of them call Texas home than any other State in the Nation.

As this population ages—keep in mind the average woman veteran is 54—they become more likely to develop cancers. The average age of women veterans diagnosed with breast cancer is 58, and the average age for reproductive cancers is 55.

For many of these veterans, the road ahead is not as clear as it should be. Many VA centers are still building out their services, so often women are connected with community care.

However, when they move outside the VA network, problems start to pile up. Records don't transfer and systems don't update with the latest data. That means more phone calls, more waiting, more back and forth, more frustrations.

Women veterans and their families could be using this energy and time on their treatment and their journey to recovery. A cancer diagnosis shakes your sense of stability. These women need a care system that works for them, not one that makes them fight to get the care that they need.

By connecting them with dedicated coordinators at VA to guide them on their path to remission, we can help these mothers, sisters, and heroes stay in the fight. We made a commitment to these women veterans. Now we must do everything in our power to keep that promise and to save their lives.

This is a commonsense bill. It passed out of committee on voice vote, and I trust the same will happen here. I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers. I am ready to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 1860, the Women Veterans Cancer Care Coordination Act of 2025, as amended. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1860, 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.

TERRITORIAL RESPONSE AND ACCESS TO VETERANS' ESSENTIAL LIFECARE ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3400) to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assign physicians of the Department of Veterans Affairs to temporarily serve as traveling physicians in the territories and possessions of the United States, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3400

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 "Territorial Response and Access to Veterans' Essential Lifecare Act" or the "TRAVEL Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS ASSIGNMENT OF TRAVELING PHYSICIANS TO SERVE TERRITORIES AND POSSESSIONS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 74 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:*

“§ 7415. Traveling physicians

“(a) *IN GENERAL.—(1) The Secretary may assign a physician appointed under section 7401 or section 7431 of this title to serve as a traveling physician for a period of not more than one year at a time. A physician assigned to serve as a traveling physician under this section may be assigned to provide health care to veterans residing in American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands of the United States, or any other territory or possession of the United States at Department facilities or other approved facilities located in such territory or possession.*

“(2) *The Secretary may assign multiple physicians to serve as traveling physicians under this section and may assign each such physician to serve in a specific territory or possession.*

“(b) *COORDINATION OF CARE.—In providing care under this section, traveling physicians shall coordinate with non-Department medical providers to the extent practicable and necessary to ensure high quality and coordinated care for veterans receiving hospital care and medical services.*

“(c) *PAY.—In addition to pay under section 7431 of this title, the Secretary shall provide a relocation or retention bonus to traveling physicians under this section. Such relocation or retention bonus shall be substantially similar to a relocation or retention bonus offered under section 7410(a) of this title, as the Secretary considers appropriate.”.*

(b) *CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7414 the following new item:*

“7415. Traveling physicians.”.

(c) *TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Title 38, United States Code, is further amended as follows:*

(1) *In section 7410(a)(1), by—*

(A) by striking “retention allowances” and inserting “retention bonuses”; and

(B) by striking the second comma after “section 7401(1) of this title”; and

(2) *In section 7431(e)(5)(B), by striking “retention allowances” and inserting “retention bonuses”.*

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF PENSION.

Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “November 30, 2031” and inserting “December 31, 2032”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3400, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3400, as amended, offered by my colleague on the Veterans' Affairs Committee Representative KING-HINDS.

This bill would give the VA Secretary the power to assign traveling physicians for up to 1 year at a time in the U.S. territories to deliver care.

The VA provides healthcare in five U.S. territories in the Pacific and Atlantic. In the Pacific, the VA has one medical center in Honolulu, Hawaii. There are three outpatient clinics in American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. In the Atlantic, the VA has one medical center in Puerto Rico. There are 10 outpatient clinics across Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Based on the most recent data we have, the VA Pacific system served 7,200 enrolled veterans. The VA Caribbean system serves 61,000 enrolled veterans. The veterans in these parts of the world are forced to spend time and money to get their hard-earned care. For example, a veteran in Guam must travel 4,000 miles for care in Honolulu. A veteran in the Virgin Islands has to fly to Puerto Rico to receive care at the VA Medical Center there. The TRAVEL Act would expand the reach of VA care by putting physicians where the veterans live.

I thank Representative KING-HINDS, my friend, for her leadership on this bill to get veterans in remote parts of the world the healthcare they have earned. I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 3400, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H.R. 3400, the TRAVEL Act of 2025, as amended.

The VA estimates that as of June 2023, there were at least 100,000 veterans living in U.S. territories, but it is likely that this number is even higher. However, only Puerto Rico has a VA Medical Center, and only American Samoa and Guam have outpatient clinics or CBOCs. Therefore, veterans living in the territories have limited access to VA medical care.

While eligible veterans can receive care through the VA's community care program, access to specialty care, even in the community, is extremely limited, given the lack of such services in the territories.

This legislation authorizes the VA to appoint traveling physicians to provide care to veterans residing in American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and any other territory or possession of the United States. It will also allow the traveling VA physician to coordinate with non-department medical providers as necessary to provide care. I thank Representative KING-HINDS for introducing this bill.

Individuals from the territories generally enlist in the military at higher

per capita rates than residents of most U.S. States. However, veterans in the territories have long struggled to access the VA healthcare they have earned. This legislation could help reduce the rate at which these veterans must be referred to community providers or endure lengthy travel to access services at VA medical facilities thousands and thousands of miles away from home.

Veterans deserve access to the care and benefits they have earned, regardless of where they live. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3400, the TRAVEL Act.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (Ms. KING-HINDS).

Ms. KING-HINDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of my bill, H.R. 3400, as amended, the Territorial Response and Access to Veterans Essential Lifecare Act, otherwise known as the TRAVEL Act of 2025.

This legislation is a vital step toward improving healthcare access to veterans residing in U.S. territories, including my district, the Northern Mariana Islands.

Our veterans have served our country with honor, but too many of them still struggle to receive even the most basic care close to home.

The TRAVEL Act directly addresses the critical shortage of specialized medical care in remote and underserved areas. It authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to temporarily deploy VA physicians and medical specialists to the territories. These professionals would receive travel bonuses and provide much-needed care, helping close persistent gaps in the VA service network.

When I meet with veterans back home, I often hear the same heart-breaking stories: long travel, long waits, and feeling forgotten by the very system meant to care for them. This bill is driven by those voices. Their needs, their experiences, and their dignity are at the heart of the TRAVEL Act. This bill brings care to them rather than asking them to sacrifice even more.

I extend my deep appreciation to the Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman MIKE BOST and Ranking Member TAKANO, as well as their dedicated staff, for their work and support of this legislation. This bipartisan effort reflects a shared commitment across the aisle and across the country ensuring that no veteran is left behind, no matter where they live.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support the TRAVEL Act.

□ 1620

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, once again, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 3400, the TRAVEL Act.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation.

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 Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3400, 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. BOST. 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.

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2025

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3767) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a time frame for the employment in the Department of Veterans Affairs of participants in the Health Professionals Scholarship Program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3767

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 "Health Professionals Scholarship Program Improvement Act of 2025" or the "HPSPI Improvement Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. TIME FRAME FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PARTICIPANTS IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH PROFESSIONALS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7616 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(d)(1) The Secretary shall ensure that a participant in the Scholarship Program receives a contract for employment in the full-time clinical practice of such participant's profession at a Department facility with the highest need, as determined by the Secretary, by not later than 90 days after the later of the following dates:

"(A) The date on which the participant completes the course in the Scholarship Program.

"(B) The date on which participant obtains all required licensure, certification, or credentialing necessary to practice independently in their field.

"(2) A contract referred to in paragraph (1) shall include a competitive salary and benefits package consistent with the employment standards of the Department.".

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter until the termination date specified in paragraph (2), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the implementation of subsection (d) of section 7616 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(2) TERMINATION DATE.—The termination date specified in this paragraph is September 30, 2027.

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON SMOKING IN FACILITIES OF THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.

(a) PROHIBITION.—Section 1715 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

§ 1715. Prohibition on smoking in facilities of the Veterans Health Administration

"(a) PROHIBITION.—No person (including any veteran, patient, resident, employee of the Department, contractor, or visitor) may smoke on the premises of any facility of the Veterans Health Administration.

"(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) The term 'smoke' includes—

"(A) the use of cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and any other combustion or heating of tobacco; and

"(B) the use of any electronic nicotine delivery system, including electronic or e-cigarettes, vape pens, and e-cigars.

"(2) The term 'facility of the Veterans Health Administration' means any land or building (including any medical center, nursing home, domiciliary facility, outpatient clinic, or center that provides readjustment counseling) that is—

"(A) under the jurisdiction of the Department of Veterans Affairs;

"(B) under the control of the Veterans Health Administration; and

"(C) not under the control of the General Services Administration.".

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 1715 and inserting the following:

"1715. Prohibition on smoking in facilities of the Veterans Health Administration.".

(2) CONFORMING REPEAL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 526 of the Veterans Health Care Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-585; 38 U.S.C. 1715 note) is repealed.

(B) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of such Act is amended by striking the item relating to such section.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3767, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3767, as amended, offered by my friend and colleague, Representative HAMADEH.

This bill would hold the VA to a deadline to hire participants in the Health Professionals Scholarship Program.

The scholarship was created to address chronic workforce shortages. Critical healthcare jobs, like nurses, physician assistants, and mental health providers, continue to be short-staffed and need good people in these roles.

Right now, VA pays for scholarship enrollees' education in return for several years of service to the VA.

Unfortunately, there have been cases where VA can take months before offering them a position. Sometimes, people in the program are forced to break the agreement because of bureaucracy delays at the VA. They seek work elsewhere just to make ends meet.

Representative HAMADEH's bill would ensure that VA is properly staffed by making VA fulfill its end of the bargain.

This bill also includes language from Representative NEAL DUNN's bill, which would prohibit smoking on VHA campuses.

Since the nineties, VA has issued policies to provide safer smoking environments. Then, in March 2019, VA issued its most recent policy for a smoke-free VHA. This bill would align law with the current VA practice.

Patients and VA employees have a right to be protected from the harmful medical effects of secondhand smoke. This bill would do just that. Many private-sector healthcare systems already have smoke-free policies.

This bill, as amended, would take important steps to improve VA healthcare.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 3767, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H.R. 3767, the Health Professionals Scholarship Program Improvement Act of 2025, as amended.

For many years, the Health Professionals Scholarship Program has allowed VA to provide financial assistance to future medical professionals in return for a promise of service at VA facilities to ensure VA can meet its staffing needs. The program has had longstanding success in both ensuring prospective providers can complete their training and bolstering VA's workforce, especially in difficult-to-hire areas and for difficult-to-recruit professions.

However, some participants have expressed concerns that hiring delays at VA have prevented them from receiving their employment contracts in a timely manner. While there are many steps to onboarding new clinicians at VA, including necessary processes such as credentialing and privileging, we must make sure that VA does everything in its power to bring new staff on quickly, especially in the case of prospective providers who have proven themselves willing to serve the veteran community.

This legislation will ensure that VA provides employment contracts to graduates of the Health Professionals Scholarship Program within 90 days of completion of their programs or within 90 days of completing all necessary licensing and credentialing processes, whichever is later.

Participants in the Health Professionals Scholarship Program are dedi-

cated to service to the veteran community and are vital to ensuring VA has sufficient staffing across the Nation.

We should continue to seek additional ways to improve the hiring and onboarding process at VA, including through additional workforce investments and improving the use of expedited hiring authorities.

However, in the meantime, there is an important step in ensuring this program fulfills its purpose, both for participants and for VA's workforce needs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAMADEH), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of my bill, H.R. 3767, the Health Professionals Scholarship Program Improvement Act of 2025.

As too many taxpayers well know, the VA spends millions of our hard-earned taxpayer dollars training healthcare professionals through scholarships, yet, these same qualified professionals are forced to wait months for employment contracts after graduation. All the while, our veterans suffer.

It is government inefficiency at its worst, and our veterans seem to always be paying the price. Veterans are sent to emergency rooms while skilled doctors are waiting to serve patients.

That is why I introduced this bipartisan legislation with my colleague, Congresswoman NIKKI BUDZINSKI, because we saw a program that required action. Bureaucratic red tape is the enemy.

The reports by the inspector general are a testament to what veterans in my district already know: Staffing shortfalls are more than a figure. They are missed appointments, endless long waits, and canceled procedures.

American heroes' lives are at stake. Back home in Arizona, the Phoenix VA Health Care System covers 100,000 veterans. The Southern Arizona VA Health Care System covers yet another 170,000. Every one of them deserves access to qualified providers.

Arizona's Eighth District alone has 65,000 veterans. These patients deserve better than bureaucratic incompetence when they need medical care. They did not wait to defend America, and America should not make them wait for healthcare.

My bill offers a simple and common-sense fix. HPSP scholarship recipients will be given offers of jobs within 90 days post-graduation. They will not wait. Veterans will not be forgotten. We are going to drain the VA swamp one regulation at a time.

Our bill also requires an annual report to Congress on hire dates and placement rates. Transparency generates performance.

We are not just addressing the issue today. We are ensuring bureaucrats cannot hide and escape tomorrow.

To those who would say 90 days is too aggressive, my response is: How long should a veteran wait? How long should a trained physician sit idle? The current state is intolerable. The status quo has failed, and it is time for genuine reform.

□ 1630

Mr. Speaker, I have seen firsthand what occurs when the systems fail for those on the front lines overseas. We cannot allow failure at home. When I served as an Army intelligence officer overseas, we lived by a simple creed: Mission first, and no Americans left behind.

My bill is an embodiment to that promise. This isn't partisan posturing. This is about doing right by America's warfighters. The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs agreed. They voted for my bill by voice vote without opposition. There was zero dissent. There was complete consensus and stakeholder support. It is now time for the entire House to deliver.

Mr. Speaker, every day of delay is another day a veteran waits for care. It is another day a qualified professional can't serve. It is another day the system fails those who have served and protected us all. It is another day the swamp wins and our heroes lose.

We ask our veterans to wait for many things. Quality healthcare shouldn't be one of them, not in President Trump's America and not on our watch.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support the HPSP Improvement Act. Our veterans have waited long enough. We must deliver on the promise we made to the brave men and women who served our country. It is time to put veterans first.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, once again, I urge my colleagues to vote 'yes' on H.R. 3767, the Health Professionals Scholarship Act of 2025, as amended.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Bost) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3767, 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.

HONORING OUR HEROES ACT OF 2025

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2721) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish and carry out a pilot program to furnish a headstone or burial marker to veterans who died on or before November 1, 1990, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2721

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 “Honoring Our Heroes Act of 2025”.

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY AUTHORITY TO FURNISH HEADSTONES AND BURIAL MARKERS TO CERTAIN VETERANS.

(a) **AUTHORITY.**—During the period of seven years following the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall furnish, pursuant to section 2306 of title 38, United States Code, and without regards to section 8041(b) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-508), an appropriate headstone, burial marker, or medallion for a veteran—

- (1) eligible for burial in a national cemetery;
- (2) who died on or after December 7, 1941; and
- (3) for whose grave the Secretary has not already provided a headstone, burial marker, or medallion.

(b) **WEBSITE.**—During such period, the Secretary shall ensure that the website of the National Cemetery Administration indicates the effect of this Act on eligibility for a headstone, burial marker, or medallion under such section.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF PENSION.

Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “November 30, 2031” and inserting “February 29, 2032”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2721.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2721, as amended. This bill would establish a 7-year pilot program to allow eligible survivors or veteran representatives to request a VA-furnished headstone or marker for veterans buried in private cemeteries, who died during or after World War II.

Under current law, the National Cemetery Administration may only furnish a headstone or marker for graves of eligible veterans who died on or after November 1, 1990. If this veteran and their family have not already received an equivalent benefit, this bill would allow the veteran’s family to honor their military service.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 2721, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2721, the Honoring Our Heroes Act of 2025, as amended, offered by Represent-

ative TIM KENNEDY, who is an outstanding member of the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, most Americans would be shocked to hear this, but service-members who passed away before 1990 are currently ineligible by law to request a government-issued headstone from the National Cemetery Administration.

In the haze of grief after a loved one passes away, families are often unaware of what benefits they may be eligible for. Oftentimes, they make short-term decisions they intend to revisit later but, for varying reasons, they do not.

Unfortunately, for the families of veterans, that sometimes means that they could have applied for a headstone for their loved one, only to find out years later they were arbitrarily cut off from accessing that benefit simply by the passage of time.

I think we can all agree that when a veteran passes away, they deserve the benefits they earned. That includes marking their place in history with a headstone or other marker that pays respect to their service. That should be true, regardless of when that veteran passes away.

Mr. Speaker, that is what the Honoring Our Heroes Act of 2025 seeks to do. It gives late veterans the burial rights they deserve, and it gives families a sense of pride and closure after their loss. We on the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs are continually guided toward equity in the veteran population. When our constituents bring an issue to us that highlights inequity or injustice, it is our duty to correct it.

It is with this change in mind that my esteemed colleague Representative KENNEDY took up the fight and spearheaded this effort on behalf of the families of veterans who, before November 1, 1990, by statute cannot request a headstone from the National Cemetery Administration.

I am thankful to Representative KENNEDY for his dedication to veterans’ families on an issue that has been overlooked for far too long. I am also thankful to the families who highlighted this issue and who testified in support of this legislation.

As we continue to strive for veterans, their families, and survivors to access their earned benefits and as we continue to push commonsense changes that allow more of these deserving people to get what they are owed, we must remember that from military separation through healthcare and in death, they matter.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KENNEDY), my good friend

and author of H.R. 2721. He currently serves on our Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity and our Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, we as a body have an obligation to honor our servicemembers for the sacrifices they have made for our country. This responsibility is always top of mind for me and my colleagues on the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

About a year ago, I discovered that military families in my district faced a painful reality. After their loved one’s passing, they could not honor their service with a headstone issued by the VA. These are families who, often years or even decades after the death of a loved one, came to fully grasp the depth of that veteran’s service and sacrifice to our Nation.

These include families like that of Technical Sergeant Florian J. Fenclau, a World War II veteran, a prisoner of war, a Purple Heart recipient, and proud member of the Greatest Generation.

Under current Federal law, the VA only provides a government-issued headstone for veterans who died after November 1, 1990. This wasn’t always the case. That arbitrary date was put in place as a cost-saving measure to pass legislation that same year. It is just one more item cut on a spreadsheet to make the math work at the expense of our military families.

Our veterans deserve better than this. They are men and women who bravely answered the call to serve. As Members of Congress, we have a moral obligation to fully honor the heroes who fought for this country.

The families left behind are simply asking our government to properly recognize the bravery and dedication of their loved ones. These are Americans who were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to protect the freedoms we all hold dear. The quality of a veteran’s memorial should not be based on when they die but, rather, every memorial must provide dignity, respect, and lasting recognition for all who wear the uniform.

That is why I introduced the Honoring Our Heroes Act. It ensures veterans who passed before 1990 receive the VA-issued headstone they earned and to guarantee that no veteran’s memory is ever forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman Bost and Ranking Member TAKANO for working with me in advancing this common-sense legislation. With their help, we are now that much closer to helping our military families correct the wrongs of the past.

□ 1640

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, in closing, once again, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 2721, the Honoring Our Heroes Act of 2025, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

In closing, once again, I stand in strong support of this legislation, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2721, 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. BOST. 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.

VETERANS READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM INTEGRITY ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3579) to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements to the Veterans Readiness and Employment program of Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3579

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Readiness and Employment Program Integrity Act”.

SEC. 2. APPLICATION REQUIREMENT UNDER VETERANS READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 3106(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “necessary (1) to determine” and inserting “necessary to determine”;

(2) by striking “and (2) in the case” and inserting “and, in the case”;

(3) by inserting “(1)” before “The Secretary”, and

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

“(2) The Secretary may not provide an initial evaluation of a veteran under paragraph (1) before the veteran submits to the Secretary an application containing the substantive work record and educational transcripts of the veteran that the Secretary determines appropriate.”.

SEC. 3. MAXIMUM DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE UNDER VETERANS READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 3117(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), a veteran may not receive assistance under this subsection for more than 365 days.

“(B) A veteran may receive an additional 180 days of such assistance if an individual who provides counseling under this chapter to such veteran certifies that the veteran is actively seeking employment.”.

SEC. 4. REPORTING AND DATA COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS UNDER VETERANS READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§3123. Requirements for data collection and reporting

“(a) DATA COLLECTION.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report regarding the employment of veterans who participate in a vocational rehabilitation program under this chapter. Such information shall include, for each such veteran—

“(1) the regional office responsible for the provision of the program; and

“(2) the annual wages of the veteran before and after the completion of the program.

“(b) PUBLICATION OF WAIT TIMES.—On an annual basis, the Secretary shall make publicly available, on an appropriate website of the Department, the average time between the date on which a veteran requests a vocational rehabilitation program under this chapter and the date on which the veteran first meets with a counselor as part of the veteran’s program.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“3123. Requirements for data collection and reporting.”.

(c) INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF PROGRAM.—

(1) REVIEW REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall seek to enter into a contract, with a non-Department entity that has expertise in vocational rehabilitation, pursuant to which the entity shall conduct a review of rehabilitation programs (as such term is defined in section 3101 of such title) under such chapter.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of such a contract, the entity shall submit to the Secretary a report containing recommendations regarding how to improve and modernize such rehabilitation programs.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3579, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3579 offered by my friend and colleague, Representative CISCOMANI of Arizona. This bill would make needed modernizations to the VA’s Veterans Readiness and Employment program, the VR&E program.

Over the last 2 years, our committee has uncovered disastrous wait times, fraud, waste, and abuse in the VA’s VR&E program. This bill would steer the ship in the right direction by establishing more oversight of the program.

It is the duty of Congress to make sure that veterans who complete this

workforce program are earning more and are in a better spot than they were before entering the program. VR&E currently does not track those results.

At a recent hearing, VA told the committee that 45 percent of veterans who successfully complete the program reenter it later. This does not show that the program is working for veterans. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it shows that the VR&E needs an overhaul. It is time to reform VR&E so that veterans can receive the training they need to find a meaningful career field that is fit for them.

This bill would also implement better practices for transparency on wait times to allow veterans to better plan for their future.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Representative CISCOMANI, for sponsoring this bill to improve job training access for veterans. My committee will continue to seek ways to level the playing field for veterans seeking employment so that every veteran has access to the opportunity they want all the while protecting the taxpayers’ investment in these programs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 3579, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 3579, as amended, the Veterans Readiness and Employment Program Integrity Act.

The VA Veteran Readiness and Employment program, otherwise known as VR&E, is also known as Chapter 31. It is a comprehensive benefits program designed to help veterans with service-connected disabilities find and maintain suitable employment. It offers personalized assistance, including career counseling, vocational training, and educational support to help veterans overcome employment barriers.

The program’s ultimate goal is to empower disabled veterans to achieve independence and a successful career in the civilian workforce.

I take great pride in my work on the Honoring our PACT Act that resulted in hundreds of thousands of veterans finally having their disability recognized, making them eligible for the VR&E program. However, that massive influx of new applicants has brought to light improvements that are needed for the VR&E program.

This legislation seeks to add some good-governance steps to the program, to make sure veterans are aware of how the benefit works upon sign up and ensures that veterans are actively seeking employment as they are prepared to exit the VR&E program.

This legislation also includes data reporting for Congress and veterans so wait times and wage data are public.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the House, and Senate as well, to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from the great State of Arizona (Mr. CISCOMANI).

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 3579, the Veterans Readiness and Employment Program Integrity Act. This bipartisan bill ensures that veterans have the tools and resources they need to successfully transition to civilian life.

This legislation does so by providing much-needed oversight over the VA's Veteran Readiness and Employment program, which offers specific job training and counseling to veterans with a service-connected disability. This bill requires the VA to track employment outcomes and wait times for participants in order for us to know if this program is fulfilling its core mission, and it enables better evaluation of all tracks in the VR&E so that we can do a better job in understanding what is working and also what is not working.

Far too many veterans wait for months just to meet with a program counselor. I have heard this over and over again in my district. Far too many leave programs without confidence that they have the skills to have a stable civilian career. This bill fixes that.

It is not about giveaways, it is about getting return on our investment in veterans, in dignity, in opportunity, in real jobs. It is about ensuring our veterans transition with the resources that they need, not just to survive, but to thrive.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in support of H.R. 3579. Stand behind our veterans not just with words but with this important oversight, with accountability, and especially with action.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK), who serves on our Subcommittee on Health and our Technology Modernization Subcommittee.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to co-lead H.R. 3579 the Veterans Readiness and Employment Program Integrity Act alongside Congressman CISCOMANI.

This bipartisan bill expands economic opportunities for our veterans and brings much-needed transparency for the Veterans Readiness and Employment Program which helps veterans with service-connected disabilities transition to civilian careers.

Serving over 125,000 veterans each year, the VR&E program is critical, especially for veterans in Florida and nationwide, helping them gain the skills and opportunities needed to build successful and dignified lives after service.

To ensure veterans receive the support they deserve, the Department of Veterans Affairs must provide timely and accurate data on program outcomes. Veterans should not have to endure excessive wait times before ac-

cessing their critical services. This requires the VA to report on employment rates, wages, and average wait times, guaranteeing that veterans receive prompt and effective assistance.

These measures will improve program effectiveness and ensure veterans benefit from high quality and timely support.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I encourage the Senate to act quickly.

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

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 3579, as amended, the Veterans Readiness and Employment Program Integrity Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I, once again, encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3579, 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.

□ 1650

RURAL VETERANS' IMPROVED ACCESS TO BENEFITS ACT OF 2025

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3951) to amend the Veterans' Benefits Improvements Act of 1996 and the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 to improve the temporary licensure requirements for contract health care professionals who perform medical disability examinations for the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3951

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 "Rural Veterans' Improved Access to Benefits Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENTS TO TEMPORARY LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTRACT HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS WHO PERFORM MEDICAL DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) EXPANSION.—Section 504 of the Veterans' Benefits Improvements Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-275; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note), as amended by paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of section 2002 of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (Public Law

116-315; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note), is further amended, subject to the sunset in paragraph (4) of such subsection, by striking paragraph (2) of subsection (c) and inserting the following:

"(2) HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL DESCRIBED.—A health care professional described in this paragraph is a person who is eligible for appointment to a position in the Veterans Health Administration covered by section 7402(b) of title 38, United States Code, who—

"(A) has a current and unrestricted license to practice the health care profession of the health care professional;

"(B) is not barred from practicing such health care profession in any State; and

"(C) is performing authorized duties for the Department pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (a)."

(b) DELAYED SUNSET OF AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (4) of subsection (a) of section 2002 of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-315; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended by striking "On the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this Act" and inserting "On September 30, 2031".

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (2) of such subsection is amended by striking "physicians assistants, nurse practitioners, audiologists, and psychologists" and inserting "health care professionals".

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 15 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report regarding the use of the authority under section 504 of the Veterans' Benefits Improvements Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-275; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note), as temporarily amended by section 2002(a)(1) of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-315; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note) and this section. Such report shall include, with respect to the one-year period after the date of the enactment of this Act, the following elements:

(1) The number of examinations conducted pursuant to a contract under such authority.

(2) The cost, timeliness, and legal adequacy of such examinations, disaggregated by—

(A) health care professional; and

(B) contract.

(3) The number of such examinations conducted in each State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States.

(4) The numbers of each kind of health care professionals who conducted such examinations.

(5) The number of examinations that were erroneously conducted by a health care professional—

(A) without such a contract; or

(B) unauthorized to enter into such a contract.

(6) The plan of the Secretary to correct errors in the use of such authority.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3951, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3951, introduced by my colleague Representative CISCOMANI from Arizona.

This bill would extend the license portability authority for contracted medical professionals conducting compensation and pension examinations for veterans until 2031. These exams are a vitally important part of going through the VA benefits process.

Veterans living in rural or underserved areas often need to travel far distances for their exams. Veterans in my district know this hurdle firsthand and the impact it can have on dragging out the timeline for them to receive their disability benefits.

Congress created the authority to expand the net for qualified, contracted medical professionals. By ensuring more contracted medical professionals can perform these exams, veterans would have greater access to their benefits closer to home.

Under current law, license portability only applies to physician assistants, nurse practitioners, audiologists, and psychologists. This bill would expand that authority to include even more providers who are eligible for employment at the VA to perform medical disability examinations. This is a necessary expansion to the VA's exam programs to get even more qualified people serving veterans.

I thank Representative CISCOMANI for his leadership on this bill and his efforts to increase access to disability benefits for our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3951, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3951, the Rural Veterans' Improved Access to Benefits Act of 2025, as amended.

There are few things we on both sides of the aisle agree on completely, and I am happy to report this bill highlights one of them.

Veterans in rural areas deserve the same access to care that someone living near a VA facility in a large city does. Rural populations are particularly vulnerable because of unreasonable travel distances for appointments, especially specialists.

For some veterans, this can be a reason to delay or forgo routine exams or care, later resulting in poorer health outcomes. We hear many stories of veterans who have appointments scheduled hours away, requiring them to secure transportation, which can often be difficult. We have also heard incredibly frustrating stories of these same appointments being canceled or rescheduled at the last minute.

What does that mean for our veterans and their families? It can mean

rescheduling childcare, leave, work, transportation, as well as other appointments they may have grouped together for ease and convenience. It also means that any follow-up appointments begin the cumbersome cycle all over again.

We should not tolerate rural veterans being treated as secondary purely because of their location. They should have the same access to care that other veterans have in more densely populated areas.

The Rural Veterans' Improved Access to Benefits Act attempts to rectify part of this problem by expanding license portability, allowing practitioners to perform exams for veterans across State lines.

At a time when medical professionals in many specializations are particularly difficult to access at the VA, it is vital that we ease access to these practitioners where possible.

This bill mandates a report regarding the number of exams completed through this license portability agreement. This data will surely prove beneficial in highlighting communities with greater needs for care.

We will continue to work to ensure all veterans get access to the care they need, whether it be through legislative levers like this or continued efforts of outreach and advocacy.

I am thankful to all of those who worked on this effort to ensure that no one is left behind. I support this bill and urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. CISCOMANI), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 3951, the Rural Veterans' Improved Access to Benefits Act of 2025.

This bipartisan bill aims to ensure rural veterans have access to quality and timely physician examinations so that they are able to receive the care they are entitled to, regardless of where they live.

This legislation does this by permanently allowing VA providers to perform cross-State disability exams and expanding the pool of providers who can perform medical disability examinations for the VA to include all licensed healthcare professionals.

These changes will help to address the shortage of qualified examiners in rural areas, specifically thereby reducing wait times and increasing the timely release of benefits to our veterans.

I have witnessed firsthand the challenges rural veterans in Arizona's Sixth Congressional District face in getting their medical exams completed in a timely manner.

This bill takes an essential first step toward eliminating these regional healthcare disparities and ensures that all veterans receive the quality care they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues to vote in support of H.R. 3951.

We owe it to our servicemen and women to make this commitment to timely healthcare access.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 3951, the Rural Veterans' Improved Access to Benefits Act of 2025, as amended.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3951, 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.

MODERNIZING ALL VETERANS AND SURVIVORS CLAIMS PROCESSING ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3854) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit a plan to expand the use of certain automation tools in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3854

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 "Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act".

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ANNUAL REPORT ON CAUSES OF DEATH AMONG VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

§ 534. Annual report on causes of death among veterans

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate an annual report that contains data and information on causes of death among veterans.

"(b) ELEMENTS.—Such report shall include—

"(1) for each veteran that died during the period covered by the report an identification of—

"(A) whether such veteran had a service-connected disability rated as total;

"(B) the primary cause of death;

"(C) the secondary cause of death, if applicable; and

"(D) the manner of death;

"(2) for each primary cause of death identified pursuant to paragraph (1), a statement of the total number of veterans that died from such primary cause of death during the period covered by the report; and

"(3) for each manner of death identified pursuant to paragraph (1), a statement of the

total number of veterans that died in such manner during the period covered by the report.

“(c) SUNSET.—This section shall terminate on the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of the Justice for America’s Veterans and Survivors Act of 2025.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 5 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 533 the following new item:

“534. Annual report on causes of death among veterans”.

SEC. 3. PLAN FOR USE OF AUTOMATION TOOLS TO PROCESS CLAIMS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives the plan of the Secretary to make available, to the maximum extent practicable, an automation tool described in subsection (b) to elements of the Department of Veterans Affairs for the purpose of processing claims under laws administered by the Secretary.

(b) AUTOMATION TOOL DESCRIBED.—An automation tool described in this subsection is a technology developed for the Compensation Service of the Veterans Benefits Administration that—

(1) automates the retrieval of the service record or health records of a veteran;

(2) compiles evidence relevant to the determination of a claim for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary;

(3) provides automated decision support relevant to such a determination;

(4) automates information sharing between Federal agencies; and

(5) assists in generating correspondence regarding such a claim.

(c) ANALYSIS.—In developing the plan required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall conduct an analysis of each of the following:

(1) The feasibility and benefits of the use of an automation tool described in subsection (b) by elements of the Department for the purpose of processing claims under laws administered by the Secretary.

(2) Any modification to an existing automation tool that could render such tool usable for such purpose by such an element.

(3) Any requirement of any such element pertaining to such purpose that cannot be addressed by using an automation tool.

(4) The extent to which the technology offices of such elements may need to collaborate with the technology office responsible for developing an automation tool in the course of the development and use of the tool by the element for such purpose.

(5) A timeline for modifying and implementing any automation tool for use by such elements for such purpose.

(d) PRIORITY.—In providing an automation tool described in subsection (b) to elements of the Department pursuant to the plan required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall give priority to the following elements:

(1) The Pension and Fiduciary Service of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(2) The Education Service of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(3) Program offices of the Veterans Benefits Administration, as determined by the Secretary.

(4) The Debt Management Center.

(5) The Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

SEC. 4. OTHER REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO TECHNOLOGY AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) AUTOMATIC NOTICES REGARDING BENEFITS FOR CERTAIN CHILDREN OF VETERANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement policies, processes, and technological capabilities, including in the National Work Queue (or successor system), to ensure that, in the case of any covered situation, a claims processor is made aware of, and assigned to address, such covered situation.

(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) The term “covered situation” means—
(i) any increase in the amount of dependency compensation paid to a beneficiary for a child under the laws administered by the Secretary; and

(ii) any educational assistance paid to the child of a veteran under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(B) The term “child” has the meaning given such term in section 101(4)(A)(iii) of title 38, United States Code.

(b) CORRECT LABELING OF DOCUMENTS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a plan to ensure that documents in the Veterans Benefits Management System (or any successor system) are correctly labeled when such documents are uploaded, including when such documents are labeled using automation tools.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3854, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3854, as amended, sponsored by Representative VALADAO.

This bill would require the VA to review existing claims, automation tools, and submit a plan to Congress on improving, modifying, or creating new tools to support claims processors.

□ 1700

These improvements would, in return, help the VA automatically retrieve veterans’ records, compile evidence, automate Federal Government data sharing, and generate notice letters to veterans. These improvements are common sense and would lead to more efficient and accurate decisions on benefit claims.

This bill would require the VA to detail how it would provide these improvements to other benefit programs in the Veterans Benefits Administration.

This bill also includes Representative EDWARDS’ bill, the Justice for American Veterans and Survivors Act of 2025. Importantly, this provision would require the VA to publish an annual re-

port for the next 5 years on the cause and manner of death among veterans rated 100 percent, our totally disabled veteran community.

The VA currently supports over 506,000 surviving spouses. However, the VA does not track the cause and manner of death among recently deceased totally disabled veterans. Data like this is critical to ensuring that the VA programs for surviving family members meet their needs.

The report would also require the VA to publish the total number of prevalent causes and manners of death among these veterans to better identify trends.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their work to ensure that the VA continues to develop the tools it needs to effectively deliver benefits. I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 3854, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3854, the Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act, as amended.

We are living in an era of remarkable technological advancement. It seems every day that there is a new story about how artificial intelligence is shaping data visualization or modeling. In fact, there are AI models that are helping to detect diseases before traditional detection periods.

As the world around us continues to advance in this way, we cannot handcuff the Department of Veterans Affairs and bar them from utilizing this remarkable technology, but neither can we let them proceed unfettered without considering all the implications of its use.

H.R. 3854 directs the VA to plan for the use of automation tools to aid in retrieving service records, medical evidence, and claims decision support, and to generate correspondence to the veteran. It requires the VA to share this report with Congress so that we may provide the proper oversight of this burgeoning technology.

This bill also provides an analytical structure to assess the feasibility and extent of collaboration required between offices utilizing artificial intelligence.

Lastly, it seeks to modernize and expedite the processing of benefits for certain children of veterans, a uniquely vulnerable community.

Beyond just addressing the use of emerging AI technology at the VA, H.R. 3854, as amended, also seeks to bolster the VA’s data collection. Currently, the VA does not collect cause-of-death data on veterans. This is problematic, and it creates a challenge when assessing trends in veteran deaths.

The collection of cause-of-death data would allow the VA to begin to build datasets that can be tracked and assessed, a promising thing in this era of rapid technological advancement.

It is not a stretch to say that this data can one day be used to anticipate and prevent potentially catastrophic diagnoses in veteran populations with similar markers. I, for one, look forward to a day when we are preventing deaths from occupational exposures instead of merely tracking them. This bill begins to tackle that.

This isn't a magic wand to fix and modernize all of VA, but it is a start. I am confident that with modernization efforts like this legislation, as well as my colleagues' efforts in other areas, we can make a concerted effort to give our veterans the best care and experience they deserve.

There is one very large caveat in this effort to modernize the VA and its systems that I would be remiss not to mention, which is any push to increase the use of automation, artificial intelligence, and big data at the VA must not simultaneously remove the humanity from the system. AI is no substitute for a well-trained workforce, especially one that is as mission-driven and dedicated as the one we have at the VA.

Even as chaos unfolds around them, I know that VA employees are trying hard to continue to deliver for veterans. We should not lose sight of that. Even with the promise of evolving technologies, we know that the human element is still the most important when delivering world-class care and service to veterans. It is what veterans want, and it is what serves them best.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), my good friend.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge support for my bill, the Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act.

Our veterans put their lives on the line to defend this country. When they come home, they shouldn't have to fight another battle just to get the benefits that they deserve.

Unfortunately, outdated systems at the VA are causing unnecessary delays that create real hardships for both veterans and their families.

To speed up disability claims, the VA has used automation tools, like AI, to draft letters and gather documents. That same technology has not been applied to other types of claims, such as pensions or survivor benefits. This has led to a growing backlog and, in some cases, missed benefits altogether.

My bill takes steps to fix this. It requires the VA to expand the use of automation tools, ensure that documents are properly labeled in the system, and improve coordination between offices. It also directs the VA to use the tools for pensions and survivors' benefits, so families aren't left behind.

By improving coordination across the VA and other Federal agencies, we can reduce overpayments and prevent families from being hit with unexpected debt notices.

This is a commonsense bill that would help to ensure that our veterans and survivors receive the benefits that they deserve in a timely and efficient manner.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I also thank Chairman BOST and his staff at the Committee on Veterans' Affairs for their work on this very important issue.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MORRISON), my good friend who serves on our Health Subcommittee and our Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee.

Ms. MORRISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3854, the Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act.

The bill before us includes the provisions of the Justice for America's Veterans and Survivors Act, which I co-led with the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS). Our bipartisan bill will improve the VA's data collection efforts on the prevailing causes of death among veterans.

As a physician myself, I can tell you firsthand that thorough and accurate data is critical to delivering the best possible care for patients. I believe it is incumbent upon us as lawmakers to take the same approach with policy-making, especially when it comes to crafting legislation to help care for our veterans.

The information provided under this report will help us to better understand the most serious threats facing our veterans, whether it be suicide, toxic exposure, or other life-threatening conditions.

This reporting will also include important information on veterans with service-connected disability, which will help to ensure that surviving family members receive the benefits that they are entitled to in a timely fashion.

This commonsense legislation will provide the information that we need to ensure that our veterans are getting the best possible care, which is a goal that we all share.

Mr. Speaker, I will end by thanking the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS) for his partnership and the chair and ranking member for their support. I also thank the bill's sponsor, the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO).

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this legislation.

□ 1710

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. VALADAO from California for his leadership on Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act. This important legislation streamlines the VA claims process, helping veterans and their families receive the benefits that they have earned and deserve.

I am especially grateful to Mr. VALADAO for his collaboration in including my bill, the Justice for America's Veterans and Survivors Act, in this package.

My legislation improves how the Department of Veterans Affairs collects and reports data on the causes of death among veterans with a particular emphasis on accurately identifying when suicide is a primary or contributing factor.

The mental health crisis among America's veterans has reached an alarming level. Suicide is now the second leading cause of death for veterans under the age of 45.

Despite ongoing efforts, the Department of Veterans Affairs struggles to accurately track and report veteran suicides. This not only hinders the development of effective policies but deprives survivors and families of the support that they have earned and deserve.

Currently, the VA relies on county-level reporting that fails to identify veteran status in nearly one in five cases. Additionally, many self-harm deaths such as drug overdoses are excluded from suicide data.

The Justice for America's Veterans and Survivors Act fixes that issue by requiring the VA to publish an annual report on causes of death among veterans and it clarifies when suicide is a primary or a secondary cause, including in cases of self-harm related deaths.

Proper cause-of-death reporting ensures families have access to the benefits and resources that they are entitled to, and understanding the full scope of the veteran suicide crisis is essential to creating effective policies to save lives.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on this legislation.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues, once again, to vote "yes" on H.R. 3854, Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act, as amended.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3854, 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.

EDITH NOURSE ROGERS STEM SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2034) to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the requirements of the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2034

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 “Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act”.

SEC. 2. MODIFICATIONS TO EDITH NOURSE ROGERS STEM SCHOLARSHIP.

Section 3320 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking paragraph (2);

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively; and

(C) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated, in subparagraph (A)(ii)—

(i) by striking “60” and inserting “45”; and

(ii) by striking “90” and inserting “67.5”;

(2) in subsection (c)(1)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as subparagraphs (C) and (D), respectively; and

(B) by inserting before subparagraph (C), as so redesignated, the following new subparagraph:

“(A) Individuals who have used the most number of months of the educational assistance to which they are entitled under this chapter.

“(B) Individuals who are using their entitlement under this chapter to pursue a program of post-secondary education and who have declared a major in a field referred to in subsection (b)(3)(A)(i).”; and

(3) in subsection (d), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) An individual who receives a benefit under this section may only use such benefit after the individual has used all of the educational assistance to which the individual is entitled under this chapter.”.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF PENSION.

Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “November 30, 2031” and inserting “March 31, 2033”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2034, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2034, as amended, offered by my colleague, Representative NIKKI BUDZINSKI of Illinois.

This bill would make needed improvements to the Edith Nourse Rogers

STEM Scholarship education benefits program.

Currently, the program is underused because of bureaucratic red tape that limits who is eligible for the scholarship. This mistake made by previous Congresses has prevented the STEM scholarship from helping those who are most in need.

While I believe more information is necessary to fully improve the program, this bill is a step in the right direction. I thank our colleague, NIKKI BUDZINSKI, for her support of this legislation. Additionally, I thank my friend and fellow Representative, ABRAHAM HAMADEH of Arizona, for cosponsoring this legislation.

Representative HAMADEH’s advocacy on this bill has been pivotal to getting it on the House floor today to cut through the red tape and improve education benefit access.

Finally, I thank The American Legion and Paralyzed Veterans of America for their support of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 2034, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 2034, the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act, as amended.

Edith Nourse Rogers was a trailblazer for veteran benefits, and the program we are amending today that bears her name was created to support the next generation of veteran trailblazers. She was instrumental in the creation of the original GI Bill and advocated for a greater role for women in the Armed Forces.

Congress created the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship in 2017 as part of the Forever GI Bill. However, since creation, we have learned of cases where improvements to the program would encourage more veterans to pursue dual degrees, degrees in STEM education, and degrees in healthcare.

Representative BUDZINSKI’s legislation would improve the program to better fit student veteran needs by making two fundamental changes to the program to increase access.

First, the legislation allows veterans to apply for the scholarship while they are still finishing their undergraduate degrees. That means students won’t have to delay their education for no reason or hit an arbitrary completed credit hour requirement if they are accepted into the program. Veterans can seamlessly progress to their next degree.

Second, the legislation removes the requirement that a student exhaust all credit hours on their GI Bill benefits, which makes enrollment easier for STEM-seeking students.

The scholarship is a wonderful tool, but these requirements, originally well-intended, have made the scholarship onerous to use and limited enrollment far below projections.

H.R. 2034 fixes those issues and clears the way for more trailblazers like Congresswoman Edith Nourse. I thank Representative BUDZINSKI for introducing this important bill, and I urge my colleagues in the House and the Senate, as well, to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. BUDZINSKI), my good friend and the author of the bill, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization.

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act.

With the start of the new school year, the time is now to pass this bipartisan legislation that will help student veterans who are training for high-demand STEM fields.

I thank my colleague on the Veterans’ Affairs Committee, Congressman HAMADEH, for his collaboration and partnership on this bill. I also thank our veterans for their service and sacrifice.

Madam Speaker, this bill removes barriers for student veterans seeking a STEM education by modifying eligibility requirements for the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship.

This scholarship has proven crucial to getting more veterans involved in STEM fields, but feedback from veterans in a 2022 GAO report has shown that current eligibility requirements are barriers for many of our student veterans.

The Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act would address these barriers by lowering the minimum number of credit hours required. It would also allow student veterans to apply for the scholarship before their post-9/11 GI Bill benefits run out.

This would allow for a smooth transition of funding for their education. They have so greatly served us. It is time for us to serve them.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

□ 1720

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I have no more speakers at this time. I am ready to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 2034, the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, once again I encourage all Members to support this legislation. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2034, 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.

FALLEN SERVICEMEMBERS RELIGIOUS HERITAGE RESTORATION ACT

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2701) to direct the American Battle Monuments Commission to establish a program to identify American-Jewish servicemembers buried in United States military cemeteries overseas under markers that incorrectly represent their religion and heritage, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2701

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 “Fallen Servicemembers Religious Heritage Restoration Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) An estimated 900 American-Jewish servicemembers of the Armed Forces, killed in World War I and World War II and buried overseas in United States military cemeteries were, for various reasons, mistakenly buried under Latin Crosses. In most instances, those mistakes were made inadvertently.

(2) In 2022, more than 2,000,000 people visited the United States World War I and World War II cemeteries in foreign countries.

(3) American-Jewish servicemembers played a vital role in the Allied victories in World War I and World War II.

(4) American-Jewish servicemembers who fought and died for the United States must have their heritage properly recognized and honored.

(5) The United States Government has a solemn responsibility to ensure that every American servicemember killed in action and buried overseas is properly honored.

(6) The work of properly identifying American-Jewish servicemembers buried overseas is vital and integral to the responsibility of the American Battle Monuments Commission to ensure that past mistakes in honoring those servicemembers who died in the line of duty are corrected.

SEC. 3. FALLEN SERVICEMEMBERS RELIGIOUS HERITAGE RESTORATION PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The American Battle Monuments Commission shall establish a program to identify covered members and to contact survivors and descendants of such covered members. Such program shall be known as the “Fallen Servicemembers Religious Heritage Restoration Program”.

(b) DURATION.—The Commission shall carry out the Fallen Servicemembers Religious Heritage Restoration Program during the first five fiscal years that begin after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) CONTRACTS.—

(1) AUTHORITY.—During each fiscal year described in subsection (b), the Commission shall seek to enter into a contract with a nonprofit organization under which such nonprofit organization shall carry out the purpose described in subsection (a).

(2) TERM; AMOUNT.—Each contract under this subsection shall be for one year and in the amount of \$500,000 to the nonprofit organization.

(3) PRIORITY.—In awarding a contract under this subsection, the Commission shall give priority to a nonprofit organization that has demonstrated capability and expertise in carrying out the purpose described in subsection (a).

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “covered member” means a deceased member of the Armed Forces who was Jewish and buried—

(A) in a United States military cemetery located outside the United States; and

(B) under a marker that indicates such member was not Jewish.

(2) The term “nonprofit organization” means an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF PENSION.

Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “November 30, 2031” and inserting “January 31, 2032”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2701.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2701, as amended, offered by Representative WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

This bill would propel VA to identify and correct the gravestones of fallen American-Jewish servicemembers who were killed in World War I and World War II.

An estimated 900 American-Jewish servicemembers were mistakenly buried under a Latin cross headstone at overseas U.S. veterans cemeteries. This bill would seek to right this wrong by creating the Fallen Servicemembers Religious Heritage Restoration Program. It would direct the ABMC, which maintains our cemeteries overseas, to contract with nonprofit organizations to identify these servicemembers and correct this to properly honor them.

Since the Revolutionary War, Jewish Americans have fought to defend our Nation's freedoms. Madam Speaker, it should go without saying that they deserve to be honored properly with the dignity that they have earned.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, H.R. 2701, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2701, the Fallen Servicemembers

Religious Heritage Restoration Act, as amended. I thank my good friend and colleague Representative DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ for introducing this bill.

Madam Speaker, oftentimes veterans who were buried overseas during World Wars I and II were put to rest on foreign soil without the full picture of who they were as people. In life, these servicemen and -women showed courage, honor, respect, dignity, and sacrifice. In death, some have been unfortunately misrepresented.

Not because of malice, but more often circumstances of time, space, and uncertainty, roughly 900 American-Jewish servicemembers were buried under a Latin cross that does not accurately reflect their religious heritage.

The Fallen Servicemembers Religious Heritage Restoration Act seeks to correct this oversight. It formalizes a program with the American Battle Monuments Commission to identify and establish contact with descendants of those fallen servicemembers who were mistakenly buried under the Latin cross and works in partnership with a nonprofit organization to obtain the grave marker that accurately represents their religious heritage and replace the inaccurate headstone.

Acts like this provide a structure to identify our veterans not merely as markers in cemeteries, but as whole humans, with their belief in something greater than even their service—their creator.

I am thankful to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) for championing this effort and for ensuring we are accurately capturing the history and dignity of those who served overseas in some of our most trying conflicts.

Far too often, we think of Arlington National Cemetery or maybe your local veterans cemetery and don't even realize that we have servicemembers buried overseas in plots around the world.

The work of the American Battle Monuments Commission is broad, reaching across 26 permanent American military cemeteries, over 30 memorials, monuments, and markers, in 17 different countries. I encourage all those who have the opportunity to do so to visit one of these cemeteries.

If you find yourself overseas, do an internet search and see if you can stop by an ABMC location. You will be awed and humbled by the emotional sight of seeing the true cost of freedom and sacrifice. I can assure you, you will find a passionate group of caretakers, educators, historians, and advocates who take such care to keep these lands sacred.

It is people like this who continually work to ensure those buried far from home are done so in dignity and with their true heritage represented. Their efforts and the efforts of those who have worked so hard to bring this program and legislation to this point assure that we, as a nation, with our

overseas partners, will work continuously for accurate representation and history for our veteran community.

Madam Speaker, I support this legislation and urge my colleagues to do the same, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), my very good friend and author of H.R. 2701. She serves as ranking member on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member for his indulgence in yielding time to speak in support of my bill, the Fallen Servicemembers Religious Heritage Restoration Act. I thank Chairman Bost for advancing this legislation through his committee and for his indulgence in reordering its consideration on the floor so that I could make it here to actually speak on the bill. I very much appreciate it.

My bill, as you have heard, is straightforward and bipartisan. It rights a wrong that occurred in some cases by accident where a Jewish servicemember was laid to rest under a headstone misidentifying their religion.

It ensures the United States properly honors the religion and heritage of the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation. It does so by creating a program with the American Battle Monuments Commission to identify American-Jewish servicemembers buried in U.S. military cemeteries in ABMC purview under headstones that incorrectly represent their religion and heritage.

World War I and World War II were brutal and devastating, leading to challenges of ensuring every fallen American servicemember received the honor and respect of a proper burial.

From World War II alone, it is estimated that 600 American-Jewish servicemembers killed in action remain improperly buried under Latin crosses rather than Stars of David. While some of these improper burials were due to clerical errors, we have heard many stories of Jewish war heroes not wanting to display their faith on their dog tags while fighting against the anti-Semitic and genocidal Nazi regime.

Sadly, this issue is not limited to World War II.

This past spring, I had the honor of participating in a ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery to properly honor two World War I fallen American-Jewish servicemembers, Private David Moser and Private First Class Adolph Hanf. Both were laid to rest for over 100 years under a headstone etched with a Latin cross.

In a moving ceremony sponsored by Private Moser's family, these American heroes' headstones were replaced,

properly honoring their heritage after all these years. It was so moving to honor the tremendous sacrifices Jewish Americans paid in service to our Nation, fighting for the same rights and freedoms every American cherishes.

At a moment when anti-Semitism is at record highs, this moment of healing was incredibly special. Knowing that there are hundreds of additional fallen Jewish servicemembers who deserve the same recognition as Private Moser and Private First Class Hanf makes this bill all the more important.

□ 1730

I have been honored by all the wide-ranging organizational support for the bill and for my colleagues who have partnered with me on this mission.

Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman MAX MILLER for being my co-lead and Senators MORAN and ROSEN for championing this bill in the Senate.

As the ranking member of Appropriations' Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, which provides funding for the ABMC, I am acutely aware that the programs that Congress authorizes require funding to ensure proper implementation.

In both fiscal year 2026 House and Senate MILCON-VA appropriations bills, we secured \$500,000 to carry out this mission with ABMC, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that it stays in the bill as we continue consideration during conference negotiations.

It is critical that Jewish Americans who served our Nation in uniform and paid the ultimate price are able to be laid to rest honoring their religious heritage. Unfortunately, due to the fog of war, hundreds of Jewish servicemembers were denied that last opportunity.

This bill is an important step to allow for the research necessary to correct these errors and ensure there are resources for that work. This will make it possible for these brave Jewish servicemembers' descendants to know that their loved one's military service, life, and religious heritage are properly honored.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 2701 so we can properly honor our fallen Jewish-American servicemembers.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I have no more speakers. I am ready to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 2701, the Fallen Servicemembers Religious Heritage Restoration Act, as amended.

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

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST)

that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2701, 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.

DELIVERING DIGITALLY TO OUR VETERANS ACT OF 2025

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3481) to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for electronic communication relating to educational assistance benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3481

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 "Delivering Digitally to Our Veterans Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENT TO CERTAIN OUTREACH UNDER SOLID START PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 6320(b) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(A) by striking "calling" and inserting "communicating with"; and
(B) by inserting "through the use of tailored lines of communication, including mailings, text messaging, virtual chatting, and other electronic forms of messaging" after "Armed Forces"; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking "tailored mailings" and inserting "tailored lines of communication, including mailings, text messaging, virtual chatting, and other electronic forms of messaging".

SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS USE OF TAILORED LINES OF COMMUNICATION FOR CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE BENEFITS.

Section 3680 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(i)(1) The Secretary shall provide a mechanism by which an eligible veteran or eligible person may use tailored lines of communication to send and receive correspondence with the Department of Veterans related to entitlement to and use of educational assistance benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary. The Secretary shall ensure that an eligible veteran or eligible person is provided with an opportunity to opt into sending and receiving such correspondence using such lines of communication rather than by mail.

"(2) The Secretary shall provide to eligible veterans and eligible persons who are enrolled in a course or program of education or training notice of the opportunity to opt in to sending and receiving correspondence using tailored lines of communication pursuant to paragraph (1).

"(3) In this subsection, the term 'tailored lines of communication' includes mailings, text messaging, virtual chatting, and other electronic forms of messaging."

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF PENSION.

Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "November 30, 2031" and inserting "January 31, 2033".

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3481, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3481, as amended, offered by my friend and colleague, Representative TOM BARRETT from Michigan.

This bill would allow veterans to opt in to receive messages digitally regarding the GI Bill education benefit.

Under current law, veterans in education programs can only receive time-sensitive information from VA through the mail. The outdated practice forces veterans to wait weeks for information they could receive in minutes through a text message.

Further, this bill would modernize VA's Solid Start program by authorizing it to communicate with veterans via text message. Right now, VA is only able to reach out to veterans in Solid Start by calling them. While the older generation of veterans pick up the phone, the VA Solid Start program has seen a concerning drop-off among younger veterans. This bill would bridge the gap in communication.

Madam Speaker, I thank Representative BARRETT for championing this bill and for finding solutions in the technology space to ensure student veterans and transitioning servicemembers are receiving up-to-date and timely information.

Madam Speaker, this bill is in lock-step with the Republican majority's efforts to properly propel VA to meet veterans where they are.

Madam Speaker, I also thank Representative VAN ORDEN for his continued efforts to make necessary improvements to the Transition Assistance Program, or the TAP program.

Under my leadership, my committee will continue to honor its commitment to all veterans, ensuring the VA is working for our veterans.

Madam Speaker, I also give special thanks to The American Legion, the PVA, and the VFW for their support.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 3481, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 3481, the Delivering Digitally to Our Veterans Act of 2025, as amended.

Veterans should not have to fight to get information about their earned GI Bill benefits, and this legislation looks to ease access to information from the VA to veterans by allowing the Department of Veterans Affairs to do outreach using digital messaging, such as text messages, direct messages, and virtual chat, in addition to direct mail.

VA is already doing much of this, but H.R. 3481, as amended, looks to codify these efforts into law to ensure they are available to veterans in the future.

H.R. 3481, as amended, also includes the text of H.R. 3386, the Streamlining the Solid Start Communications Act. Then-Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin and Senator HASSAN permanently authorized the Solid Start program, which has been a critical outreach to newly separated veterans. Solid Start allows VA to stay connected with veterans as they navigate their transition to civilian life.

H.R. 3481, as amended, expands VA Solid Start outreach efforts to include the same texts and digital options included in the underlying text.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the House, and the Senate, as well, to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BARRETT), who is the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. BARRETT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3481, the Delivering Digitally to Our Veterans Act.

This important legislation is a bipartisan effort to finally bring the VA into the 21st century by changing the way veterans are notified about their benefits.

Right now, under current statute, veterans across America are left digging through the mail, often intermixed with junk mail and other notices that they may receive, just to find important updates from the VA, which often leads to things getting lost and delays in their benefits.

In fact, it was not that long ago when I was in college and required to manually call in to a hotline for the VA every month to notify them that I was still a student enrolled in courses to receive my GI Bill benefits.

H.R. 3481 fixes these issues by authorizing the VA to send GI Bill and Solid Start updates to veterans digitally through their devices that so many of us carry around every single day.

This is an opt-in program that doesn't obligate any veteran to do this, but it is an easy and effective solution that will help veterans take advantage of the benefits they need when transitioning back into their communities after service.

As the chairman said, this is also supported by The American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Paralyzed Veterans of America because they understand the importance of what we are trying to do in this legislation.

By updating the way the VA communicates, we are guaranteeing veterans receive convenient and timely updates wherever they are, on their computer, phone, or tablet. Like so many students, they may live remotely from their home address, which would prevent them from receiving these updates.

It will also reduce postage costs, allowing the VA to spend money in ways that better serve our Nation's heroes. It is a win-win overall.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues, Mr. VAN ORDEN and Mr. TRAN, for their help in introducing this bill as we continue to work to improve the lives of veterans everywhere.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

□ 1740

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 3481, the Delivering Digitally to Our Veterans Act, as amended.

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

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3481, 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. BOST. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

VA HOSPITAL INVENTORY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3494) to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out an information technology system and prioritize certain requirements to manage supply chains for medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3494

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 "VA Hospital Inventory Management System Authorization Act".

SEC. 2. MANAGEMENT OF SUPPLY CHAINS FOR MEDICAL FACILITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs is authorized to—

(1) purchase or develop for the Veterans Health Administration a cloud-based information technology system for the management of inventory, including expendable and nonexpendable items; and

(2) implement such system.

(b) PILOT.—If the Secretary purchases or develops a system under subsection (a), the Secretary shall carry out a pilot program at one Veterans Health Administration facility before implementing the system throughout the Veterans Health Administration. The pilot program shall be designed to determine whether the functions of the system are satisfactory.

(c) DEADLINE.—If the Secretary purchases or develops a system under subsection (a), the Secretary shall complete the implementation of the system by not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may not exercise the authority under subsection (a) or subsection (b) until the date on which the Secretary submits to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report that includes—

(1) a comprehensive supply chain strategy to guide enterprise-wide implementation, as recommended in the report of the Comptroller General of the United States titled “VA Acquisition Management: Comprehensive Supply Chain Management Strategy Key to Address Existing Challenges” (GAO-21-445T; published March 24, 2021), which includes success metrics, a plan for data standardization, and staffing models;

(2) a cost estimate and implementation schedule for the supply chain modernization program of the Department;

(3) a comprehensive staffing assessment of the supply chain and information technology modernization workforces of the Department that includes—

(A) monthly staffing gains and losses since October 1, 2022;

(B) the current staffing level of each such workforce as of the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(C) an estimate of future staffing requirements for the implementation of the supply chain modernization program, disaggregated by each such workforce; and

(4) an independent assessment of the review carried out by the Secretary with respect to failures of the supply chain modernization program of the Department.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF PENSION.

Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “November 30, 2031” and inserting “December 31, 2032”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3494, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3494, as amended, offered by Representative KIGGANS. This bill would ensure VA finally has a reliable system to track hospital supplies and equipment.

For too long, an unreliable system has wasted taxpayer dollars and left doctors and nurses searching for basic tools they need to care for our veterans. That kind of mismanagement is unacceptable. Veterans should never face delays in treatment because a hospital can't find the supplies and equipment it needs.

A modern supply chain means stronger care for our veterans, smarter spending for taxpayers, and greater accountability at the VA. It means no excuses, no wasted dollars, and no veterans left waiting because the system failed them. That is exactly what this bill delivers for our Nation's heroes.

I thank Representative KIGGANS for her continued leadership on the committee and her tireless commitment to solving this problem at the VA. I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3494, as amended.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in cautious—I emphasize cautious—support for H.R. 3494, the VA Hospital Inventory Management System Authorization Act, as amended.

Throughout my time on this committee, I have seen the importance and necessity of an accessible and efficient supply chain system. Without these tools, hospitals remain ill-equipped to handle demand.

This became painfully evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when VA facilities were forced to use Excel spreadsheets to report PPE inventory up to the central office.

VA patients and providers deserve a modernized supply chain, and it has yet to be proven that VA has the capacity to provide this solution. I emphasize this has occurred, regardless of which party was in charge of the Department.

After a canceled procurement effort last year, VA has told us that it plans to restart its supply chain modernization effort for a fifth time. As far as I can tell, they have not done much of the work needed to avoid making the same expensive mistakes again.

Representative KIGGANS' bill in its introduced form would have authorized tens of millions of dollars to VA for a pilot on a program VA does not even yet have a plan for. That is millions of dollars to the Department simply with the hope that VA was ready to get it right this time.

However, I am glad my Republican colleagues chose to incorporate critical accountability measures initially proposed by my colleague, Representative NIKKI BUDZINSKI, for consideration on the floor today after these measures

were voted down on party lines in our most recent committee markup.

With the help of committee Democrats, this bill will now ensure that the Department has critical measures in place before it embarks on implementing the untested and unproven pilot program this bill authorizes.

Representative BUDZINSKI's input requires that VA develop a comprehensive strategy for its supply chain program, a cost estimate and implementation schedule, reports on VA's internal staffing levels after support workforces were heavily depleted by the Deferred Resignation Program and other attrition, and an assessment of its recent failures in this modernization effort.

These updates represent just the most basic levels of oversight and planning that VA should have done once it decided to restart this modernization effort. I am glad my Republican colleagues are joining us in pushing for the Department to conduct these necessary assessments and plans before overhauling such an important program as supply chain management.

I also applaud Representative BUDZINSKI for inserting these commonsense checks into this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. KIGGANS), the sponsor of this bill.

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the VA Hospital Inventory Management System Authorization Act.

As a Navy veteran, a nurse practitioner, and the proud Representative of a district that is home to more than 78,000 veterans, I know how essential it is to ensure our veteran health system works efficiently and effectively.

Unfortunately, outdated systems and fragmented logistics have created real obstacles within the VA. These failures aren't just technical. They are personal. They affect real people and real families.

Over the past several years, millions of dollars in medical equipment have gone missing from VA facilities across the country. These are not isolated incidents. They are symptoms of a broader issue, one where a lack of modern infrastructure has led to waste, delay, and avoidable gaps in care.

That is why I introduced this bipartisan and commonsense approach to improving how the VA manages medical supplies. This bill authorizes the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to develop or acquire a cloud-based inventory management system to help ensure VA clinicians always have the right tools at the right time to provide high-quality care.

This system will offer better tracking, better forecasting, and better accountability. We are not reinventing the wheel. We are simply asking the VA to adopt the same kinds of tools

and best practices that are already being used in the private sector and to do so in a way that is transparent, results-driven, and veteran-focused.

The benefits are clear. A modern inventory management system will reduce waste, prevent delays in care, and ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent efficiently. Most importantly, it will help restore trust in a system that too often leaves veterans feeling frustrated and forgotten.

Madam Speaker, I respectfully urge my colleagues to support this bill and join me in making a practical, bipartisan improvement to the care our veterans receive.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in voting “yes” on H.R. 3494, the VA Hospital Inventory Management System Act, as amended.

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

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3494, 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.

□ 1750

FOCUSED ASSISTANCE AND SKILLS TRAINING FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION SUCCESS ACT

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4446) to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the conditions under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is required to redevelop the individualized vocational rehabilitation plan for a veteran, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4446

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 “Focused Assistance and Skills Training for Veterans’ Employment and Transition Success Act” or the “FAST VETS Act”.

SEC. 2. CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SHALL REDEVELOP INDIVIDUALIZED VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PLAN.

Section 3107 of title 38, United States Code, is amended in subsection (b)—

(1) by striking “The Secretary shall review” and inserting “(1) The Secretary shall review”;

(2) by striking the second sentence; and

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

“(2) On the basis of such review, the Secretary shall—

“(A) redevelop such plan with such veteran if the Secretary determines the achievement of the long-range rehabilitation goals for such veteran is—

“(i) no longer feasible due to changes in the employment handicap of the veteran; and

“(ii) likelier under a different plan formulated under subsection (a); or

“(B) disapprove redevelopment of such plan if the Secretary determines such redevelopment is not appropriate.”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4446.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4446 offered by my colleague, Representative MAXINE DEXTER, from Oregon.

H.R. 4446 would allow a veteran who has changed in their disability rating to apply for changes in their Veterans Readiness and Employment, or the VR&E plan, instead of being forced to complete their current rehabilitation plan first.

This bill is a simple fix that would remove the outdated practice that requires disabled veterans to complete their current plan before switching to a plan that may better fit the changes in their disability.

During the Biden Administration, VA damaged their relationship with veterans in the VR&E program. Under President Trump’s Secretary Collins’ leadership, VA is rebuilding that trust and is working to fix the program.

This Congress, the Republican majority has worked hard to improve VR&E by modernizing the program, increasing transparency, and introducing accountability to both the VA and the veterans. While this bill is a step in the right direction, I hope my colleagues recognize that there is much more work to be done to get VA to work for the veterans first.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 4446, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 4446, the Focused Assistance and Skills Training for Veterans’ Employment and Transition Success, or FAST VETS Act. Introduced by Veterans’ Affairs Committee member Representative DEXTER, the

VA Veterans Readiness and Employment, or VR&E program, is perhaps the greatest resource disabled veterans have to seek a new career path, but veterans are dealing with historic wait times due to program popularity and expanded eligibility under the PACT Act.

I respectfully disagree with how the chairman has framed the VR&E program and its shortcomings, but let me just proceed to the virtues of this bill.

The program is incredibly important for disabled veterans because it provides a comprehensive, individualized pathway to overcome employment barriers caused by service-connected disabilities, but with wait times weeks, or even months in some areas of the country, veterans risk missing out on the program’s benefits.

Representative DEXTER’s bill would make it easier for veterans to find employment while in the program and to graduate faster from the program, freeing up counselors at VA to assist the next class of disabled veterans seeking a new career.

One of the primary goals of the PACT Act was to recognize the sacrifice of so many more veterans who were injured during their time serving our Nation and to make them eligible for many of the programs offered to help them find meaningful employment such as VR&E. Now the VR&E program must keep pace with this new influx of veterans and ensure that it is meeting their needs.

I thank Representative DEXTER for her work on this bill, and I know she is already at work on additional solutions for the program, such as measures to maintain and support the staff at VA tasked with carrying out the program.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the House and Senate as well to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. DEXTER), who is the author of H.R. 4446 and who serves on our Health Subcommittee and our Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee.

Ms. DEXTER. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their words of support today for the FAST VETS Act.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak in strong support of the FAST VETS Act. Focused Assistance and Skills Training for Veterans’ Employment and Transition Success, or FAST VETS Act.

I am grateful to Representatives MESSMER, McGARVEY, and VAN ORDEN for joining me in this bipartisan effort to better serve our Nation’s veterans.

Like many physicians, I trained at the VA where the sign on the door said: The price of freedom is visible here. Our veterans gave everything for this country. Our promise in return is that they will not just get by in civilian life, they will thrive.

Congress must ensure employment readiness programs truly work for veterans, and that is exactly what the

FAST VETS Act does. I am heartened that my first bill to come to the floor of the House advances our commitment to those who served.

The FAST VETS Act is about delivering on our promise to those who have served. Veterans who live with service-connected disabilities deserve every opportunity to succeed in civilian life. That includes access to the Veterans Readiness and Employment, VR&E, program, which provides job training, education, employment accommodations, and the resources to build a meaningful career. However, too often, that support comes too late. In Portland, it currently takes more than 65 days for a veteran to be connected with a vocational rehabilitation counselor. That is at least 2 months of missed income, missed classes, and missed opportunity. That is unacceptable.

The FAST VETS Act is a critical first step to addressing the backlog. It establishes clearer standards and prioritizes outcome-focused planning to support more veterans successfully and efficiently moving through the program and into the workforce.

Ensuring every veteran gets the support they deserve helps prevent housing instability, reduces food insecurity, and strengthens mental health. We owe it to them to act with urgency and purpose.

I am committed to continuing this work until every veteran has a clear, supported path to meaningful and gainful employment. The FAST VETS Act moves us closer to that goal, and I am proud to have led this effort.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote “yes” on this bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my good friend from the State of Oregon on what will become the passage of her first bill.

Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers. In closing, I ask my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 4446, the FAST VETS Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. In closing, Madam Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support the legislation. I want to congratulate the gentlewoman for passing her first piece of legislation in the House, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Bost) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4446.

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.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 58 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

RELATING TO A NATIONAL EMERGENCY BY THE PRESIDENT ON JULY 30, 2025

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Meeks of New York moves that the Committee on Foreign Affairs be discharged from further consideration of House Joint Resolution 117.

MOTION TO TABLE OFFERED BY MR. MAST

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Mast of Florida moves to table the motion to discharge.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to table.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to table will be followed by a 5-minute vote on the motion to suspend the rules with respect to H.R. 3400.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 200, nays 198, not voting 34, as follows:

[Roll No. 265]

YEAS—200

Aderholt	Crane	Gonzales, Tony	Frankel, Lois
Alford	Crank	Gooden	Friedman
Allen	Crawford	Gosar	Frost
Amodei (NV)	Crenshaw	Greene (GA)	Garamendi
Arrington	Davidson	Griffith	McClintock
Babin	De La Cruz	Grothman	McCormick
Baird	DesJarlais	Guest	McDowell
Balderson	Diaz-Balart	Guthrie	McGuire
Barrett	Donalds	Hageman	Miller (IL)
Baumgartner	Downing	Hamadeh (AZ)	Miller (OH)
Bean (FL)	Edwards	Haridopolos	Miller (WV)
Begich	Ellzey	Harrigan	Mills
Bentz	Emmer	Harris (MD)	Moran
Bergman	Estes	Harris (NC)	Norman
Bice	Evans (CO)	Harshbarger	Ong
Biggs (AZ)	Ezell	Hern (OK)	Ortiz
Biggs (SC)	Fallon	Higgins (LA)	Palmer
Bilirakis	Fedorchak	Hill (AR)	Patterson
Boebert	Feenstra	Hinson	Perry
Bost	Fine	Houchin	Pfleuger
Brecheen	Finstad	Hudson	Reschenthaler
Bresnahan	Fischbach	Huijzenaga	Rogers (AL)
Buchanan	Fitzgerald	Hunt	Rogers (KY)
Burchett	Fitzpatrick	Hurd (CO)	Rosen
Burlison	Fleischmann	Issa	Ryan
Calvert	Flood	Jack	Schiff
Cammack	Fong	Johnson (LA)	Shuster
Carey	Foxx	Jordan	Smith (NE)
Carter (TX)	Franklin, Scott	Joyce (OH)	Smith (NJ)
Ciscomani	Fry	Joyce (PA)	Smucker
Cline	Fulcher	Kean	Stauber
Cloud	Garbarino	Kelly (MS)	Stefanik
Clyde	Gill (TX)	Kelly (PA)	Steube
Cole	Gimenez	Kennedy (UT)	Stutzman
Comer	Goldman (TX)	Kiggans (VA)	Tenney
			Thompson (PA)
			Tiffany
			Timmons
			Turner (OH)
			Valadao
			Van Drew
			Van Duyne
			Van Orden
			Wagner
			Walberg
			Weber (TX)
			Webster (FL)
			Westerman
			Wied
			Williams (TX)
			Wilson (SC)
			Wittman
			Womack
			Yakym
			Zinke

NAYS—198

Adams	Frankel, Lois	Nadler
Aguilar	Friedman	Neguse
Amo	Frost	Norcross
Ansari	Garamendi	Ocasio-Cortez
Auchincloss	Garcia (CA)	Olszewski
Bacon	Garcia (IL)	Omar
Balint	Garcia (TX)	Pallone
Barragán	Gillen	Panetta
Beatty	Golden (ME)	Pappas
Bell	Goldman (NY)	Perez
Bera	Gomez	Peters
Beyer	Gonzalez, V.	Pingree
Bishop	Goodlander	Pou
Bonamici	Harder (CA)	Pressley
Boyle (PA)	Hayes	Rivis
Brown	Himes	Quigley
Brownley	Horsford	Ramirez
Budzinski	Houlihan	Randall
Bynum	Huffman	Raskin
Carabajal	Ivey	Riley (NY)
Carson	Jackson (IL)	Rivas
Carter (LA)	Jacobs	Ross
Casar	Jayapal	Ruiz
Case	Jeffries	Ryan
Casten	Johnson (GA)	Salinas
Castor (FL)	Johnson (TX)	Sánchez
Castro (TX)	Kamlager-Dove	Scanlon
Cherifius-	Kaptur	Schakowsky
McCormick	Kelly (IL)	Schneider
Chu	Kennedy (NY)	Scholten
Cisneros	Khanha	Scott (VA)
Clark (MA)	Krishnamoorthi	Sewell
Clarke (NY)	Landsman	Sherman
Cleaver	Larsen (WA)	Simon
Clyburn	Larson (CT)	Smith (WA)
Cohen	Latimer	Sorensen
Conaway	Lee (NV)	Subramanyam
Correa	Lee (PA)	Suozzi
Costa	Levin	Swalwell
Courtney	Liccardo	Tancredo
Craig	Lieu	Stanton
Crockett	Lofgren	Stevens
Crow	Lynch	Strickland
Cuellar	Mannion	Takano
Davids (KS)	Massie	Thanedar
Davis (IL)	Matsui	Thompson (CA)
Davis (NC)	McBath	Thompson (MS)
Dean (PA)	McBride	Tlaib
DeLauro	McClain Delaney	Tokuda
DeLauro	McClellan	Tonko
DelBene	McCullom	Torres (CA)
Deluzio	McDonald Rivet	Torres (NY)
DeSaulnier	McGarvey	Tran
Dexter	McGovern	Underwood
Dingell	McIver	Vargas
Doggett	Meeks	Vasquez
Doulton	Mirvian	Veasey
Fletcher	Mullin	Velázquez
Foster	Foushee	Vindman

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING CELEBRATE COMMUNITY WEEK

(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 recognize Celebrate Community Week.

As co-chairs of the bipartisan Congressional Service Organization Caucus, Congressman JIMMY PANETTA and I introduced a resolution to designate the week of September 14 through September 20 as Celebrate Community Week, where we honor the efforts of local service organizations across the country.

The resolution recognizes the role of service organizations in promoting humanitarian assistance, while also showing our youth the value of giving back.

We specifically applaud Kiwanis International, Lions Clubs International, Optimist International, and Rotary International for encouraging and promoting community service and humanitarian assistance through their local chapters.

The Celebrate Community Week resolution highlights the critical work of our community service organizations.

Mr. Speaker, volunteer service is the cornerstone of a successful, strong, and healthy community, and it is an important staple of American life.

Mr. Speaker, I commend our community service organizations for everything they do to help our communities flourish.

OUR DEDICATED AND EXTRAORDINARY MARINES AND AIRMEN

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, our marines and airmen are extraordinary. I co-led a congressional delegation to Camp Lejeune and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base with Representative ELLZEY.

The V-22 Osprey, with its tilt rotor, is a remarkable aircraft with a statistically sound safety record and was the perfect ride from Onslow to Wayne County.

Congress must ensure the future of our F-15Es at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base.

Touring marine barracks, visiting the child development center at Seymour Johnson, and hearing directly from our marines and airmen reminded me why we fight every day to ensure that we have the resources, housing, and equipment that it takes to win anywhere, anytime.

Our servicemembers sacrifice so much for our freedom.

It was great seeing such dedicated servicemembers, because when we take

care of our men and women in uniform and their families, we take care of the future of our country.

□ 1910

RECOGNIZING LISA DUCKWORTH

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

Mr. KENNEDY of Utah. Mr. Speaker, today I rise and recognize a proud U.S. Army veteran, Lisa Duckworth, who was recently named Military Friendly's 2025 Veteran of the Year for the State of Utah. From her role as a chaplaincy resources manager in the Army for close to 6 years to her current role as Utah's veteran employment representative, Lisa has demonstrated her outstanding devotion to education and empowerment.

As Utah's veteran employment representative, Lisa advocates for the veteran and military community by working with organizations that provide them with employment, training, and development opportunities.

This award given to Lisa recognizes the tangible difference she makes every day for those in Utah's military community.

Her unwavering dedication to those who have served our country reminds us that all public service continues beyond uniform, whether it be through advocacy or community. She reminds us that when we support our veterans and military members, we strengthen our communities.

I am proud to have Lisa Duckworth representing our beautiful State and thank her for her continued service. I thank Lisa for all she does to ensure a supportive environment for our veterans in Utah.

GIVE 'EM HELL WRAP-UP

(Ms. BYNUM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BYNUM. Mr. Speaker, I just wrapped up the Give 'Em Hell Tour, 10 townhalls over the last 3 months from every corner of my district. We welcomed all Oregonians, and we were thankful to have community leaders participating and local law enforcement keeping us safe.

From Bend to Portland, Silverton to Albany, over 42,000 people joined and made their voices heard. Mr. Speaker, the message was clear: Quit messing with our healthcare and start making life more affordable.

Mr. Speaker, hear me when I say this: We will not back down—not on healthcare, not on costs, and not on making our voices heard.

My message to my fellow Oregonians is: I hear you, and I got you. Even though the Give 'Em Hell Tour is over, there is always an open line of communication between you and me.

CALIFORNIA IS NATION'S LEADER IN SPECIALTY CROPS

(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, as I often tell you, California is the leader in specialty crops important to all Americans, to their diet and their enjoyment. For many of these crops, 90 percent plus are grown in my home State. If we didn't grow them there, you would not have them or you would have to import them from somewhere else at higher cost and lower quality.

Farmers in my State know how to grow food better than anyone, but I think my Midwest folks would probably dispute that a bit. The American farmer is extremely important, and we need to have what they need, the inputs for that.

In my home State, water is the key element that seems to be shorted not so much by nature but by bad, man-made decisions on how we manage our reservoirs or even not to bother to build reservoirs. We need new reservoirs to feed our growing Nation and a growing State. When we get the water cut off, as happens frequently, you have farmers left literally high and dry and the crop having to come from somewhere else or not at all.

It doesn't have to be this way. Let's build water supplies and be a little smarter about actually allocating to farmers instead of to fish and things like that.

Lastly, remember Iryna Zarutska, needlessly killed by a guy who had been arrested 14 times.

CDC'S DANGEROUS TURN ON VACCINES

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

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, as a parent and a grandparent and as a former county executive who led the COVID response in one of the first epicenters of that outbreak, I am concerned by recent developments at the CDC and the future of public health.

Decades of sound science and public health progress are being cast aside in favor of conspiracy theories and pseudoscience.

Last month, the CDC Director was dismissed after just weeks on the job. This week, the agency's vaccine advisory committee is considering changes that could weaken or even eliminate requirements for lifesaving childhood vaccines.

It is easy to forget the fear and devastation of measles and polio, not because these diseases are harmless but because vaccines have kept them at bay.

Today, parents worry about vaccine side effects largely because they have never seen the horrors these vaccines

prevent. That doesn't make vaccines any less necessary.

The science is clear. Vaccines are safe, effective, and essential. Every major medical association agrees, yet fringe ideologies are gaining influence inside the very agencies charged with protecting our health.

Mr. Speaker, I fear our children and grandchildren will bear the cost of these reckless decisions.

CHARLIE KIRK'S RELIGIOUS MESSAGE

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, a lot has been said the last few days about the horrible assassination of Charlie Kirk.

I was able to attend two ceremonies over the weekend in which people gathered to memorialize him.

I hear a lot of people talking about Charlie Kirk exercising his right to political free speech, and we have to respect people's ability to engage in political speech.

I think if you look at some of his videos, and certainly if you attended these ceremonies, Charlie Kirk was a much more religious person than a political person. I think that is lost on a lot of people, lost on a lot of political commentators.

I think particularly in this era of declining church attendance, a time when so many young people are raised in families that don't even go to church, I think his speaking about Christianity and his faith and the importance to carry on his mission is more important than his political statements.

ONE BIG, BEAUTIFUL REPEAL

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

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, Virginians are already paying the price for the one big, ugly bill.

Two small-town clinics and one regional urgent care center in Virginia just closed as a direct result of the bill. Now, six more rural hospitals around the Commonwealth are at risk of closure. That means mothers, children, and Virginians with urgent healthcare concerns have to drive further to get urgent care or wait months to see a specialist.

Remember, this majority and this President said that this bill wouldn't take away benefits or close rural hospitals. Well, they were wrong. We don't need more broken promises. What we need is a different approach, a one big, beautiful repeal instead.

Let's pass the Protecting Healthcare and Lowering Costs Act, which will restore people's benefits and access to care, ensuring that people in small towns and rural communities will have more access to quality care, not less.

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION FUNDING

(Ms. STEVENS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the counselors, outreach workers, and credible messengers who save lives as community violence interrupters in Michigan and across the Nation.

These programs, supported by the Community Violence Intervention funding, deescalate conflicts, mediate retaliation, and connect people to essential services like jobs, housing, and mental health care to break cycles of violence.

The impact is undeniable. From May to July of this year, Detroit's CVI zones saw about a 30 percent drop in homicides and shootings with some neighborhoods faring even better.

Despite this, cuts are taking their toll. This spring, the Department of Justice rescinded over \$800 million in grants, including \$150 million for CVI efforts. Michigan programs lost millions, forcing layoffs and cuts. Worse, the current budget would slash dedicated CVI funding even further, jeopardizing these lifesaving efforts.

Congress must act to restore funding and protect proven prevention strategies.

□ 1920

RECOGNIZING DONNA MINTER ON COMPLETING "GRAMMY CLIMATE RIDE"

(Ms. OMAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Donna Minter from Minneapolis for her extraordinary feat of completing the Grammy Climate Ride. Inspired by her love for her grandchildren and a vision for a healthier, more sustainable planet for future generations, Donna spent 64 days traveling 3,000 miles by bicycle to raise awareness and support for climate justice.

From California to Florida, Donna struck up conversations with those whom she met along the way to raise the alarm on the climate crisis. Through this year's ride, Donna raised \$25,000 for various Minnesota-based climate nonprofits.

Please join me in celebrating the extraordinary achievement and spirit of Donna Minter and her strength and preservation that made this possible.

RECOGNIZING MORE ACTION FOR STUDENTS ORGANIZATION

(Mr. MRVAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, I recently had the privilege of sitting down with a group of dedicated youth, who created

and inspired the More Action for Students organization in northwest Indiana.

I was greatly impressed with their knowledge of many important issues and their sincere advocacy.

We discussed a variety of topics, including the significant cuts to Federal Pell grants, the programs designed to help first-generation college students.

They also shared their concern that Congress is not fulfilling its constitutional responsibilities by allowing this administration to rescind approved Federal funding for minority-serving institutions of higher learning in Indiana's First Congressional District.

Since this administration is also rescinding Federal funds for economic development projects that are approved and signed into law and when the OMB is picking and choosing how appropriations laws are implemented, they are right to be concerned.

This meeting has filled me with a renewed sense of optimism for the days ahead, for it is clear that these young women and men are not waiting for the future to arrive. They are shaping it. They labor to build a society that is more just, more inclusive, and more responsive to the needs of all people.

Let us take the inspiration from their dedication. The strength of our Nation rests in the courage and the vision of its youth.

RESISTING THE TEMPTATION TO DIVIDE

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, as I returned home to northwest Ohio this weekend, I found soul searching among people who I represent following the tragedies of last week in Colorado and Utah.

Then, in the Point Place neighborhood of Toledo, I saw a church sign that read:

Love Always Heals. Hate Always Harms. All Welcome Sunday.

These are simple words but profound. Governor Spencer Cox of Utah observed that social media is a cancer on our society right now, and he encouraged people to log off, turn off, touch grass, hug a family member, and go out and do good in their community, and I couldn't agree more.

Today in Toledo, we did exactly that. We celebrated the completion of a \$13.5 million water project to restore the Delaware, Clark, and Horseshoe Islands in Walbridge Park on the Maumee River, the largest river that flows into the Great Lakes.

This restoration means cleaner water, aquatic and wildlife habitats renewed, and a healthier Lake Erie. As co-chair of the Great Lakes Task Force, I am profoundly grateful that our citizens united to restore the heart of our islands along the mighty Maumee by, quite literally, constructing bridges for the future. Our

community keeps delivering progress, and we all must lift our Nation's motto up: "e pluribus unum"; "out of many, one."

Not against one another but working together for the future of America.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JUAN LÓPEZ

(Ms. RAMIREZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Juan López.

(English translation of the statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

I rise today to honor the life of Juan López—a Honduran, a Catholic leader, a human rights defender, an environmental activist—a year after his brutal assassination.

Today, I declare we will not forget Juan López. As Juan said, "They can tear me up, they can cut me down. But I'll always come back."

Today, I honor all those who carry on Juan's legacy to live without fear of powerful companies and corrupt officials stealing and polluting their land and murdering courageous leaders for peacefully defending natural resources that are rightfully theirs.

Today, I stand in solidarity with all those who loved Juan López, who continue his struggle, and who will not back down until we realize justice for Juan, for Berta Cáceres and for all those land defenders murdered.

Me levanto hoy para honrar la vida de Juan López—hondureño, líder católico defensor de los derechos humanos y activista ambiental—un año luego de su brutal asesinato.

Hoy, declaro que no olvidaremos a Juan López. Como dijo: "Pueden destrozarme, pueden derribarme. Pero siempre volveré".

Hoy, rindo homenaje a todos aquellos que continúan el legado de Juan, viviendo sin temor a que empresas poderosas y funcionarios corruptos les roben y contaminen sus tierras y asesinen a líderes valientes por defender pacíficamente los recursos naturales que les pertenecen por derecho.

Hoy, me solidarizo con todos aquellos que amaron a Juan López, que continúan su lucha y que no cederán hasta que se haga justicia para Juan, para Berta Cáceres y para todos los defensores de la tierra asesinados.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman will provide a translation.

HONORING VICTIMS OF 16TH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH BOMBING

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Ms. McCLELLAN of Virginia was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. McCLELLAN. 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 subject of this Special Order hour.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to anchor this CBC Special Order hour. For the next 60 minutes, members of the CBC will have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people.

Today, the Congressional Black Caucus is remembering an anniversary. It was a terrible anniversary that happened 62 years ago today in Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, to begin our commemoration, I yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. FIGURES).

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

Mr. Speaker, this is one of those speeches that I wish we did not have to give and one of those moments in our history that I wish we did not have to acknowledge in the first place. By acknowledging it, we are reminded of its occurrence.

This is one of the more tragic acts in American history: the bombing of four little girls, made worse by the fact that it happened in a place of worship, that it happened in a church, and that it happened in an African-American church.

When you grow up Black in Alabama, this is one of the seminal events that you hear about in our State's history that you cannot ever forget. It is important to me that we sit here in this Chamber today to acknowledge this disastrous event and to remember the names of the little girls who were killed and one who was injured.

As a son of Alabama and a Representative of the birthplace of the civil rights movement today, which is the city of Montgomery, I know the names of Carole Robertson, Denise McNair, Addie Mae Collins, and Cynthia Wesley. These are names that you have to know. They are names that all of America should know, and they are names that all of us should recognize and appreciate and honor here in this House.

They are names that must be said. They are names that must be said repetitively. They are names that must be ingrained into the fabric of this Nation: Carole Robertson; Denise McNair; Addie Mae Collins; Cynthia Wesley; and Sarah Collins Rudolph, who took from that day not only the loss of her friends and family member but also injuries that she still carries with her to this day as she advocates for justice.

Let us not forget that this was merely one example of tragic violence that was used as a means to suppress the greatest movement that this world and that this Nation has ever seen, which is the civil rights movement.

Though these are names that we know and names that we speak of in one of the more noteworthy or notable or well-known events that happened, there were several others who were the victims of such violence, and we also cannot forget them as we sit here today and honor the four little girls in Birmingham.

These are names, some of which you know and some of which you don't.

These are names like Medgar Evers, who was assassinated in his fight for equal access to the ballot box; and Rev. James Reeb, who was a minister who was beaten to death while standing with the marchers in Selma.

These are names like Viola Liuzzo. These are names like Jimmie Lee Jackson and Jonathan Daniels. These are people who put it all on the line and whose deaths are the reason that I am able to stand here today.

Whenever we have the opportunity, we should always sit here in this Chamber and recognize these individuals.

□ 1930

I cannot close without quoting the speech that Martin Luther King gave in his eulogy of these four little girls. Speaking at a time when racial tensions in the country were enormously, enormously high and never did anyone think that those tensions would result in such a cowardly act as a bomb being placed in a church and set to detonate on a Sunday morning as four little girls were down there getting ready for Sunday school, but he took to the pulpit and he gave these powerful words that I will quote, in part.

He said: "These children—unoffending, innocent, and beautiful—were the victims of one of the most vicious and tragic crimes ever perpetuated against humanity.

"And yet they died nobly. They are the martyred heroines of a holy crusade for freedom and human dignity. And so this afternoon in a real sense, they have something to say to each of us in their death.

"They say to each of us, Black and White alike, that we must substitute courage for caution. They say to us that we must be concerned not merely about who murdered them but about the system, the way of life, the philosophy which produced the murderers. Their death says to us that we must work passionately and unrelentingly for the realization of the American Dream.

"And so my friends, they did not die in vain.

"God still has a way of wringing good out of evil. And history has proven over and over again that unmerited suffering is redemptive. The innocent blood of these little girls may well serve as a redemptive force that will bring new light to this dark city."

Those are the words of Martin Luther King as he eulogized these four little girls. I think a lot of what he references is still true to this day, that we have to, by all means, continue to be unrelenting in our pursuit of the realization of the American Dream for everyone.

These four beautiful little girls, who unknowingly became one of the galvanizing symbols of the civil rights movement, these are names that we must know. These are names that we must continue to say: Carole Robertson, Denise McNair, Addie Mae Collins, and Cynthia Wesley.

I obviously never had the opportunity to meet any of them. I have had the privilege to meet several of their family members throughout my life, but to them I owe an enormous debt of gratitude because without acts like this, as violent and as vicious and as terrible as it was, without moments like that, there would not have been a Civil Rights Act. There would not have been a Voting Rights Act. There would not have been the progress in this Nation that we saw in terms of rights being secured for African Americans, and all people for that matter, the same rights which led to the possibility of myself and many others being able to stand here in Congress.

This is about more than an anniversary of celebrating the lives of those that were killed in the explosion. This is about celebrating the galvanizing force for progress in this Nation. This is about celebrating the lives of people who are responsible for many of us being here.

Whether you like it or not, the civil rights movement embodied everything that America should be, and it is because of these four little girls that I am able to stand here today.

It is also worth noting about this tragic event, to add insult to the injury of four little girls being murdered in a church, justice was not served immediately. Justice was not served a year late or 5 years late or even 20 years late. It took nearly 40 years, nearly 40 years, for all of the perpetrators involved in this case to be brought to justice.

Let's think about that. Mr. Speaker, 40 years after four little girls were killed in a church and the leaders at the time knew not only that it was the Klan that was responsible but they knew the individuals who were responsible, but for lack of courage, for lack of cooperation, for lack of willingness, that justice was delayed for nearly four decades, 39 years. It took the involvement of the Federal Government to finally make that happen.

That story, both the viciousness of this crime, the delayed justice, that story is a story that is not uncommon, especially during acts of violence during the civil rights movement, but despite there being the delay in justice, what was not delayed was the impact that they had on the broader realm of justice and the broader realm of rights that we were able to secure. Though unfortunate and certainly unnecessary, certainly unwarranted, their deaths shine a bright light on the injustices that were happening across this Nation in how Black people were being treated in the South, especially in the State of Alabama, and we were able to get through this body and the Senate and across the President's desk the biggest and most beautiful piece of legislation that this Nation has ever seen, and that is the Civil Rights Act and that is the Voting Rights Act.

As I close, I will again thank Carole Robertson, Denise McNair, Addie Mae

Collins, Cynthia Wesley, and Sarah Collins Rudolph.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, it is now my privilege to yield to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL).

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I first really just thank the Congressional Black Caucus for commemorating this 62nd anniversary of the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church with this Special Order hour.

Mr. Speaker, I indeed rise with my colleagues to commemorate the 62nd anniversary of the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, and to honor the legacy of the four precious little girls killed in that attack.

Sixty-two years ago today, parishioners of the 16th Street Baptist Church gathered within its sacred walls ahead of its 11 a.m. service. It was youth day that day, that day 62 years ago. It was youth day, so the youth were in charge of that service.

There were lots of little girls and little boys running around the church. At approximately 10:23 a.m., while the four little girls were getting dressed in the church basement restroom, 19 sticks of dynamite placed by the KKK exploded.

As the walls of the church caved in, more than 100 parishioners rushed for safety. While most of them escaped unharmed, under the debris lay five little girls.

Today, we must remember all five, four were killed that day and one is still alive today.

Today, we remember the name of Addie Mae Collins, of Denise McNair, of Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Morris Wesley. We also remember the name of Sarah Collins, who was the younger sister of Addie Mae Collins.

□ 1940

In response to the attack, hundreds of African Americans took to the street to demand justice, only to be met with more violence at the hands of law enforcement. Within hours of the bombing, two more children lost their lives in Birmingham, Alabama: Johnny Robinson and Virgil Ware were killed in clashes with the police.

Dr. King described the bombing as one of the most vicious crimes ever perpetrated against humanity. Yet, despite the horrific nature of the attack, it took more than 34 years for the perpetrators to be faced with justice. In fact, it was only 34 years later that they really all were brought to justice.

Make no mistake, the four little girls did not die in vain, as my colleague from Alabama, SHOMARI FIGURES, so eloquently said. They didn't die in vain. Their murder focused the eyes of the Nation on the racial terror being waged against African Americans in the Jim Crow South, and their legacy galvanized the civil rights movement, giving voice to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

It was because of their death that the Nation in horror saw four little girls,

who were simply going to church, killed. It was senseless violence by the KKK. We had a Birmingham campaign because of that, a crusade of children who marched and protested in Kelly Ingram Park.

It was because of their efforts and the efforts of so many, the sacrifices of so many, it is never lost on Shomari or myself that we get to walk the Halls of Congress because four little Black girls cannot. Four little Black girls cannot.

Congresswoman McCLELLAN, we are blessed to be able to represent our home districts, but we know that we are not the first who deserve to be here in Congress. No, we are the lucky ones who stand on the shoulders of those who were murdered, who marched, who bled, who prayed for the opportunity of African Americans to have an equal voice in this society.

The sacred right to vote is just as sacred today as it was then. I think all of us in this Chamber, Republicans and Democrats alike, respect the late, great Congressman John Lewis, who had the audacity to believe that he could march across a bridge unfettered by the viciousness of the State troopers.

When he was met with that viciousness, it was John, with a backpack on his shoulder—that image is seared in my mind. I have the great honor of being a daughter of Selma, growing up in Selma, Alabama, without really understanding its place in American history.

I often tell my constituents that we are custodians of America's history. What happened on that bridge, the blood that was shed for the Voting Rights Act of 1965, is commemorated year after year after year. The first Sunday in the month of March is Bloody Sunday, a sacred day that for so many years John Lewis would bring Republicans and Democrats, a bipartisan group, to walk across that bridge. We didn't just come to Selma. He would take us first to Birmingham where we would sit in the 16th Street Baptist Church, and we would see the beautiful stained glass that was donated by the people of Wales to the church.

I have heard Pastor Price, who is the current pastor of the 16th Street Baptist Church, regale that the sermon that day 62 years ago, the sermon that day was: A love that forgives. That was the title of the sermon: A love that forgives. Now, we know that political violence has no place in this society, but how ironic that the pastor was preaching a sermon about forgiveness.

As I reflect on our painful past, I am reminded that every gain in the battle for civil rights and voting rights has come at a high cost, paid for by the sacrifices of others.

As a direct beneficiary of the legacy of the four little girls, I am honored that my very first piece of legislation that I passed in Congress bestowed

upon the four little girls a Congressional Gold Medal on the 50th anniversary of the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church.

Oh, it was a grand day. I was able to watch as President Barack Obama signed that bill into law in the Oval Office. Standing to my right was none other than the mother of Denise McNair and the sister of Denise McNair. Standing to my left was a cousin of Carole Robertson. Standing right beside me was Eric Holder, the Attorney General, and his wife, Sharon Malone, a distinguished doctor whose sister, Vivian Malone, was the very first African American to integrate University of Alabama. Also there was the Surgeon General, another very proud native of Alabama. The Surgeon General at the time was Regina Benjamin.

It was a proud day to be an Alabamian. It was a proud day to be an African American. It was a proud day to be an American. It took us 50 years to acknowledge the four little girls on this House floor.

I have to say that perhaps one of the most poignant memories that I have not just of that day—and, yes, Pastor Price was there as well—it was really the opportunity to bestow a Congressional Gold Medal to Sarah Collins, and lots of our colleagues came with us that day, came with me, flew to Birmingham months later to actually bestow the Congressional Gold Medal to Sarah Collins.

History is riddled with the bodies and blood of those who sacrificed for this country to live up to its creed, the creed of this country to honor its principles of justice and equality. At a time when some would seek to whitewash our history and roll back our progress, it has never been more important for us to remember, to ensure that the memory of the four little girls lives on. Their loss paved the way for the freedoms and opportunities that we enjoy today, and their legacy reminds us that the price of freedom is not free. It has been paid for by the sacrifices of others.

I thank my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus for hosting tonight's Special Order hour, and I ask both sides of the aisle to join us in honoring the memory of Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley, and the life of Sarah Collins.

I look forward to having a colloquy with my colleagues about what this really means to all of us. I have to say that as the Member of Congress who represents Birmingham, Alabama, and Selma and Tuscaloosa, I was never more proud than to remember the legacy, the amazing legacy that is Alabama's Seventh Congressional District.

□ 1950

While I am honored to represent the constituents of today, I carry with me and know that the legacy of this district is something that must be ad-

vanced. It needs to be protected. It needs to be known. It needs to be advanced.

I never thought that 60 years after John Lewis was bludgeoned on a bridge, or 62 years after four little girls were killed in the bombing—assassinated in the bombing—of the 16th Street Baptist Church, that the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act would be in jeopardy.

The *Shelby v. Holder* decision struck down a key provision of the Voting Rights Act. As we speak, the Supreme Court is considering striking down or nullifying section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

It is on our collective watch that we say no, that we must say hell no, that this body must act. This body can come up with a modern-day formula to determine voter discrimination, such that we can put life back into section 4, which allowed us to say that those States that had a history of voting discrimination must pre-clear every voting law.

That provision had no teeth because they struck down the formula. States across this Nation started voter suppression laws, voting on voter suppression laws that didn't have any remedy other than after the fact. We could only sue after the fact.

In my portion tonight, I join my colleagues for a colloquy by just saying that we who are beneficiaries of this important legacy have a very special role to play. Ours is to legislate, but ours is also to motivate and mobilize our constituents and this Nation, to mobilize and realize that the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act are similar pieces of legislation that all Americans should acknowledge as the reason why the arc is bending toward justice, as Martin Luther King would say. We know that the moral arc doesn't bend by itself. It bends at the will, at the sacrifice, at the demands of the people.

As I close, I want us not only to remember their names but remember their sacrifice, and let's pay it forward. I think we who are beneficiaries must pay it forward. I don't know about you, but just looking at their faces gives me a pep in my step.

We may be living through very troubling times, but we do so because others sacrificed. It was because of their sacrifice that we get to enjoy the freedoms we do.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Congressional Black Caucus for acknowledging today as the 62nd anniversary of the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Virginia has 31 minutes remaining.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I will put today's anniversary in a larger context, but first, I will center on these four little girls again.

As the congregation of the 16th Street Baptist Church greeted each

other before the start of Sunday's service, five little girls gathered in the ladies' room in their best dresses. They chatted about the first few days of the school year. They were excited about Youth Day. They were excited to take part in the Sunday adult service.

Rather than rising to begin prayers, just before 11 o'clock, the congregation was knocked to the ground when a bomb exploded under the steps of the church.

In the basement, 14-year-olds Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and 11-year-old Cynthia Wesley were killed. Addie's sister, Sarah, survived but lost her right eye. Between 14 and 22 other people were injured.

Dr. King described the attack as "one of the most vicious and tragic crimes ever perpetrated against humanity."

Two years later, the FBI shut down its investigation after determining that the bombing had been committed by four members of the local Ku Klux Klan: Thomas Edwin Blanton, Jr., Herman Frank Cash, Robert Edward Chambliss, and Bobby Frank Cherry.

They chose the church because it had been a rallying point for the civil rights activities of that tumultuous spring of 1963.

In 1971, Alabama Attorney General Bill Baxley reopened the case and requested evidence from the FBI. After building trust with witnesses who had been reluctant to testify, they were able to convict Robert Chambliss on November 14, 1977, of his part in the crime. It would be decades later before the other suspects were tried.

On May 1, 2001, Thomas Blanton was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. In 2002, Bobby Frank Cherry was convicted. He boasted that he was the one who planted the bomb next to the church wall. That brag is what sent him to prison.

Justice was delayed, but ultimately, justice for these little girls was had.

Putting this in a larger context, as we grapple with the fact that political violence has reared its ugly head in America yet again, yet again, we see anger, fear, hatred, and division across the Nation. We have been here before multiple times. We don't have enough hours in the day to do a Special Order hour on everyone who has suffered because of political violence.

Focusing on how we move forward, Dr. King's words have been on my mind a lot in the past few years. In response to the violence of Charlottesville after the Unite the Right rally, in response to assassination attempts, in response to school shootings, in response to hate crimes, whether political violence, racial violence, or just violence grown out of hate, Dr. King gave us a way forward in two speeches that I come back to as being relevant today. He gave two speeches, one in 1957 called "Loving Your Enemies," and he gave one in 1967 called "Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?"

That question is relevant today. We see a lot of chaos around us. We have

lost sight of community, but we come out of chaos when we focus on community.

I am going to read some of Dr. King's words. His speech "Loving Your Enemies" was rooted in the Sermon on the Mount. It was rooted in the commandment that Jesus added on the Sermon, in addition to love God, love God as you love yourself, to love your enemies.

□ 2000

Mr. Speaker, he talked about how difficult it is to love our enemies. How do we do it? He gave some practical suggestions.

He said: "In order to love your enemies, you must begin by analyzing self. And I'm sure that seems strange to you, that that I start out telling you this morning that you love your enemies by beginning with a look at self. It seems to me that that is the first and foremost way to come to an adequate discovery to the how of this situation."

He went on to talk about how sometimes there is something in the way a person carries himself that triggers a hate response or anger in someone else. He said that the first thing we have got to do is look at ourselves. Was it something I said, even if I didn't mean it? Was it something I posted? Take a look at whether we are embodying love. He said that sometimes we have got to admit there are people that just aren't going to like us, and that is okay.

The second, and much more important one, was that an individual must discover the element of good in his enemy.

"Every time you begin to hate that person and think of hating that person, realize that there is some good there and look at those good points which will overbalance the bad points." . . . "We're split up and divided against ourselves. And there is something of a civil war going on within all of our lives."

He put it in the context of what was happening in the south. I think we have heard rumblings over the past few years and questions: Are we facing another civil war in ourselves?

He said: "So somehow the 'isness' of our present nature is out of harmony with the eternal 'oughtness' that forever confronts us." . . . "That within the best of us, there is some evil, and within the worst of us, there is some good. When we come to see this, we take a different attitude toward individuals. The person who hates you most has some good in him; even the nation that hates you most has some good in it; even the race that hates you most has some good in it.

"And when you come to the point that you look in the face of every man and see deep down within him what religion calls 'the image of God', you begin to love him in spite of. No matter what he does, you see God's image there."

Mr. Speaker, I think that is really important. I regret the fact that I

never got to meet John Lewis or Dr. King because I want to ask both of them one question: How did they come to love people who physically threatened or attacked them? They both found a way to do it.

I think it was rooted in the fact that they recognized—and I think all of us watching in this Chamber, and around the world, should remember what John F. Kennedy said, which is that we all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future.

We may violently disagree in theory, but that does not mean we should put that violence into action solely because we don't like what someone has said or what they have done. I think we all need to take a step back and see the face of God in one another.

Growing up, I remember listening to my parents tell stories of my great-grandparents and the racial terror and lynchings that they faced. I remember them telling me stories of the violence of the 1960s. I remember being lulled into this false sense of security as a Gen X child of the seventies and the eighties of how great it is we moved beyond that.

Unfortunately, this week reminded us we haven't. We never will if we don't acknowledge and hold onto the basic decency that tells us, yes, we should love our neighbors but also love our enemies. If we don't, I don't know that we will survive as a country. That is one of the things Dr. King talked about.

As a historian, he talked about how different civilizations fell. He talked about the destructive nature of hatred not only toward the person that is hated but toward ourselves.

One of my favorite quotes from him is how in both of these speeches he said: "And I say to you, I have also decided to stick with love."

"Hate is too great a burden to bear."

Hate twists us up. It eats us up and destroys us. He told a story about how he and his brother were traveling in Tennessee. Every time they would go down a road, the oncoming car would leave their bright lights on. His brother said: The next time somebody does that, I am going to leave my bright lights on.

He said: Hold up. Somebody has got to have sense enough to turn down the lights. If we don't, we will both be blinded and run off the road.

I think we are at a point where we need to have sense enough to turn off the lights, to turn down the temperature, and remember our children are watching. Our children are watching.

As we see a rise in gun violence, I have been particularly disturbed by how many children have gotten to the point where they let their hatred allow them to kill other children.

As I raise a teenager and a tween, as a preacher's daughter, I try to instill in them the same message of love our neighbors and love our enemies. It is really hard to do that.

When I am away from home, making sacrifices to make their lives easier,

they see not only the violence that we have become numb to but they see people, their mother included, get threatened. They see people that they have seen in this body say the most vicious things on social media. These are people who were kind to them when I was sworn in and when they stood beside me. They ask some pretty tough questions.

As leaders in this country, we have a responsibility to understand that when we stand in this well, at this podium, in our committees, at a press conference, or post on social media, we are not just trying to get clicks, or we shouldn't be. We are not just trying to get attention, or we shouldn't be. We are setting an example for the next generation of leaders. We are setting an example for our children.

I think we need to think about that before we post or say something in anger. If somebody doesn't have sense enough to turn on the lights, our hatred is going to blind us to the point where we tear each other and ourselves apart.

□ 2010

I get asked all the time: How do you stand it on the Hill?

How do you stand in the same room with this person or that person?

It is because I do what Dr. King says, which is rooted in love. I look at that person, even if they give me a reason not to, and I recognize: You and I breathe the same air. We both cherish our children's future. We are all worthy of love and respect.

We need to get back to that, Mr. Speaker, because if we don't, then I don't know where that leads.

Does it lead to a civil war?

Does it lead to chaos and everybody just being afraid to leave the house, give a speech, go to a rally, to a movie theater, to school, or to church?

Violence isn't new, but in the past, we have found a way to come together and focus on community in the midst of chaos. I am afraid we are losing the ability to do that. We have a responsibility as Members of Congress and as leaders in our community to show the way, to show a way toward community and to show a way out of chaos.

It is up to us. It is up to us whether we make it to 2026 where we can celebrate a revolutionary idea that the power of government was derived from the people. I don't know if we can do that if we allow hatred to tear us apart. I think we owe it to everyone who has suffered at the hands of violence, political, racial or otherwise.

I want to end with something Dr. King said at the funeral of these four little girls whose lives we celebrate on the 62nd anniversary of when they died:

"Now I say to you in conclusion, life is hard, at times as hard as crucible steel. It has its bleak and difficult moments. Like the ever-flowing waters of the river, life has its moments of drought and its moments of flood. Like the ever-changing cycle of the seasons,

life has the soothing warmth of its summers and the piercing chill of its winters. And if one will hold on, he will discover that God walks with him, and that God is able to lift you from the fatigue of despair to the buoyancy of hope, and transform dark and desolate valleys into sunlit paths of inner peace.”

I think there are a lot of people this week who need that hope. I think there are a lot of people who worry and fear: Will they feel the same despair that so many others have felt when a loved one is killed because of hatred?

We owe it to Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley to do our best every day to build what Dr. King called the “beloved community,” where someone will not go to a college campus, a church, or to the movie theater and have their lives snuffed out solely because someone hated them.

We can get there if we focus on building community out of chaos, if we focus on the goodness of everybody, and if we focus on love.

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

HONORING THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH, H.H. BARTHOLOMEW I

(Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. BILIRAKIS of Florida was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. 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 subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHREVE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentlewoman from Virginia. Well said this evening. I appreciate the gentlewoman’s kind words.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today not only as co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on International Religious Freedom and the Hellenic Caucus, but, more importantly, as an Orthodox Christian. I am here to honor and welcome His Holiness Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch, who is visiting the United States this week.

This visit is a huge blessing for the Orthodox family in the United States, Mr. Speaker. Not only is His All Holiness a great spiritual leader, but he is also an unparalleled ambassador for peace, interfaith dialogue, and religious freedom. As we honor him today for a lifetime of achievements, Mr. Speaker, I think of his legacy in three words: faith, peace, and endurance.

First, faith; His All Holiness has led millions of the faithful in the global Orthodox church for more than 34 years, conscientiously carrying the leg-

acy of Saint Andrew the Apostle and upholding the 2,000-year-old traditions of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Holy See for over 300 million Orthodox faithful worldwide.

His leadership of the Eastern Orthodox community has impacted and will continue to impact this ancient church and doctrine for centuries to come.

However, his role extends far beyond the Orthodox church, which brings me to the second point, peace. Throughout his selfless service, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has been at the forefront of interreligious dialogue, setting the stage for a more peaceful and cohesive world. He has a record of reaching out and working for peace and reconciliation amongst all faiths and has fostered dialogue among Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

Just last month, Mr. Speaker, he hosted the annual Religions for Peace World Council, bringing together leaders of diverse faiths to address global challenges.

His All Holiness’ leadership in these groundbreaking conventions has not only been about theology, but to engage faith with humanity’s most pressing challenges.

From his historic visit to the Korean Demilitarized Zone in 2018 to his current efforts promoting coexistence in the Middle East, His All Holiness’ pursuit of global peace in the world’s most challenging conflicts has truly touched the lives and hearts of millions.

In fact, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew received, on his first official visit to the United States in 1997, the Congressional Gold Medal presented by my father, Michael Bilirakis, and many, many others. It was presented by the United States on behalf of the Congress in recognition of his outstanding and enduring contributions to religious understanding and peace and was recognized by the United States in a manner reserved for a very small number of world leaders, as you know, Mr. Speaker, leaders such as George Washington, Winston Churchill, and Pope John Paul II.

Most dear to my heart, however, is his life of enduring advocacy for his persecuted church, as well as other oppressed religious minorities.

□ 2020

Recently, when the Egyptian Government confiscated the holy Saint Catherine’s Monastery in Sinai, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew stood as defender of Christian heritage. This monastery is not just a Greek Orthodox treasure but an ancient house to Christianity’s most valued heritage, including the sacred tree, the Burning Bush, where our God revealed himself to Moses.

For months now, Mr. Speaker, His All Holiness has led a global movement demanding that the Egyptian Government honor this heritage and protect the autonomy of the monastic community in Sinai. For those of us in Congress who have worked to preserve the

monastery’s independence and existence, his advocacy is a source of inspiration.

His All Holiness’ mission to protect the Christian community and its heritage in Turkiye is just another example of his noble pursuit. In the last hundred years, the Turkish state has systematically exploited its Christian communities unfortunately, reducing them from 20 percent of the population to a mere 2 percent.

To this day, the Turkish Government refuses to recognize His All Holiness’ ecumenical jurisdiction, stripping him of the universal title that is acknowledged by more than 300 million faithful across the globe.

Mr. Speaker, His All Holiness has endured in silence discrimination under Erdogan’s regime. This body must insist that Turkiye eliminate all forms of discrimination, particularly discrimination based on race or religion, grant the Ecumenical Patriarchate appropriate recognition and ecclesiastic succession, grant the Ecumenical Patriarchate the right to train clergy of all nationalities, not just Turkish nationals, by reopening the famed and beautiful Theological School at Halki, which I visited in 2019 with my beautiful wife.

Turkiye must absolutely reopen the jewel of Christendom, the Hagia Sophia, Church of the Holy Wisdom of God, as a church, not a mosque. The Hagia Sophia was the world’s largest cathedral for nearly 1,000 years. It served as a center for all Christians until the Ottoman invasion in 1453, which saw the collapse of Constantinople as well as the church.

For decades, it had been converted to a museum and has been a UNESCO Heritage site until Erdogan illegally converted it into a mosque 5 years ago.

I could go on and on, Mr. Speaker, about the persecution His All Holiness and the Ecumenical Patriarchate has faced under Erdogan’s rule. It is maddening, as far as I am concerned.

But Ankara’s violations go far beyond just Christian communities. Just over the summer, Mr. Speaker, the government authorities in Istanbul arrested 41 Muslim women, including 15 minor girls, solely based on their religious expression.

As the Turkish Government converts ancient churches to mosques, intimidates clergy, and displaces religious and ethnic minorities, His All Holiness has continued to peacefully advocate for the voiceless, which is why I take this occasion to call on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom to designate Turkiye as a country of particular concern under U.S. law.

It is incumbent upon us to recognize His All Holiness as a living testament for Turkiye’s explicit mission to erase its native Christian community and to respond to such cynical plans with the seriousness they deserve.

As we honor His All Holiness today, let us not only celebrate his faithfulness and mission of peace but commit

ourselves to defending the rights of his church and the protection of all persecuted religious minorities.

The timing of the Ecumenical Patriarch's visit could not be more ideal as America is grieving the loss of a true warrior of God, Charlie Kirk, who through his death has shown all of us that we must be defenders of our faith, even if that puts us in danger. I am going to say it again. We must be defenders of our faith, even if it puts us in danger.

We have to be a voice for the voiceless. We must be convicted and stay the course so that our faith is not extinguished by bad actors.

To honor both His All Holiness and America's martyr, Charlie Kirk, is to take up their cause, the cause of religious freedom, the cause of peaceful co-existence, and the cause of standing up to those who oppress others.

I wish my friend and my spiritual father, Ecumenical Patriarch, a safe and fruitful visit as he inspires not only the Orthodox faithful but all who love peace, understanding, and humanity.

May God bless His All Holiness, our Patriarchate in Constantinople, now Istanbul, our beautiful 2,000-year old faith and Orthodox Church.

May God bless the United States of America.

I also wanted to say that Archbishop Iakovos stood with Martin Luther King and marched at Selma. He was called by Martin Luther King. It is depicted in the movie, Mr. Speaker, "Selma." He was called by Martin Luther King. He showed up for the march. Martin Luther King apparently told him: Wow, I am surprised—something to that effect. He said his final words were, before the march: You called, and I came.

We must stand up to racism. We must stand up to any form of discrimination, in this case religious freedom.

I appreciate all of you. I know there are others that will speak at a later time, but I want to welcome this wonderful individual who visited the White House today with President Trump, just an outstanding person and a wonderful role model for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, God bless you and God bless America.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 29 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

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:

[Submitted September 12, 2025]

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky: Committee on Appropriations. H.R. 5342. A bill making ap-

propriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes (Rept. 119-272). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

[Submitted September 15, 2025]

Mr. BOST: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 3494. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out an information technology system and prioritize certain requirements to manage supply chains for medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, with an amendment (Rept. 119-273). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BOST: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 2721. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish and carry out a pilot program to furnish a headstone or burial marker to veterans who died on or before November 1, 1990, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 119-274). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 3427. A bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to review all clean water-related technical assistance authorities of the Environmental Protection Agency, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 119-275). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 528. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a program for Post-Disaster Reforestation and Restoration Program, and for other purposes (Rept. 119-276, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 655. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain Federal land to the City of The Dalles, Oregon, with an amendment (Rept. 119-277). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 831. A bill to establish an interest-bearing account for the non-Federal contributions to the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 119-278). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 972. A bill to amend the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area Act to adjust the boundary of the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area, and for other purposes (Rept. 119-279). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1045. A bill to amend the Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act of 2004 to require the establishment of an additional Institute under that Act (Rept. 119-280, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1276. A bill to remove restrictions from a parcel of land in Paducah, Kentucky, with an amendment (Rept. 119-281). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1676. A bill to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to approve the wildlife conservation and restoration program of a State within a certain period of time, with an amendment (Rept. 119-282). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1809. A bill to reauthorize funding to monitor, assess, and research the Great Lakes Basin (Rept. 119-283). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2290. A bill to provide that the memorial to commemorate the sacrifice and service of the women who worked on the home front to support the efforts of the United States military during World War II may be located on the National Mall, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 119-284). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2293. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to reissue certain regulations relating to the taking of double-crested cormorants at aquaculture facilities, with an amendment (Rept. 119-285). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2302. A bill to take certain Federal land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 119-286). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2388. A bill to take certain Federal land in the State of Washington into trust for the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, and for other purposes (Rept. 119-287). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2389. A bill to take certain land in the State of Washington into trust for the benefit of the Quinault Indian Nation, and for other purposes (Rept. 119-288). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2400. A bill to take certain Federal land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Pit River Tribe, with an amendment (Rept. 119-289). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2876. A bill to confirm the use of certain non-Federal land in Salt Lake City, Utah, for public purposes, and for other purposes (Rept. 119-290). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3176. A bill to amend the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act to reauthorize the National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring System (Rept. 119-291). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3187. A bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to convey a parcel of property of the Forest Service to Perry County, Arkansas, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 119-292). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3857. A bill to amend the Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program Authorization Act, with an amendment (Rept. 119-293). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 4285. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to designate an entrance-fee free date in 2026 at National Park Service sites in order to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States of America,

with an amendment (Rept. 119-294). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 1047. A bill to require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to reform the interconnection queue process for the prioritization and approval of certain projects, and for other purposes (Rept. 119-295). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GARBARINO: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4058. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance outreach for the Urban Area Security Initiative and the State Homeland Security Grant Program of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes (Rept. 119-296). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3668. A bill to promote interagency coordination for reviewing certain authorizations under section 3 of the Natural Gas Act, and for other purposes (Rept. 119-297, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. LANGWORTHY: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 707. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4922) to limit youth offender status in the District of Columbia to individuals 18 years of age or younger, to direct the Attorney General of the District of Columbia to establish and operate a publicly accessible website containing updated statistics on juvenile crime in the District of Columbia, to amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to prohibit the Council of the District of Columbia from enacting changes to existing criminal liability sentences, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5143) to establish standards for law enforcement officers in the District of Columbia to engage in vehicular pursuits of suspects, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5140) to lower the age at which a minor may be tried as an adult for certain criminal offenses in the District of Columbia to 14 years of age; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5125) to amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to terminate the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1047) to require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to reform the interconnection queue process for the prioritization and approval of certain projects, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3015) to re-establish the National Coal Council in the Department of Energy to provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Energy on matters related to coal and the coal industry, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3062) to establish a more uniform, transparent, and modern process to authorize the construction, connection, operation, and maintenance of international border-crossing facilities for the import and export of oil and natural gas and the transmission of electricity; and for other purposes (Rept. 119-298). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Agriculture discharged from further consideration. H.R. 528 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Agriculture discharged from further consideration. H.R. 1045 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3668 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

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. MOORE of Utah (for himself, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. YAKYM, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mrs. TRAHAN):

H.R. 5343. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure prompt coverage of breakthrough devices under the Medicare program; to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LYNCH (for himself and Mr. NUNN of Iowa):

H.R. 5344. A bill to amend the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Rewards Act to extend the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Rewards Pilot Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KUSTOFF:

H.R. 5345. A bill to amend title VII of the Social Security Act to provide for a single point of contact at the Social Security Administration for individuals who are victims of identity theft; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GROTHMAN:

H.R. 5346. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform certain penalty and interest provisions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BUCHANAN (for himself, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. CRENSHAW, and Mr. LAHOOD):

H.R. 5347. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure the availability of appropriate collection types for quality reporting under the Medicare Shared Savings Program, and for other purposes; to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMUCKER:

H.R. 5348. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide for the reissuance of social security account numbers to young children in cases where confidentiality has been compromised; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself and Ms. SEWELL):

H.R. 5349. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve services provided to taxpayers by the Internal Revenue Service by providing greater judicial review; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. CARSON, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. CASAR, Mr. CASTEN, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. CHU, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. DELUZIO, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DOGGETT, Mrs. FLETCHER, Mr. FOSTER, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. GARCIA of California, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. GOLDEN of Maine, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. JAYPAL, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Mr. LIEU, Mr. MAGAZINER, Ms. MCCLELLAN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. McGARVEY, Mr. MORELLE, Mr. MRVAN, Mr. NEGUSE, Ms. NORTON, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Ms. OMAR, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Ms.

PRESSLEY, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. ROSS, Ms. SCANLON, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. SIMON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. STANTON, Mr. SWALWELL, Mr. THANEDAR, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. TONKO, Mr. TRAN, and Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia):

H.R. 5350. A bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FONG (for himself, Ms. SALINAS, and Ms. PETTERSEN):

H.R. 5351. A bill to support National Science Foundation education and professional development relating to artificial intelligence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. VAN ORDEN:

H.R. 5352. A bill to prohibit Federal funding for entities that employ individuals who condone and celebrate political violence and domestic terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. BEYER (for himself and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 5353. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a pilot program to support evidence-based mental health peer support activities for students; to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Education and Workforce.

By Mr. COHEN (for himself, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MULLIN, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 5354. A bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to prohibit the use of consumer credit checks against prospective and current employees for the purposes of making adverse employment decisions; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. COSTA (for himself and Ms. VAN DUYNE):

H.R. 5355. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out activities to promote screenings for liver diseases in newborns, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. TONKO, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. MAGAZINER, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. DELUZIO, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. MULLIN, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. FROST, Mr. LANDSMAN, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. McGOVERN, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Mr. AMO, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. THANEDAR, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mr. NADLER, Mr. LATIMER, Mr. RYAN, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Mr. CARSON, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 5356. A bill to facilitate efficient investments and new job creation through the establishment of a National Infrastructure Bank, and for other purposes; to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Ways and Means, Transportation and Infrastructure, Financial Services, Education and Workforce, Natural Resources, and the Budget.

By Mr. FLOOD (for himself, Mr. BACON, and Mr. NUNN of Iowa):

H.R. 5357. A bill to provide limited licensing reciprocity for a college mental health provider to furnish mental health services through telehealth technology to students of the institution of higher education that employs such provider; to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Education and Workforce.

By Mr. FRY:

H.R. 5358. A bill to provide that a project to remove and replace communications equipment or services listed under the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks

equipment or services listed under the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019 is not subject to requirements to prepare certain environmental or historical preservation reviews; to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HARDER of California:

H.R. 5359. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to require biannual financial disclosure reports for Federal officials, to prohibit certain acts by the President, the Vice President, and their families, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. HOUCHIN (for herself and Mr. AUCHINCLOSS):

H.R. 5360. A bill to direct the Federal Trade Commission to develop and make available to the public educational resources for parents, educators, and minors with respect to the safe and responsible use of AI chatbots by minors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. IVEY (for himself, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. ANSARI, Ms. BALINT, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BELL, Mr. BERA, Mr. BEYER, Ms. BROWN, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. CARSON, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. CASTEN, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Ms. CHU, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CORREA, Mr. COSTA, Ms. CROCKETT, Mr. CROW, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DELUZIO, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. ESCOBAR, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Mr. FIGURES, Mrs. FLETCHER, Mr. FOSTER, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Ms. FRIEDMAN, Mr. FROST, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GARCIA of California, Mr. GARCIA of Illinois, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. HOULAHAN, Mr. HOYER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. JACOBS, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ, Mr. LIEU, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. MCBRIDE, Ms. McCLELLAN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGARVEY, Mr. McGOVERN, Mrs. McIVER, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MENG, Mr. MFUME, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MORELLE, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. MRVAN, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NEGUSE, Ms. NORTON, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Mr. OLSZEWSKI, Ms. OMAR, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. POCAN, Ms. PRESSLEY, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. ROSS, Ms. SCANLON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. SIMON, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SOTO, Ms. STANSBURY, Ms. STEVENS, Ms. STRICKLAND, Mr. SWALWELL, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. TOKUDA, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mrs. TRAHAN, Ms. UNDERWOOD, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WATERS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. TONKO, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. RASKIN, and Ms. RANDALL):

H.R. 5361. A bill to hold law enforcement accountable for misconduct in court, improve transparency through data collection, and reform police training and policies; to

the Committees on the Judiciary, Armed Services, and Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LOUDERMILK (for himself, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mrs. MCBATH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. JACK, Mr. CLYDE, Mr. COLLINS, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Ms. GREENE of Georgia, and Mr. BISHOP):

H.R. 5362. A bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs multispecialty clinic in Marietta, Georgia, as the “Colonel Michael H. Boyce Department of Veterans Affairs Multispecialty Clinic”; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

By Ms. PEREZ (for herself, Mr. MANN, Ms. UNDERWOOD, and Mr. BAIRD):

H.R. 5363. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out an initiative to develop, expand, and improve rural childcare, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. SCHMIDT:

H.R. 5364. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to direct State Medicaid fraud control units to investigate and prosecute instances of beneficiary fraud; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. SCHRIER (for herself and Mr. NEWHOUSE):

H.R. 5365. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 with respect to the conservation reserve program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. STEUBE (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. PANETTA):

H.R. 5366. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to codify and extend the rules for personal casualty losses arising from major disasters and the rules for the exclusion from gross income of compensation for losses or damages resulting from certain wildfires; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. STRICKLAND (for herself, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. FIGURES, and Mr. CARTER of Louisiana):

H.R. 5367. A bill to amend the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to provide for a pilot program under which development loans and loan guarantees may be made to beginning farmers and ranchers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. STRICKLAND:

H.R. 5368. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to rename the Community Liaison Services within the Office of Pipeline Safety of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration as the Office of Public Engagement, and for other purposes; to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. TITUS:

H.R. 5369. A bill to provide for a review of sanctions with respect to Azerbaijan; to the Committees on Foreign Affairs and the Judiciary.

By Ms. MACE (for herself, Mr. BIGGS of Arizona, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. RULLI, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. PATRONIS, Mr. BABIN, Mr. MCGUIRE, Ms. BOEBERT, Mr. GILL of Texas, and Mr. JACKSON of Texas):

H. Con. Res. 48. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for the lying in honor of the remains of the late Charles James Kirk, a lifelong advocate for freedom of speech, civil political discourse, and the political engagement of youth; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mrs. BICE, Mr.

McDOWELL, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, and Mr. VAN ORDEN):

H. Res. 706. A resolution removing a certain Member from certain standing committees of the House; to the Committee on Ethics.

By Mr. CARSON (for himself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. SMUCKER, and Ms. DELBENE):

H. Res. 708. A resolution recognizing the contributions of medical research and observing “Medical Research Week” from September 15 through September 19, 2025; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia (for himself, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. CLYDE):

H. Res. 709. A resolution condemning the September 10, 2025, political assassination of Charlie Kirk and honoring his life and legacy; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. CHU (for herself, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. MENG, and Ms. PINGREE):

H. Res. 710. A resolution expressing support for the designation of “Community School Coordinators Appreciation Week”; to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

By Mr. EDWARDS (for himself, Ms. FOXX, Ms. ROSS, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. HARRIGAN, Mr. McDowell, Mr. MOORE of North Carolina, Mr. KNOTT, Mr. ROUZER, and Mr. HUDSON):

H. Res. 711. A resolution honoring the victims of Hurricane Helene and expressing condolences and support for the affected communities in western North Carolina, specifically North Carolina’s 11th Congressional District, 1 year after the hurricane made landfall in the State on September 27, 2024; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. McGOVERN):

H. Res. 712. A resolution expressing support for the designation of September 14, 2025, as “National Food is Medicine Day”; to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Agriculture.

By Ms. MACE:

H. Res. 713. A resolution censuring Representative Ilhan Omar of Minnesota and removing her from the Committee on Education and Workforce and the Committee on the Budget; to the Committee on Ethics.

By Mrs. MCBATH (for herself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MRVAN, Mrs. HOUCHIN, Mr. FIELDS, Mr. MANNION, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Ms. NORTON, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. SWALWELL, and Mr. BISHOP):

H. Res. 714. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of September 14 through 20, 2025, as “National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week”; to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. SOTO, and Mr. RUIZ):

H. Res. 715. A resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of September 15, 2025, as “National Latino Gastronomic Cuisine Week”, and celebrating the vibrant and diverse culinary traditions of Latino gastronomy; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS (for herself, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Mr. AMODEI of Nevada, Ms. HOULAHAN, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. LATTA, Mr. COSTA, Mrs. KIM, Ms. McCLELLAN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. EVANS of Colorado,

Mr. SWALWELL, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. SORENSEN, and Mr. KEAN):

H. Res. 716. A resolution supporting the designation of the week of September 15 through September 19, 2025, as “National Clean Energy Week”; to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Science, Space, and Technology, and Technology.

By Mrs. RAMIREZ (for herself, Mr. McGOVERN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. CASAR, and Ms. OMAR):

H. Res. 717. A resolution honoring Juan López, a Honduran Catholic leader and human rights advocate murdered in the Tocoa municipality of the Bajo Aguán region of Honduras and commemorating one year since his assassination; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. RIVAS (for herself, Ms. ANSARI, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. CARSON, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. FROST, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. MANNION, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. SALAZAR, Ms. SALINAS, Mr. SOTO, Ms. STANSBURY, Ms. STEVENS, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. TONKO, Mrs. TORRES of California, and Ms. LOFGREN):

H. Res. 718. A resolution expressing support for increasing the number of Latino students and young professionals entering careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields; to the Committees on Science, Space, and Technology and Education and Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House 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. ROGERS of Kentucky:

H.R. 5342.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: “No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law” In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: “The Congress shall have the Power to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States” Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to appropriate funds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

By Mr. MOORE of Utah:

H.R. 5343.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. LYNCH:

H.R. 5344.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Cl. 18

By Mr. KUSTOFF:

H.R. 5345.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article 1, Section 8, the Necessary and Proper Clause. Congress shall have the

power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing powers and all Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. GROTHMAN:

H.R. 5346.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 5347.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. SMUCKER:

H.R. 5348.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of section 8 article 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. MORAN:

H.R. 5349.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:

H.R. 5350.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section1.

By M. FONG:

H.R. 5351.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. VAN ORDEN:

H.R. 5352.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 5353.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 5354.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. COSTA:

H.R. 5355.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 5356.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution:

To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the powers enumerated under section 8 and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. FLOOD:

H.R. 5357.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Sec. 8

By Mr. FRY:

H.R. 5358.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article I

By Mr. HARDER of California:

H.R. 5359.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mrs. HOUGHIN:

H.R. 5360.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. IVEY:

H.R. 5361.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. LOUDERMILK:

H.R. 5362.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 18: Congress has the power “to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or any Department or Officer thereof.”

By Ms. PEREZ:

H.R. 5363.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. SCHMIDT:

H.R. 5364.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Ms. SCHRIER:

H.R. 5365.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the United States Constitution

By Mr. STEUBE:

H.R. 5366.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Ms. STRICKLAND:

H.R. 5367.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. STRICKLAND:

H.R. 5368.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. TITUS:

H.R. 5369.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 45: Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas and Mr. McGuire.

H.R. 211: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 227: Mr. PANETTA.

H.R. 247: Ms. TLAIB, Ms. JACOBS, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. LATIMER, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. FIGURES, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. LIEU, Mr. CONAWAY, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. BERA, Ms. ROSS, Mr. RYAN, Mr. PAPPAS, Mrs. BEATTY, and Mr. SWALWELL.

H.R. 392: Ms. TLAIB.
 H.R. 516: Mr. MORAN and Mr. BELL.
 H.R. 589: Mr. GROTHMAN.
 H.R. 630: Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 631: Mr. JACKSON of Texas.
 H.R. 637: Ms. MATSUI, Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas, Mr. BERA, Mr. FIELDS, Mr. NEGUSE, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. CRAIG, Mr. EVANS of Colorado, Mr. SUBRAMANYAM, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MRVAN, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. POCAN, Mr. MORELLE, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Ms. McCLELLAN.
 H.R. 647: Mr. SHREVE.
 H.R. 718: Mr. CISCOMANI.
 H.R. 740: Mr. DESJARLAIS and Mr. YAKYM.
 H.R. 783: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 842: Ms. WILSON of Florida and Mrs. LUNA.
 H.R. 857: Ms. JOHNSON of Texas.
 H.R. 909: Mr. RULLI and Ms. SEWELL.
 H.R. 944: Ms. HOYLE of Oregon.
 H.R. 979: Mr. CROW and Mr. VARGAS.
 H.R. 987: Mr. McDOWELL, Mr. JACKSON of Texas, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas, and Mr. MC GUIRE.
 H.R. 1013: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
 H.R. 1028: Mr. BURLISON, Mr. HARRIGAN, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 1046: Mr. HUNT and Mr. LALOTA.
 H.R. 1055: Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ.
 H.R. 1065: Ms. BROWN and Ms. CROCKETT.
 H.R. 1077: Mr. GRAY.
 H.R. 1144: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 1151: Mr. CROW.
 H.R. 1163: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
 H.R. 1171: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 1189: Ms. BYNUM.
 H.R. 1219: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 1229: Mr. MENENDEZ.
 H.R. 1232: Mr. JACKSON of Texas.
 H.R. 1262: Mr. KEAN and Mr. PAPPAS.
 H.R. 1266: Mr. LUCAS.
 H.R. 1307: Ms. PETTERSEN and Ms. CRAIG.
 H.R. 1340: Mr. KUSTOFF.
 H.R. 1346: Ms. STEVENS.
 H.R. 1348: Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. FROST, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
 H.R. 1355: Ms. McCLELLAN.
 H.R. 1383: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
 H.R. 1397: Mr. RULLI.
 H.R. 1414: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
 H.R. 1422: Mr. CAREY and Mr. COLE.
 H.R. 1423: Mr. MASSIE and Mrs. HAYES.
 H.R. 1477: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
 H.R. 1502: Mr. MANN and Mr. MOOLENAAR.
 H.R. 1506: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 1509: Mr. SOTO, Mrs. SYKES, Ms. McCLELLAN, Ms. BALINT, and Ms. PETTERSEN.
 H.R. 1529: Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
 H.R. 1530: Mr. HUNT and Mr. MANNION.
 H.R. 1548: Mr. ARRINGTON and Mr. McDOWELL.
 H.R. 1551: Mr. VAN ORDEN, Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas, Ms. LEE of Florida, Ms. HOULAHAN, and Ms. McDONALD RIVET.
 H.R. 1564: Mr. CARSON and Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida.
 H.R. 1566: Ms. LEE of Nevada and Mr. CRAWFORD.
 H.R. 1627: Ms. BALINT.
 H.R. 1657: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 1674: Ms. CRAIG.
 H.R. 1685: Ms. BROWNLEY and Mr. PANETTA.
 H.R. 1703: Mr. MOULTON.
 H.R. 1706: Ms. GILLEN, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. RYAN.
 H.R. 1773: Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. FALLON, and Mr. JACKSON of Texas.
 H.R. 1782: Mr. BELL and Mr. FIGURES.
 H.R. 1845: Mr. VAN DREW and Mr. MASSIE.
 H.R. 1965: Mr. CONAWAY.
 H.R. 1987: Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 1991: Mr. MC GUIRE.
 H.R. 1993: Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Mr. COSTA, Ms. SCANLON, and Mrs. DINGELL.
 H.R. 2003: Mr. VAN DREW.

H.R. 2061: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 2086: Mr. MOSKOWITZ.
 H.R. 2089: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
 H.R. 2092: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 2189: Mr. MACKENZIE and Mr. MC GUIRE.
 H.R. 2192: Mr. BELL.
 H.R. 2203: Mr. HARDER of California.
 H.R. 2314: Mr. MC GUIRE.
 H.R. 2319: Mr. CISCOMANI.
 H.R. 2350: Mr. MEUSER.
 H.R. 2353: Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.
 H.R. 2362: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 2381: Mr. PETERS.
 H.R. 2477: Mr. CALVERT.
 H.R. 2478: Mr. SESSIONS.
 H.R. 2485: Ms. CRAIG.
 H.R. 2505: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
 H.R. 2538: Ms. BYNUM and Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
 H.R. 2548: Mr. HURD of Colorado, Mr. VASQUEZ, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. GOLDEN of Maine, Mr. MACKENZIE, Mr. AUCHINCLOSS, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, and Ms. SCANLON.
 H.R. 2551: Mr. SCHMIDT.
 H.R. 2577: Mrs. KIM and Ms. CRAIG.
 H.R. 2598: Mr. DELUZIO, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Mr. BISHOP.
 H.R. 2601: Mr. WALKINSHAW.
 H.R. 2605: Mr. CRENSHAW, Mrs. BICE, Mr. BELL, and Ms. ESCOBAR.
 H.R. 2642: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 2736: Mr. LALOTA.
 H.R. 2767: Mr. MAGAZINER, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. PETTERSEN, and Mr. SOTO.
 H.R. 2814: Mr. OWENS.
 H.R. 2818: Ms. TLAIB.
 H.R. 2837: Ms. CRAIG.
 H.R. 2843: Ms. LOFGREN.
 H.R. 2853: Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas, Mrs. TRAHAN, and Mr. PAPPAS.
 H.R. 2879: Mr. MEUSER.
 H.R. 2881: Mr. NEGUSE, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, and Mr. BEYER.
 H.R. 2896: Mr. YAKYM.
 H.R. 2902: Ms. BYNUM.
 H.R. 2936: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 2978: Mr. SHREVE.
 H.R. 3045: Mr. CLYBURN.
 H.R. 3049: Ms. JAYAPAL.
 H.R. 3078: Mr. LAWLER and Mr. HARRIGAN.
 H.R. 3102: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 3104: Mr. BERA.
 H.R. 3105: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania and Ms. BONAMICI.
 H.R. 3107: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 3108: Mr. WITTMAN.
 H.R. 3112: Mr. MEUSER.
 H.R. 3125: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 3131: Mr. BERGMAN and Ms. DE LA CRUZ.
 H.R. 3139: Ms. HOYLE of Oregon.
 H.R. 3151: Mr. LANDSMAN.
 H.R. 3164: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina and Mrs. DINGELL.
 H.R. 3184: Ms. HOYLE of Oregon.
 H.R. 3188: Ms. CHU.
 H.R. 3234: Mr. SESSIONS.
 H.R. 3241: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 3281: Ms. SIMON, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, and Ms. BYNUM.
 H.R. 3312: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 3353: Mr. MEUSER.
 H.R. 3427: Ms. GILLEN.
 H.R. 3474: Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, and Mr. KEAN.
 H.R. 3508: Ms. TLAIB.
 H.R. 3509: Mr. GRAY.
 H.R. 3514: Ms. McDONALD RIVET, Mr. RULLI, Ms. TLAIB, and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.
 H.R. 3519: Mr. FINE.
 H.R. 3526: Mr. OBERNOLTE.
 H.R. 3551: Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 3569: Mr. KENNEDY of New York, Ms. RANDALL, and Mr. BELL.
 H.R. 3592: Mr. CRENSHAW and Mr. SELF.
 H.R. 3597: Mr. LALOTA.

H.R. 3604: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
 H.R. 3634: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 3682: Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. BYNUM, and Mr. DOWNING.
 H.R. 3740: Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 3773: Mr. LAMALFA.
 H.R. 3808: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 3826: Mr. POCAN and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 3866: Ms. ESCOBAR.
 H.R. 3868: Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 3873: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 3876: Mr. GRAY.
 H.R. 3885: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 3906: Mrs. BEATTY and Mr. BISHOP.
 H.R. 3912: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 3921: Mr. CRENSHAW and Mr. QUIGLEY.
 H.R. 3930: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
 H.R. 3931: Mr. MOULTON.
 H.R. 3954: Mr. DOGGETT.
 H.R. 3962: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. MULLIN.
 H.R. 4008: Ms. SEWELL and Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
 H.R. 4032: Ms. BYNUM.
 H.R. 4033: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida and Ms. MALOY.
 H.R. 4092: Mr. HUNT.
 H.R. 4099: Mr. NEGUSE.
 H.R. 4101: Ms. NORTON and Ms. BALINT.
 H.R. 4105: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 4145: Mr. RUTHERFORD.
 H.R. 4168: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 4169: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 4176: Mrs. TRAHAN and Mr. NEAL.
 H.R. 4180: Mr. HIMES.
 H.R. 4194: Mr. CLINE.
 H.R. 4253: Mr. RASKIN.
 H.R. 4288: Mr. ISSA.
 H.R. 4327: Mr. TAYLOR.
 H.R. 4329: Mr. PETERS and Mr. McCaul.
 H.R. 4335: Mr. SCHMIDT.
 H.R. 4398: Mr. DELUZIO.
 H.R. 4425: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 4440: Ms. HOYLE of Oregon.
 H.R. 4441: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 4443: Mr. FITZPATRICK and Mr. KHANNA.
 H.R. 4503: Mr. CALVERT and Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas.
 H.R. 4577: Mr. YAKYM.
 H.R. 4606: Mr. LAWLER and Mr. SWALWELL.
 H.R. 4639: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 4667: Mr. GRAY.
 H.R. 4669: Mr. GUTHRIE.
 H.R. 4680: Ms. TLAIB and Mr. SORENSEN.
 H.R. 4681: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 4688: Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 4696: Ms. TLAIB.
 H.R. 4712: Mr. HURD of Colorado and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.
 H.R. 4717: Mr. LEVIN.
 H.R. 4721: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 4760: Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas.
 H.R. 4781: Mr. SCHMIDT.
 H.R. 4782: Mr. LATIMER and Mr. ELLZEY.
 H.R. 4796: Mr. LATIMER.
 H.R. 4821: Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia.
 H.R. 4843: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 4849: Ms. SCHRIER, Ms. MENG, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SWALWELL, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. PAPPAS, and Ms. PETTERSEN.
 H.R. 4879: Mrs. LUNA.
 H.R. 4922: Mr. GILL of Texas, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mrs. LUNA.
 H.R. 4924: Mr. McDOWELL.
 H.R. 4936: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 4949: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
 H.R. 4952: Mr. HARIDOPOLOS.
 H.R. 4955: Mr. DUNN of Florida.
 H.R. 4957: Mr. STUTZMAN and Mr. RILEY of New York.
 H.R. 4977: Mr. LAWLER.
 H.R. 4986: Ms. FEDORCHAK.
 H.R. 4989: Ms. DE LA CRUZ and Mr. NUNN of Iowa.
 H.R. 4993: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 4994: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 5013: Mr. CASE and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
 H.R. 5024: Mr. MILLER of Ohio.
 H.R. 5068: Ms. SCANLON, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. GARCIA of California, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Ms. BROWN, and Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 5075: Mr. RULLI.
 H.R. 5080: Mr. JACKSON of Texas.
 H.R. 5081: Ms. ROSS.
 H.R. 5093: Mr. LIEU.
 H.R. 5097: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 5105: Mr. HIMES, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. GRAY, and Mr. NUNN of Iowa.
 H.R. 5106: Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. POCAN, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Mr. MULLIN, Ms. GOODLANDER, Mr. GARCIA of Illinois, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Mr. VASQUEZ, Ms. SALINAS, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, and Mr. McGARVEY.
 H.R. 5116: Mr. McDOWELL and Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 5138: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 5140: Mrs. LUNA.
 H.R. 5143: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
 H.R. 5146: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 5152: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 5156: Mr. RULLI.
 H.R. 5158: Ms. MALOY.
 H.R. 5195: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
 H.R. 5199: Mr. VINDMAN.
 H.R. 5206: Mr. KENNEDY of New York and Ms. ELFRETH.
 H.R. 5208: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
 H.R. 5220: Mrs. FLETCHER.
 H.R. 5233: Mr. LAWLER.
 H.R. 5237: Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Ms. BARRAGÁN, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 5238: Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Ms. BARRAGÁN, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 5242: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
 H.R. 5257: Mr. MANN.
 H.R. 5260: Mr. HUNT.
 H.R. 5267: Mr. MEUSER and Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
 H.R. 5270: Mr. SESSIONS.
 H.R. 5271: Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Mr. LAWLER.
 H.R. 5279: Mr. PATRONIS.
 H.R. 5281: Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 5284: Mr. CLINE, Mr. YAKYM, and Mr. MOORE of Utah.
 H.R. 5291: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
 H.R. 5298: Mr. CASAR and Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 5312: Mr. MILLER of Ohio.
 H.R. 5322: Mr. KENNEDY of New York and Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas.
 H.R. 5323: Mr. MOYLAN.
 H.R. 5332: Ms. MCBRIDE and Mr. LIEU.
 H.R. 5334: Mr. LAWLER.
 H.R. 5336: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Mr. CASAR.

H.J. Res. 108: Mr. CARBAJAL.
 H.J. Res. 111: Mr. CLINE.
 H.J. Res. 113: Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. CHU, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. FLETCHER, Mr. FROST, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. MULLIN, and Ms. SIMON.
 H.J. Res. 115: Mr. BELL, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. FROST, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Ms. BYNUM, Mr. KENNEDY of New York, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. DELAUBO, Mr. LIEU, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
 H. Res. 100: Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ.
 H. Res. 120: Mr. CALVERT.
 H. Res. 473: Ms. MORRISON.
 H. Res. 575: Mr. LALOTA.
 H. Res. 651: Mr. LALOTA.
 H. Res. 670: Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas.
 H. Res. 671: Ms. MCBRIDE.
 H. Res. 677: Mr. CARSON.
 H. Res. 684: Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida.
 H. Res. 695: Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. BARR, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. SHREVE, Mr. COLLINS, Mrs. HOUCHE, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. ALFORD, Mr. JACKSON of Texas, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. FLOOD, and Mr. GUTHRIE.
 H. Res. 697: Ms. BALINT.
 H. Res. 700: Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas, Ms. MACE, Mr. BRECHEEN, Mr. MOORE of North Carolina, Mr. MOORE of West Virginia, Mr. HURD of Colorado, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. RULLI, Mr. KNOTT, Mr. BALDERSO, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. ALFORD, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. LAWLER, Mrs. HARSHBARGER, Mr. McDowell, Mr. CRENSHAW, Ms. TENNEY, Mrs. HOUCHE, Mr. STEIL, Mr. DOWNING, Mr. HARRIGAN, Mr. CRANK, Mr. WIED, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. LANGWORTHY, Mr. VAN DREW, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Ms. HAGEMAN, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. ELLZEEY, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, and Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina.
 H. Res. 702: Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. JACK, Mr. BERGMAN, Mrs. LUNA, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Ms. BOEBERT, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. BURCHETT, Mr. GILL of Texas, Mr. CLOUD, Mr. ALFORD, Mr. NEHLS, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mrs. HARSHBARGER, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. CALVERT, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. FALLON, Mr. STUTZMAN, Ms. GREENE of Georgia, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. MILLER of Ohio, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. SELF, Mr. VAN ORDEN, Mr. CAREY, Mr. RULLI, Mr. FULCHER, Mr. AMODEI of Nevada, Mr. BRECHEEN, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. PERRY, Mr. DONALDS, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. HARRIS of Maryland, Mr. MACKENZIE, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. SMITH of

Missouri, Mrs. HOUCHE, Mr. BABBIN, Mr. MCGUIRE, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. MORAN, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. HARRIS of North Carolina, Mr. BALDERSO, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. WALBERG, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, Mr. STEIL, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. LAMALFA, Mrs. MCCLAIN, Mr. BACON, Mr. SIMPSON, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina, Mr. KUSTOFF, Mr. PALMER, and Mr. GUTHRIE.
 H. Res. 704: Ms. MCBRIDE, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. KHANNA.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. COMER

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in H.R. 4922, the DC CRIMES Act of 2025, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. COMER

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in H.R. 5125, the District of Columbia Judicial Nominations Reform Act of 2025, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. COMER

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in H.R. 5140, to lower the age at which a minor may be tried as an adult for certain criminal offenses in the District of Columbia to 14 years of age, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. COMER

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in H.R. 5143, the District of Columbia Policing Protection Act of 2025, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.