

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise in support of S. 1455.

Mr. Speaker, as we are all aware, the cost of a college education is becoming increasingly high, causing more and more students to seek some type of financial assistance. Fortunately there are a number of private and Federal scholarship opportunities available to needy and deserving students. However, some unscrupulous companies are making money off unsuspecting students and their families by imitating legitimate government agencies and grant-giving foundations.

Often these fraudulent companies guarantee scholarships in exchange for an advanced fee. Other times they trick students into divulging their checking account numbers and access their accounts without their consent. Whatever the particular scheme, more than 350,000 students and their families lose over \$5 million to scholarship fraud every year.

To address this growing problem, in 1996 the Federal Trade Commission launched Project ScholarScam, a joint law enforcement and consumer education effort aimed at purveyors of fraudulent scholarship services. While the FTC should be commended for its efforts to educate and prevent the exploitation of students and their families, the agency lacks the authority to prosecute scholarship scam artists to the fullest extent of the law.

S. 1455 not only increases the criminal penalties for fraud in connection with the provision of scholarship services, it removes the shield of bankruptcy that many financial assistance services hide behind when prosecuted. In addition, S. 1455 requires the Department of Education, in conjunction with the FTC, to create a Web site of legitimate sources of scholarship information.

I urge Members to support this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I commend the speakers that have spoken on this bill and those who helped lead the way in the Senate as well. Again we have seen bipartisan cooperation.

I rise today in support of S. 1455, the College Scholarship Fraud Prevention Act of 1999. This bill will prevent unscrupulous businesses from defrauding vulnerable students and their families seeking to finance their education. In essence we identified a scam that needs to be corrected and we have done it with common sense, bipartisan legislation. I urge my colleagues to follow the lead of the other body and pass this legislation this afternoon.

Students in Michigan and across the Nation are targeted by corrupt companies who prey on their hopes and dreams for a college education. A college education is one of the most important investments a person will ever

make. College is not only a place where students decide what professions to follow but, more importantly, a place that begins their journey into adulthood. While education is central to students, it is even more vital to our Nation. Our political system depends on an educated citizenry who are able to make informed decisions. Also in light of the continual technological advances, businesses require an educated workforce. Thus, we want to encourage more students to in fact pursue a college education.

But each year crooked companies send literally thousands of letters out to hopeful students offering bogus scholarships. Scam artists target some of the most vulnerable members of our society. They collect millions of dollars, not thousands but millions of dollars, by preying on the hopes and dreams of students who desire to improve their life through higher education.

The FTC, the Federal Trade Commission, has been aware of this growing problem. In fact, in 1996 the FTC initiated Project Scholarship Scam, a nationwide crackdown on fraudulent scholarship search services. Though the FTC is dedicated to stopping these con artists, the FTC can only file civil charges that include redress to defrauded consumers and injunctions prohibiting or restricting future market activity. In most cases, the defendants settle with the FTC because evidence of their fraudulent conduct is so overwhelming. For example, in one case Student Assistance Services paid \$300,000 to defrauded consumers and agreed not to offer further scholarship services and to pose, in fact, a \$75 bond before telemarketing. Reluctantly, the FTC can only use injunctions to deter these con artists from their activities because they lack the authority to prosecute them on criminal charges.

It is clear that what this bill will do is in fact provide more protection for the most vulnerable members of our community, needy students and their families, than ever before. I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation and commend the remarks of my previous colleagues who spoke in support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KILDEE. 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 Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1455.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CORRECTING TECHNICAL ERRORS IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 1455, COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP FRAUD PREVENTION ACT OF 1999

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 407) to direct the Secretary of the Senate to correct technical errors in the enrollment of S. 1455, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and I do not intend to object, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan for an explanation of his request.

Mr. UPTON. I thank the gentleman from the great State of Michigan for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this concurrent resolution allows the enrolling clerk to make technical corrections and citation changes.

Mr. KILDEE. I thank the gentleman for his explanation.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 407

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That, in the enrollment of the bill (S. 1455), to enhance protections against fraud in the offering of financial assistance for college education, and for other purposes, the Secretary of the Senate shall make the following corrections:

(1) In section 1, strike "of 1999" and insert "of 2000".

(2) In section 3, strike "base level offense for" and insert "enhanced penalty the guidelines establish for a".

(3) In section 522(c)(4) of title 11, United States Code, as amended by section 4(3) of the bill—

(A) strike "obtaining or"; and

(B) strike "Higher Education Act of 1954" and insert "Higher Education Act of 1965".

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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HMONG VETERANS' NATURALIZATION ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2000

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5234) to amend the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 2000 to extend the applicability of that Act to certain former spouses of deceased Hmong veterans.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5234

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF HMONG VETERANS' NATURALIZATION ACT OF 2000 TO CERTAIN FORMER SPOUSES OF DECEASED HMONG VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2 of the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-207; 114 Stat. 316; 8 U.S.C. 1423 note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking "or" at the end;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; or"; and

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

"(3) who—

"(A) satisfies the requirement of paragraph (1)(A); and

"(B) is the surviving spouse of a person described in paragraph (1)(B) which described person was killed or died in Laos, Thailand, or Vietnam."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3 of such Act is amended by striking "or (2)" and inserting ", (2), or (3)".

(c) DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION.—Section 6 of such Act is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "In the case of a person described in section 2(3), the application referred to in the preceding sentence, and appropriate fees, shall be filed not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this sentence."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year Congress enacted legislation facilitating naturalization for Hmong veterans who were admitted to the United States as refugees. Recruited to assist our combat effort in Indochina, the Hmong had made great sacrifices on our behalf and faced persecution because of their association with us.

Many Hmong in the United States today continue to face unique language problems that can be traced to the fact that they grew up in a predominantly preliterate society without educational opportunities. By enacting Public Law 106-207, the Hmong Veterans Naturalization Act of 2000, this Congress very appropriately sought to remove insurmountable obstacles to citizenship by providing an exemption from the English language requirement and authorizing special consideration relating to the civics requirement. The potential beneficiaries, Hmong veterans and spouses who came to the United States as refugees, were limited to 45,000.

The bill before us today corrects an omission in Public Law 106-207's de-

scription of spouses without raising the ceiling on total potential beneficiaries. Under H.R. 5234, surviving spouses of Hmong who served with special guerrilla units or irregular forces and were killed or died in Laos, Thailand or Vietnam can qualify for facilitated naturalization.

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The equities in favor of helping these widows certainly are as great as the equities in favor of helping widows who already benefit from Public Law 106-207, namely, those whose husbands were able to apply for refugee status and make it to the United States. The widows in both groups are living permanently in this country after having been admitted as refugees.

The surviving spouses we seek to help now, like the widows who benefited from Public Law 106-207, are survivors of those who made common cause with us at great personal peril to themselves and their families.

I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) for introducing this important bill and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO), the author of the bill that became Public Law 106-207 and the cosponsor of H.R. 5234, who also deserves great credit for his tireless efforts on behalf of the Hmong over the years.

This is a humane measure that merits the support of my colleagues.

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

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

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, as is his custom, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) has given a very, very thorough explanation of this bill, and I concur with what the gentleman has said.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important bill because the Hmong have stood by the U.S. at a crucial time in our history and now is the time to repay and honor the loyalty of Hmong veterans. The Hmong were a pre-literate society. They had no written language in use when the United States recruited them during the Vietnam War. The best symbol of why H.R. 5234 is necessary is the Hmong "story cloth," the Pandau cloth, that is their embroidered cloth record of important historical events and oral traditions.

Mr. Speaker, I approve of the new correction language which allows the spouses of the Hmong veterans who made it to the United States, but for whatever reason their husbands did not and remained in Laos. This additional correction which is being initiated by the House will waive the language and civics requirements for these widows who have been granted legal permanent residency.

I join Chairman SMITH and the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims in commending the Lao Veterans of America for its tireless efforts for the Hmong. I too also commend our colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota, Mr. VENTO, for his sponsorship of this legislation.

The Hmong were critical to the American war strategy in S.E. Asia—especially the U.S. air strategy. Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides for the expedited naturalization of Hmong veterans of the U.S. Secret Army currently residing in the United States (as legal aliens) who served with U.S. clandestine and special forces during the Vietnam War by allowing them to take the citizenship test with a translator since the Hmong are a tribal people with no written language, thus relying solely on the "story cloths".

The bill is capped at 45,000, in terms of the total of number of Hmong veterans, their widows and orphans who currently reside in the United States who would fall under the legislation. This correction legislation will not count against the cap. This cap is supported by the Hmong veterans in the United States and is considered to be a generous cap. I support this legislation to provide relief to the Hmong heroes.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support for H.R. 5234, the Hmong Veterans Naturalization Act. I commend Representative RADANOVICH, the gentleman from California, for crafting this important bill.

The spouses of the brave Hmong freedom fighters who were our allies during the Vietnam War deserve to be given special consideration for naturalization. The Hmong Veterans Naturalization Act, H.R. 371 was signed into law on May 26 of this year. That historic legislation assists Hmong and Laotian veterans of the U.S. secret army that fought in Laos. Currently, however, several thousand Laotian and Hmong widows living in the United States whose husbands died in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War were excluded under the new law. H.R. 5234 would rectify this problem.

It is the very least that we can do for these people who had to flee their homeland because they protected our downed fighter pilots and fought by the sides of our soldiers.

Accordingly, I urge our colleagues to support H.R. 5234.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5234, legislation to amend The Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 2000.

I am pleased with the passage of H.R. 5234, the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act, and the president signing it into law. It was a necessary step in assisting the Hmong, a special group of legal immigrants who served with the U.S. Armed Forces and now require help in obtaining U.S. citizenship. It waives the residency requirement for those Hmong and their spouses. Additionally, it waives the English language test and residency requirement for attainment of U.S. citizenship.

The Hmong Veterans' Naturalization was an important piece of legislation that will impact thousands of people in the United States, including the large Lao-Hmong community in my home district of western Wisconsin. H.R. 5234, however, extends the applicability of the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act to widows of the veterans covered by that law. They were inadvertently left out under the original legislation. Under this measure, therefore, the widows of those veterans would be exempt from certain citizenship requirements. This bill will help many more Hmong families and that is why I support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the Hmong people need our help. It is wrong to abandon these men and women who served as valuable allies to us

during the Southeastern Asian conflict. I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation. And I want to especially commend and thank Representative BRUCE VENTO for his leadership and hard work on behalf of the Hmong and this legislation. I'm sure all my colleagues join me in wishing him a speedy recovery and a happy retirement.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is an important bill because the Hmong have stood by the U.S. at a crucial time in our history and now is the time to repay and honor the loyalty of Hmong veterans. The Hmong were a pre-literate society. They had no written language in use when the United States recruited them during the Vietnam War. The best symbol of why H.R. 5234 is necessary is the Hmong "story cloth," the Pandau cloth, that is their embroidered cloth record of important historical events and oral traditions.

Mr. Speaker, I approve of the new correction language which allows the spouses of the Hmong veterans who made it to the United States, but for whatever reason their husbands did not and they remained in Laos. This additional correction which is being initiated by the House will waive the language and civics requirements for these widows who have been granted legal permanent residency.

I join Chairman SMITH in commending the Lao Veterans of America for its tireless efforts for the Hmong. I too also commend our colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota, Mr. VENTO, for his sponsorship of this legislation.

The Hmong were critical to the American war strategy in S.E. Asia—especially the U.S. air strategy. Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides for the expedited naturalization of Hmong veterans of the U.S. Secret Army currently residing in the United States (as legal aliens) who served with U.S. clandestine and special forces during the Vietnam War by allowing them to take the citizenship test with a translator since the Hmong are a tribal people with no written language, thus relying solely on the "story cloths." The bill is capped at 45,000, in terms of the total of number of Hmong veterans, their widows and orphans who currently reside in the United States who would fall under this legislation. This correction legislation will not count against the cap. This cap is supported by the Hmong veterans in the United States and is considered to be a generous cap. I support this legislation to provide relief to the Hmong heroes.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 5234, a measure that would extend the applicability of the Hmong Veteran's Naturalization Act (PL 106-207) to widows of the veterans covered by that law.

As I've stated in the past, the Lao-Hmong people stood honorably by the United States at a critical time in our nation's history. Approximately 60,000 Lao-Hmong know the Minnesota region as their new home and I have long championed efforts to help ease their adjustment into our society. Many of the older Lao-Hmong patriots who made it to the U.S. are separated from their family members and have had a difficult time adjusting to many aspects of life and culture in the U.S., including passing aspects of the required citizenship test.

I appreciate the efforts of those in my district and nationwide to clarify an unintended oversight of the Hmong Veteran's Naturalization Act. Clearly, this Congress did not intend to exclude the widows of those veterans who sacrificed for our country. It is my hope that this technical bill will clear the confusion, and

that the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and Department of Justice (DOJ) will work to ensure full and proper implementation of the language and spirit of this law.

I was greatly heartened when my colleagues joined me earlier this year to stand with the Lao-Hmong in their struggle to become U.S. citizens and to live a good life in the United States. We were right to recognize their dedication and service. Now we must guarantee that no one is inadvertently left out. I strongly urge your support of this bill.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5234.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for approximately 10 minutes.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess for approximately 10 minutes.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD) at 2 o'clock and 58 minutes p.m.

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SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2000

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 590) providing for the concurrence by the House with an amendment in the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 2392.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 590

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution the House shall be considered to have taken from the Speaker's table the bill H.R. 2392, with the amendment of the Senate thereto, and to have concurred in the amendment of the Senate with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the amendment of the Senate, insert the following:

SECTION 1. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Table of contents.

TITLE I—SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH PROGRAM

Sec. 101. Short title.

Sec. 102. Findings.

Sec. 103. Extension of SBIR program.

Sec. 104. Annual report.

Sec. 105. Third phase assistance.

Sec. 106. Report on programs for annual performance plan.

Sec. 107. Output and outcome data.

Sec. 108. National Research Council reports.

Sec. 109. Federal agency expenditures for the SBIR program.

Sec. 110. Policy directive modifications.

Sec. 111. Federal and State technology partnership program.

Sec. 112. Mentoring networks.

Sec. 113. Simplified reporting requirements.

Sec. 114. Rural outreach program extension.

TITLE II—GENERAL BUSINESS LOAN PROGRAM

Sec. 201. Short title.

Sec. 202. Levels of participation.

Sec. 203. Loan amounts.

Sec. 204. Interest on defaulted loans.

Sec. 205. Prepayment of loans.

Sec. 206. Guarantee fees.

Sec. 207. Lease terms.

TITLE III—CERTIFIED DEVELOPMENT COMPANY PROGRAM

Sec. 301. Short title.

Sec. 302. Women-owned businesses.

Sec. 303. Maximum debenture size.

Sec. 304. Fees.

Sec. 305. Premier certified lenders program.

Sec. 306. Sale of certain defaulted loans.

Sec. 307. Loan liquidation.

TITLE IV—CORRECTIONS TO THE SMALL BUSINESS INVESTMENT ACT OF 1958

Sec. 401. Short title.

Sec. 402. Definitions.

Sec. 403. Investment in small business investment companies.

Sec. 404. Subsidy fees.

Sec. 405. Distributions.

Sec. 406. Conforming amendment.

TITLE V—REAUTHORIZATION OF SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS

Sec. 501. Short title.

Sec. 502. Reauthorization of small business programs.

Sec. 503. Additional reauthorizations.

TITLE VI—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Sec. 601. Loan application processing.

Sec. 602. Application of ownership requirements.

Sec. 603. Eligibility for HUBZone program.

Sec. 604. Subcontracting preference for veterans.

Sec. 605. Small business development center program funding.

Sec. 606. Surety bonds.

TITLE I—SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH PROGRAM

SECTION 101. SHORT TITLE.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This title may be cited as the "Small Business Innovation Research Program Reauthorization Act of 2000".

SEC. 102. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) the small business innovation research program established under the Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982, and reauthorized by the Small Business Research and Development Enhancement Act of 1992 (in this Act referred to as the "SBIR program") is highly successful in involving small businesses in federally funded research and development;

(2) the SBIR program made the cost-effective and unique research and development capabilities possessed by the small businesses of the Nation available to Federal agencies and departments;

(3) the innovative goods and services developed by small businesses that participated in the SBIR program have produced innovations of critical importance in a wide variety of high-technology fields, including biology, medicine, education, and defense;

(4) the SBIR program is a catalyst in the promotion of research and development, the commercialization of innovative technology, the development of new products and services, and the continued excellence of this Nation's high-technology industries; and

(5) the continuation of the SBIR program will provide expanded opportunities for one