

However, this legislation is still pending in the Senate, as the other body has been unable to complete action on a long-term FAA reauthorization bill. Given that the current authority for aviation programs expires on December 31, an extension of current law is necessary to continue financing of aviation programs until a multi-year reauthorization bill can be completed. H.R. 4217 provides a three-month extension of aviation programs, through March 31, 2010.

H.R. 4217 provides \$2 billion in contract authority for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) through the end of March. This \$2 billion will enable airports to move forward with important safety and capacity projects. When annualized, this level of AIP funding equals \$4 billion, which is consistent with both the House and Senate FAA reauthorization bills, and the FY 2010 Concurrent Budget Resolution.

The bill also authorizes appropriations for FAA Operations, Facilities and Equipment (F&E), and Research, Engineering, and Development (RE&D) programs, consistent with average funding levels of the FY 2010 House-approved appropriations bill and the Senate-approved appropriations bill.

In addition, H.R. 4217 extends the aviation excise taxes through March 31, 2010. These taxes are necessary to support the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, which funds a substantial portion of the FAA's budget. With an uncommitted cash balance of just \$251 million at the end of FY 2009, any lapse in the aviation taxes could put the solvency of the Trust Fund at risk.

In addition to extending the aviation taxes, H.R. 4217 extends the FAA's authority to make expenditures from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund through March 2010.

To allow aviation programs to continue under the same terms and conditions as were in effect during the previous authorization period, H.R. 4217 also extends several other provisions of Vision 100.

I thank Chairman RANGEL, Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, for introducing this measure, and for his assistance in ensuring the continued operation of aviation programs. I also thank Ways and Means Committee Ranking Member CAMP and my Committee colleagues, Ranking Member MICA, Subcommittee Chairman COSTELLO, and Subcommittee Ranking Member PETRI, for working with me on this critical legislation.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 4217.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. With that, 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 Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4217.

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.

NO SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS FOR PRISONERS ACT OF 2009

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4218) to amend titles II and XVI

of the Social Security Act to prohibit retroactive payments to individuals during periods for which such individuals are prisoners, fugitive felons, or probation or parole violators.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4218

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 "No Social Security Benefits for Prisoners Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION OF RETROACTIVE TITLE II AND TITLE XVI PAYMENTS TO PRISONERS, FUGITIVE FELONS, AND PROBATION OR PAROLE VIOLATORS.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO TITLE II.—Section 204(a)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 404(a)(1)(B)) is amended—

(1) by striking "(B) With" and inserting "(B)(i) Subject to clause (ii), with"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(ii) No payment shall be made under this subparagraph to any person during any period for which monthly insurance benefits of such person—

"(I) are subject to nonpayment by reason of section 202(x)(1), or

"(II) in the case of a person whose monthly insurance benefits have terminated for a reason other than death, would be subject to nonpayment by reason of section 202(x)(1) but for the termination of such benefits, until section 202(x)(1) no longer applies, or would no longer apply in the case of benefits that have terminated.

"(iii) Nothing in clause (ii) shall be construed to limit the Commissioner's authority to withhold amounts, make adjustments, or recover amounts due under this title, title VIII or title XVI that would be deducted from a payment that would otherwise be payable to such person but for such clause."

(b) AMENDMENTS TO TITLE XVI.—Section 1631(b) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1383(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(7)(A) In the case of payment of less than the correct amount of benefits to or on behalf of any individual, no payment shall be made to such individual pursuant to this subsection during any period for which such individual—

"(i) is not an eligible individual or eligible spouse under section 1611(e)(1) because such individual is an inmate of a public institution that is a jail, prison, or other penal institution or correctional facility the purpose of which is to confine individuals as described in clause (ii) or (iii) of section 202(x)(1)(A), or

"(ii) is not an eligible individual or eligible spouse under section 1611(e)(4), until such person is no longer considered an ineligible individual or ineligible spouse under section 1611(e)(1) or 1611(e)(4).

"(B) Nothing in subparagraph (A) shall be construed to limit the Commissioner's authority to withhold amounts, make adjustments, or recover amounts due under this title, title II, or title VIII that would be deducted from a payment that would otherwise be payable to such individual but for such subparagraph."

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall be effective for payments that would otherwise be made on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4218.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. JOHNSON and I bring this bill to the floor today. It's a stopgap measure, Mr. Speaker.

The Social Security Act already prohibits payment of Social Security and SSI benefits to individuals in prison and to those who are fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody, or confinement for a felony. The law also prohibits payments to individuals violating a condition of parole or probation. However, payments of retroactive benefits owed to such individuals are not currently barred by law, and this ensures that retroactive payments are treated the same as monthly benefits.

The need for this law to be done quickly is because of a recent court determination that the Social Security Administration's implementation of this prohibition for those fleeing prosecution or imprisonment was applied too broadly. Without this legislation, the Social Security Administration will be obligated under court order to make payments to some of these individuals as early as next week.

What Mr. JOHNSON and I wanted to do was to bring this bill today and pass it so we can get it to the Senate and give some guidance to the Social Security Administration in this regard.

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the point of this bill is simple. Social Security and supplemental security income benefits should not be paid to prisoners, probation, or parole violators or fugitive felons. That is why I joined the Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee with JOHN TANNER, who is great about looking into these things, and we cosponsored this bill. And I ask all of my colleagues to support it.

This stopgap measure addresses a glitch in the current law discovered when Social Security began to implement a nationwide class-action settlement agreement reached in September in the case of *Martinez v. Astrue*. That agreement reduced the number and type of felony arrest warrants used to prohibit benefit payments, resulting in retroactive payments to certain recipients.

In the first phase of settlement implementation, notices will be issued beginning this week to 28,000 individuals. Of these, Social Security recently identified 150 as prisoners.

Current law already prohibits prisoners, fugitive felons, and probation/parole violators from receiving benefits. The same law should apply to retroactive benefits as well but right now

it doesn't. That is why we need to pass this bill. If we don't, prisoners eligible for payments from before they were in jail may soon receive a lump sum retroactive check, some covering back benefits over 3 or 4 years.

Thanks in large part to the work of my Ways and Means colleague, WALLY HERGER, those with outstanding felony arrest warrants, known as fugitive felons, have not been able to receive supplemental security income, Social Security, or Social Security disability benefits.

According to the Office of the Inspector General, their data-sharing efforts with local, State, and Federal law enforcement agencies contributed to over 83,000 arrests since the program's inception in 1996. While well-intentioned, the Martinez settlement nevertheless requires Social Security to pay benefits that had been suspended. And as a result, taxpayers are now on the hook for millions of dollars. We can and we must do better.

I look forward to working with Chairman TANNER to right this wrong and draft legislation to suspend payments for those fugitives wanted for the most heinous crimes while permitting lenience in cases where good cause exemptions make sense.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TANNER. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. At this time, I'd like to recognize and yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER), a member of the Ways and Means Committee and one of our staunch allies, as much time as he may consume.

Mr. HERGER. I thank my good friend from Texas.

I rise today to discuss an issue I have been involved with for many years.

The landmark 1996 welfare reform included legislation I drafted that denies fugitive felons, along with probation and parole violators, Supplemental Security Income checks. GAO long recognized those SSI disability payments were at a high risk for fraud and abuse and encouraged Congress to act. Subsequent legislation expanded that 1996 ban to include certain Social Security checks. These provisions have been successful in saving millions of taxpayer dollars and have assisted law enforcement in making over 86,000 arrests and getting felons off the street, including a man wanted in Texas for 20 counts of child molestation.

Due to a recent court action, however, the Social Security Administration now is required to ban payments only to fugitive felons issued a warrant for trying to escape arrest rather than the broader group of fugitives with an outstanding felony arrest warrant. That action also compels SSA to restore benefits denied earlier, which will result in large retroactive payments of as much as \$30,000 per individual. Not only will this cost taxpayers millions of dollars, but I'm deeply concerned that the effectiveness of the program

we set up in 1996 could be greatly reduced.

The bill before us would immediately prevent checks for past-due Social Security and SSI benefits from being sent to currently incarcerated individuals, including checks that, without this action, could pay inmates tens of thousands of dollars while they are behind bars. Thus, the bill before us is a step in the right direction of addressing issues created by the court decision.

But there are more steps to take.

Following release of an October 2009 report from the SSA Inspector General that brought to light concerns with SSA's fugitive felon policy, I joined other Ways and Means members in requesting additional information on how SSA has used the good cause exemptions it is already allowed to make in certain cases. I believe the Social Security Administration should continue to suspend payments for those fugitives wanted based on the most heinous crimes while using the authority it already has to make good cause exemptions as appropriate.

As the legislation before us suggests, many of those made eligible for disability payments under the recent court action continue to break the law and can and do wind up in jail, costing taxpayers thousands of dollars.

I look forward to the Inspector General's response to our inquiry so that Congress can determine the best way forward to improve this important program and prevent the misuse of taxpayer dollars while protecting those who truly merit relief.

Let's stop these payments from going to prisoners today, and then keep working to ensure the right people are getting the right benefits and that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely to help only those truly in need.

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. JOHNSON for working with us on this.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. 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 Tennessee (Mr. TANNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4218.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H. Res. 845, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 2278, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 915, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 907, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

RECOGNIZING THE AIR FORCE AND DYESS AIR FORCE BASE ON ACHIEVING ENERGY SAVINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 845, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 845, as amended.

This will be a 15-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 409, nays 0, not voting 25, as follows:

[Roll No. 935]

YEAS—409

Ackerman	Carter	Fattah
Aderholt	Cassidy	Filner
Adler (NJ)	Castle	Flake
Akin	Castor (FL)	Fleming
Alexander	Chaffetz	Forbes
Altmire	Chandler	Fortenberry
Andrews	Childers	Foster
Austria	Chu	Fox
Baca	Clarke	Frank (MA)
Bachmann	Clay	Franks (AZ)
Bachus	Cleaver	Frelinghuysen
Baird	Clyburn	Fudge
Baldwin	Coble	Gallegly
Barrow	Coffman (CO)	Garamendi
Bartlett	Cohen	Garrett (NJ)
Barton (TX)	Cole	Gerlach
Bean	Conaway	Giffords
Becerra	Connolly (VA)	Gingrey (GA)
Berkley	Conyers	Gohmert
Berry	Cooper	Gonzalez
Biggert	Costa	Goodlatte
Bilbray	Costello	Gordon (TN)
Bilirakis	Courtney	Granger
Bishop (GA)	Crenshaw	Graves
Bishop (NY)	Crowley	Grayson
Bishop (UT)	Cuellar	Green, Al
Blackburn	Culberson	Green, Gene
Blumenauer	Cummings	Griffith
Blunt	Dahlkemper	Guthrie
Boccheri	Davis (CA)	Gutierrez
Boehner	Davis (IL)	Hall (NY)
Bonner	Davis (KY)	Hall (TX)
Boozman	Davis (TN)	Halvorson
Boren	Deal (GA)	Hare
Boswell	DeFazio	Harman
Boustany	DeGette	Harper
Boyd	Delahunt	Hastings (FL)
Brady (PA)	DeLauro	Hastings (WA)
Brady (TX)	Dent	Heinrich
Braley (IA)	Diaz-Balart, L.	Heller
Bright	Diaz-Balart, M.	Hensarling
Brown (SC)	Dicks	Herger
Brown, Corrine	Dingell	Herseth Sandlin
Brown-Waite,	Doggett	Higgins
Ginny	Donnelly (IN)	Hill
Buchanan	Doyle	Himes
Burgess	Dreier	Hinche
Burton (IN)	Driehaus	Hinojosa
Butterfield	Duncan	Hirono
Buyer	Edwards (MD)	Hodes
Calvert	Edwards (TX)	Holden
Camp	Ehlers	Holt
Campbell	Ellison	Honda
Cantor	Ellsworth	Hoyer
Cao	Emerson	Hunter
Capito	Engel	Inglis
Capps	Eshoo	Inlee
Cardoza	Etheridge	Israel
Carnahan	Fallin	Issa
Carson (IN)	Farr	Jackson (IL)