

Church in Wichita, Kansas. Dr. Tiller was murdered because he had provided comprehensive legal reproductive healthcare to women and their families.

For 20 years, Dr. Tiller lived under a constant threat of violence. His clinic was bombed in 1986 and he was shot in both arms in 1993. He received constant death threats. Despite feeling the need to wear body armor and travel with a guard dog, he continued to provide reproductive services to women, often in the most difficult and heartbreaking circumstances. Dr. Tiller once said that he provided these services because "Women and families are intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and ethically competent to struggle with complex health issues—including abortion," he said, "and come to decisions that are appropriate for themselves." I could not agree more. Women must have the right to make their own reproductive choices.

Regardless of one's personal feelings about abortion, we all must stand vigilant against such abhorrent and vile acts of violence. To murder someone because of disagreement with his belief system is morally, ethically, and legally wrong. It is especially disturbing that this murder took place in a church. Assaulting, intimidating, and harassing doctors and clinic employees should not be tolerated.

Dr. Tiller's death is only one act of violence against those that perform abortion services. Pro-life extremists have engaged in more than 5,800 reported acts of violence against abortion providers since 1977, including bombings, arsons, death threats, kidnappings, and assaults, as well as more than 143,000 reported acts of disruption, including bomb threats and harassing calls. Eight abortion providers have been murdered in the United States, and another 17 have been the victims of attempted murder. It is past time that we condemn the violence and intimidation against clinics that provide legal services to women in need.

I hope and pray that the friends and family members of Dr. Tiller find solace and comfort as we deal together with this historic and heartbreaking episode.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 505, which condemns the tragic murder of Dr. George Tiller. The murder of Dr. Tiller is a form of domestic terrorism that we cannot tolerate in our country.

I firmly agree with President Obama that we can maintain our beliefs while agreeing to disagree. Dr. Tiller's medical practice in Kansas was operating legally, and we must abide by the rule of law.

Mr. Speaker, I have personal knowledge of the work of Dr. Tiller. In 2000, my Subcommittee Staff Director, Jason Steinbaum, and his wife, Miriam, were expecting a child. This was their first baby, and they were very excited about becoming new parents.

Through visit after visit to their doctor, they learned the pregnancy was proceeding well and all seemed normal. The sonograms were all as they should have been, until calamity struck. At 28 weeks the doctors discovered a horrible brain deformity. They said the baby would die in utero or shortly after birth.

I recall that Jason and Miriam went from doctor to doctor and hospital to hospital to try to find a way to save their baby boy, but all told them that there was no chance that he would live. At that point, after consulting with their clergy, their doctors, and their families, they decided to terminate the pregnancy to put an end to this tragedy in their lives.

At 28 weeks, however, extremely few physicians in the country would provide the medical care they needed. Dr. Tiller was recommended to them as the best physician to help them.

I recall that I could not believe they had to fly to Wichita, Kansas to get the medical care they required. As a member of Congress from New York, I have become accustomed to receiving the best health care in New York City and could not imagine that they would have to travel half way across the country because no such clinic existed nearby. Nevertheless, when they determined that there was no other place to which they could turn, Jason, Miriam, and their mothers flew to Kansas to Women's Health Care Services of Wichita and Dr. Tiller.

Jason has told me that the care they received at Dr. Tiller's clinic was extraordinary and that the people at the clinic treated them as well as they could imagine. The procedure was safe and humane, and at the end, they held their baby boy for a moment and said goodbye. Today, the baby is buried not far from their home in north Virginia.

So, as the House votes on this solemn resolution, I ask that my colleagues reflect for a moment on the fact that Dr. Tiller helped someone right here in our congressional community and that his murderer took someone who was there for one of us in a time of need. This is a terribly sad day, and I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 505.

Mr. NADLER of New York. 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 New York (Mr. NADLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 505.

The question was taken.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

WITNESS SECURITY AND PROTECTION GRANT PROGRAM ACT OF 2009

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1741) to require the Attorney General to make competitive grants to eligible State, tribal, and local prosecutors to establish and maintain certain protection and witness assistance programs, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1741

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 "Witness Security and Protection Grant Program Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF WITNESS PROTECTION GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall make competitive grants to eligible State, tribal,

and local governments to establish or maintain programs that provide protection or assistance to witnesses in court proceedings involving homicide, or involving a serious violent felony or serious drug offense as defined in section 3559(c)(2) of title 18, United States Code. The Attorney General shall ensure that, to the extent reasonable and practical, such grants are made to achieve an equitable geographical distribution of such programs throughout the United States.

(b) STATE DEFINED.—For purposes of this Act, the term "State" means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

SEC. 3. USE OF GRANTS.

A grant made under section 2 may be used only to pay all or part of the cost of the program for which such grant is made.

SEC. 4. PRIORITY.

In making grants under section 2, the Attorney General shall give priority to applications submitted under section 5 involving programs in States with an average of not less than 100 murders per year during the most recent 5-year period, as calculated using the latest available crime statistics from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

SEC. 5. APPLICATION.

To be eligible for a grant under section 2, a State, tribal, or local government shall submit to the Office of Justice Programs an application in such form and manner, at such time, and accompanied by such information as the Attorney General specifies.

SEC. 6. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

From amounts made available to carry out this Act, the Attorney General, upon request of a recipient of a grant under section 2, shall provide technical assistance to such recipient to the extent the Attorney General determines such technical assistance is needed to establish or maintain a program described in such section.

SEC. 7. BEST PRACTICES.

(a) REPORT.—Each recipient of a grant under section 2 shall submit to the Attorney General a report, in such form and manner and containing such information as specified by the Attorney General, that evaluates each program established or maintained pursuant to such grant, including policies and procedures under the program.

(b) DEVELOPMENT OF BEST PRACTICES.—Based on the reports submitted under subsection (a), the Attorney General shall develop best practice models to assist States and other relevant entities in addressing—

- (1) witness safety;*
- (2) short-term and permanent witness relocation;*
- (3) financial and housing assistance; and*
- (4) any other services related to witness protection or assistance that are determined by the Attorney General to be necessary.*

(c) DISSEMINATION TO STATES.—Not later than 1 year after the development of best practice models under subsection (b), the Attorney General shall disseminate to States and other relevant entities such models.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that States and other relevant entities should use the best practice models developed and disseminated in accordance with this Act to evaluate, improve, and develop witness protection or witness assistance as appropriate.

(e) CLARIFICATION.—Nothing in this Act requires the dissemination of any information if the Attorney General determines such information is law enforcement sensitive and should only be disclosed within the law enforcement community or that such information poses a threat to national security.

SEC. 8. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

Not later than December 31, 2015, the Attorney General shall submit a report to Congress on the

programs funded by grants awarded under section 2, including on matters specified under section 7(b).

SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act \$30,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2010 through 2014.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days 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 Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Witness Security and Protection Act of 2009 authorizes the Attorney General to award grants to States and local prosecutors for establishing and improving short-term witness protection programs for witnesses that are involved in a State or local trial involving a homicide, a serious violent felony, or a serious drug offense.

Witness intimidation reduces the likelihood that citizens will be willing to perform their civic duty in the criminal justice system, often depriving police and prosecutors of critical evidence. More broadly, it also undermines public confidence that the criminal justice system can adequately protect its citizens.

And there is no better example that demonstrates the need for this legislation than the tragedy that befell the Dawson family in the autumn of 2002 in Baltimore, Maryland.

Angela Dawson had repeatedly contacted the police about drug dealing in her neighborhood. In retaliation, Darrell Brooks, a neighborhood dealer, firebombed the Dawson home not once but twice before killing Angela; her husband, Carnell; and all five of their children.

This heinous violence perpetrated against the Dawson family was the impetus for this legislation, and I commend Congressman CUMMINGS for his tireless pursuit of this legislation over multiple Congresses. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1741, the Witness Security and Protection Grant Program Act of 2009. Witness testimony is a critical component of our criminal justice system. Even with sophisticated DNA and other fo-

rensic evidence, there is no substitute for an eyewitness testimony.

However, engaging the cooperation of witnesses is frequently a daunting obstacle in many criminal prosecutions. Many witnesses fail to come forward or refuse to testify out of fear of retribution by the defendants or pressure by the community.

It is no surprise that violent criminals will unleash their brutality on witnesses whose testimony could result in years or decades in prison. It is also no surprise that violent gangs and drug organizations are the source of much of this brutality. The Justice Department's National Gang Center reports that "gang members so frequently engage in witness intimidation that it is considered part of normal gang behavioral dynamics." State and local law enforcement officials and prosecutors are in a constant struggle to counteract witness intimidation and to convince witnesses to cooperate. It's vital that we assist in this.

At the Federal level, the U.S. Marshals Service is charged with witness protection and has operated the Witness Security Program since 1970. Under the program, more than 7,500 witnesses and over 9,500 family members have been protected, relocated, or given new identities. Most States and local governments cannot offer that level of protection. Many cannot afford to offer even basic protection services, for instance, during a trial in which the proceedings in a small town might be all too evident to gangs in the area.

H.R. 1741, the Witness Security and Protection Grant Program Act, directs the Attorney General to award grants to State and local governments to establish and maintain witness protection programs.

Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that this not only is a well-worthwhile program whose time has come, but, in fact, it could be a real cost-saving to the taxpayers from the Federal level. Federal prosecution tends to be more expensive. In the case of gang, drug, and other activities, there is almost always a dual nexus: one in which the State or local courts can try the gang members, one in which the Federal Government can find Federal statutes to try under. Unfortunately, without an effective witness protection program, localities may often choose to move a case to Federal court where witness protection is available rather than providing that protection themselves.

So, Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to support strongly that we find those opportunities in which local government can provide this service rather than removing to Federal court. This is a cost-saving, commonsense initiative, and I support it.

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

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Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, with respect to my great colleague

from the great State of Maryland, Congressman CUMMINGS, I will yield so much time as he may consume.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) for yielding, and I want to certainly thank Chairman CONYERS, Chairman SCOTT, Mr. ISSA, the entire Judiciary Committee, and the House leadership for recognizing the importance of this legislation by bringing it to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, while our soldiers fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, many citizens across our Nation are facing terrorism right here at home, right here in their own neighborhoods. People are being murdered in broad daylight, and their killers are walking free because we do not protect witnesses to crimes from threats against their safety if they cooperate with the police, if they testify in court, or even if they are listed as witnesses to testify in court.

This epidemic of witness intimidation is a menace to our civil society, and it is a plague on our entire justice system. In fact, it was the deaths of Angela and Carnell Dawson and their five children, ages 9 to 14, that first motivated me to address this issue. I can remember very vividly sitting at a funeral with one adult casket and with the caskets of five children. Then, a day later, the husband died, and we went to his funeral.

The entire Dawson family was killed in October 2002 when a gang member firebombed their home in the middle of the night in retaliation for Mrs. Dawson's repeated complaints to the police about the recurring drug trafficking in her east Baltimore neighborhood.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, that Mrs. Dawson literally lived within about a 5-minute drive from my house.

Angela Dawson and her family were not affiliated in any way with drugs or gangs. Rather, Mrs. Dawson was just a civic-minded parent, trying to clean up her neighborhood, and trying to make it a safe place for her children and for other families.

While several State and local entities have established witness assistance programs, many of these programs have fallen victim to the tough economic times and have had to be discontinued. Conversely, the U.S. Marshals Service uses \$65 million to operate its Federal Witness Security Program, and it has an excellent track record. In all of its years in existence, they have never been known to have lost a witness, and at the same time, the prosecutors in those cases have had an 89 percent success rate.

It is because of this inequity that I call upon my colleagues to give law enforcement the ability to protect the sanctity of our justice system and pass H.R. 1741, the Witness Security and Protection Grant Program Act.

H.R. 1741 would help local law enforcement officers strengthen witness assistance and protection units, sending a very loud and clear message to

criminals that our citizens and we in the Congress of the United States of America will not be deterred by fear tactics like intimidation.

Speaking of intimidation, through the City of Baltimore, we have a group that put out two trailers entitled "Stop Snitching." In one of those trailers I, along with the State's attorney, were threatened because we were standing up for this legislation and because we were standing up for witnesses. I made it very clear to them that I have no fear because, if you can have a situation where a person can literally be standing on a corner and 20 people know the perpetrator and the perpetrator comes up and blows somebody's brains out and nobody testifies, what happens then is that we have given the criminal more power; we have taken power away from regular citizens. The next thing you know, the criminal feels that there are no consequences to his or her actions.

You cannot have a criminal justice system that is effective and efficient unless you have the cooperation of witnesses. It is up to this Congress to make it very, very clear that we will not, under any circumstances, stand for witnesses to be intimidated, harmed, threatened, killed or in any way deterred from carrying out their duties to assist police and law enforcement.

The bill would provide \$150 million in competitive grants over 5 years to enable State and local governments to establish witness assistance programs with priority given to cities or to locales that have had an average of at least 100 homicides per year during the most recent 5-year period. H.R. 1741 would also allow these programs to receive technical assistance from the United States Marshals Service.

By improving the protection for State and local witnesses, we come one step closer to alleviating the fears and the threats of prospective witnesses and to safeguarding our communities from violence.

Again, I want to thank Mr. CONYERS. I want to thank Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. SCOTT, and the ranking member for their support. I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished attorney from the City of New Orleans, the junior Member from Louisiana, Mr. CAO.

Mr. CAO. I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1741, the Witness Security and Protection Grant Program Act.

Crime is the number one concern of my constituents in New Orleans and in Jefferson Parishes in Louisiana. Crime is my top concern, too. My district includes the City of New Orleans, which, as of June 1, has already seen 80 murders. Further, according to the FBI's annual report on crime released last week, New Orleans leads the Nation in

murders. This says nothing about the incidence of other types of crime, from sexual offenses to robberies.

I hold in my hand a photo of Sergeant Manuel Curry. He was a popular and much-loved member of the New Orleans Police Department. At 62 years of service, he was one of America's longest-serving police officers. Tragically, for the NOPD and for New Orleans, he passed away last week, and our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, with his family, and with his NOPD colleagues.

Here is an article from today's newspaper. It reports that, within hours of Sergeant Curry's death, three people broke into his home and stole guns, money, jewelry, and medication. While at the funeral home, arranging her husband's burial, his wife was notified of the burglary.

Our thoughts and prayers also go to the family of this couple, Orlander Cassimere, Sr., and his wife of 55 years. Elder Cassimere was scheduled to have preached the Mother's Day sermon this year at the church in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward, where he was pastor; but on that day, relatives found him and his wife fatally shot in their home. It is thought that their murders are connected to a relative's plan to testify in a kidnapping and attempted murder case.

Reading these articles makes me angry and sick because of the actions of these individuals who disgraced the memories of Sergeant Curry and of the Cassimeres. They disgrace all of the people of New Orleans and of Jefferson Parishes. If these stories don't paint a picture of out-of-control crime, I don't know what will.

I continue to meet with law enforcement and with prosecution officials in my district, and I am presently working with them to leverage Federal resources. They must have all of the resources they can get.

The Witness Security and Protection Grant Program will go a long way towards addressing the issue of crime in my district because, without adequate protection and assurances, these witnesses will stop coming forward, and crime will remain out of control.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for this effort with this important bill, and I look forward to working with them on other important legislation.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I will yield 3 minutes to my fellow Judiciary Committee member, Congressman PEDRO PIERLUISSI.

Mr. PIERLUISSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1741, and I want to commend Congressman CUMMINGS for his terrific work on this bill.

H.R. 1741 will provide funding to States and to territories so they can create or can improve their witness protection programs. Priority for funding would be given to those jurisdictions with the highest rates of violent crime.

Violent crime continues to plague many of our communities. Many of

those crimes were likely observed by one or more bystanders. Whether these witnesses choose to come forward or choose to remain in the shadows, many of those crimes will depend, in large part, on whether they feel safe cooperating with law enforcement. It is, therefore, critical to the effective functioning of our criminal justice system that government at all levels has the means to provide for witness security.

As Attorney General of Puerto Rico, I have worked with many witnesses who have received threats that they or their loved ones would be harmed if they testified against a defendant. Not unreasonably, some of these witnesses ultimately chose to remain silent. Others elected to plunge ahead despite the risks, motivated by a sense of civic duty. The key point is this:

Choosing between providing information that may deliver a criminal to justice and protecting one's own safety is a choice that no witness should be forced to make.

Since 1970, the Federal government has operated its own successful witness protection program. In light of a 2006 report by the Department of Justice that found that witness intimidation was pervasive and increasing, the need to support similar programs at the State and territorial levels is beyond question. Therefore, I respectfully urge my colleagues in this Chamber to support H.R. 1741.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague from Georgia for bringing forth and for handling this commonsense bill on the floor of the House. I want to thank my colleague from California for yielding me time.

This is an important issue. There are many issues that are remarkably important to the American people, and I want to talk about one of them. It is the national energy tax.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, there is a proposal that is moving through the House committees right now that will have a remarkable effect on the American people. If history holds true, there will be very little time on the floor of this House to debate this issue. As the Speaker has said, she wants to get it done by July 4.

So I would suggest that it is important for all of our colleagues to be paying attention to the national energy tax and to the consequences of it. I would suggest that the American people ought to be paying attention as well. Let me point out a couple of the issues on this national energy tax.

By an outside group, by an objective group, the estimates are that it will destroy millions of jobs—1.1 million jobs on average each year. It will raise electricity rates 90 percent after adjusting for inflation. It will increase gasoline prices by 74 percent. It will increase residential natural gas prices by 55 percent. It will raise the average family's

annual energy bill by \$1,500. That's right, Mr. Speaker, by \$1,500. It will increase inflation-adjusted Federal debt by 26 percent. So let's review.

This national energy tax, supported by the Speaker, is going to decrease jobs, and she is trying to get it through this House by the end of this month. It will decrease jobs; it will increase electricity rates; it will increase gas prices; it will increase natural gas prices; it will increase the family energy bill; and it will increase the Federal debt.

Now, the American people think this is a terrible idea, and they are very frustrated with the fact that the commonsense solutions that have been put on the table are not being given an opportunity to come to the floor.

What are those commonsense solutions?

Well, Mr. Speaker, as you know and as the American people know, there are good bills out there. One of them is one that I have cosponsored, H.R. 2300, coming out of the Republican Study Committee and the Western Caucus. It is called the American Energy Innovation Act.

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What it does is provide for increasing production, responsible production of American resources. It provides for increasing conservation so that we decrease the demand side of the energy curve; and it provides for expansion of innovation, incentives for innovation so that we unleash the genius of the American people to solve the challenges that we have in the area of energy. It doesn't tax the American people. It doesn't decrease jobs. It doesn't increase electricity prices, as the Democrat plan would do. It doesn't increase gas prices, as the Democrats would do. It doesn't increase natural gas prices, as the Democrat plan would do. It doesn't increase the family energy bill, and it doesn't increase the Federal debt. No, Mr. Speaker, it solves the problems in the way that the American people want them solved.

The American Energy Innovation Act would increase production in a responsible and environmentally sensitive and sound way. It would increase innovation so that we develop a new energy for this 21st century, and it would increase conservation, decrease that demand side so that we don't continue to support countries overseas that, frankly, aren't necessarily our friend.

I appreciate the opportunity to commend my friend from Georgia for his bill. I appreciate my friend from California for offering this opportunity to speak to my colleagues and to ask the Speaker if she wouldn't allow for full and open debate of appropriate energy bills that American people can support, not ones that increase their taxes and decrease jobs all across this land.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, nothing can be more important than the liberties that we enjoy under our Constitution. This bill that we are considering could not be any more important.

Therefore, in that regard, I wish to yield 5 minutes to my good friend from New Jersey, Congressman PASCRELL.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, this is truly bizarre. We're talking about life-and-death issues—and I know technically you can speak about anything. But we're talking about life-and-death issues. We have seen witnesses disappear, go underground so that law enforcement cannot protect us. Yet the gentleman, my good friend from Georgia, gets up and talks about something which has absolutely nothing to do with what we're talking about. But I guess that's par for the course.

So I thank the ranking member. I thank the chairman. I thank Mr. CUMMINGS for getting this legislation. And Mr. CUMMINGS has done us all a great favor. Nothing is going to help law enforcement more than our trying to help with the protection of the witnesses out there who view these crimes.

Criminal street gangs have been a major concern all across this country and in New Jersey; and truly, law enforcement cannot do its job without this legislation. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that there is a more significant thing that we can do in reversing the losing battle that we face at this point and attacking street crime and ending modern-day organized crime on the streets. You need viable witnesses who are not left to chance and risk and will not be frightened or intimidated.

In a 2007 survey conducted in New Jersey by the State police, respondents in 4 out of every 10 New Jersey municipalities—that's 43 percent—reported the presence of street gangs in their jurisdiction during the previous 12 months, not only in cities but in suburban communities. As a former mayor, I know how tough it is for our cities and communities to deal with gang problems all across the United States of America. Gang members are involved in violent and drug-related crimes and recruit young folks in our public schools. Catching and punishing the perpetrators of these crimes is oftentimes difficult, if not impossible. Gangs are so pervasive in many communities that the threat of violent reprisal against members of a community or gang members who want to leave severely hinders law enforcement investigations.

H.R. 1741 would provide a crucial missing link that prevents many of these crimes from being solved in the first place. This legislation will allow the Justice Department to begin offering grants to local communities to implement local witness protection programs. What have we come to? When we talk about witness protection programs, we think we're talking about something 20 years ago, 40 years ago. We're talking about now. We're talking about in our own neighborhoods. We're talking about in our own families. That's what we're talking about. Ensuring witness safety, short- and long-term relocation, and financial and

housing assistance are essential to the effective investigation and prosecution of gang-related crimes, Mr. Speaker. The Federal Government must reach out to assist local police departments in keeping our communities and our schools safe. This bill will provide a critical service to many needy communities. I thank those folks who brought it to the floor, particularly Mr. CUMMINGS, my good friend from Maryland. I'm glad we could stay, most of us, on the topic at hand.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, we believe that the precious time on the floor needs to be well spent, and we certainly support that we are well spending it. This is an important piece of legislation. It's important because, in fact, we in the Federal Government need to team with cities and localities around the country to ensure that we not distort where prosecutions are made. I fully support this legislation because, with all due respect to my colleague, it will relieve the cities and the counties from often choosing a Federal venue rather than a local venue if we help with protecting their witnesses, something that the Federal Government and the U.S. Marshals have proven to do very well. So I do support the bill. It's a bipartisan bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would ask how many minutes are left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There are 6 minutes remaining for the gentleman from Georgia. The gentleman from California has 9 minutes remaining.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I now yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Houston, Texas, and also a fellow member of the Judiciary Committee, Ms. JACKSON-LEE.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee and chairperson of the subcommittee for yielding.

I rise in support of H.R. 1741, which is long in coming and long overdue. Tragically, we are seeing the increased utilization of gun violence and certainly the increased impact on our teenagers. Whether it is guns used in gang activity or guns used to slaughter innocent persons in various stop-and-go shops or others, we are seeing that kind of senseless violence. Over the last couple of days, I saw in my own community two hardworking shopkeepers murdered and slaughtered in their own shop early in the morning; and the kind of killing it was may have generated witnesses who need to be protected. We have watched the slaughter of children in the Chicago school district, which has gotten to be an epidemic condition. They have been using guns. There have been young people leaving churches who have been shot and killed. So we understand the value

of this legislation. I remember hearing before the Judiciary Committee where the individuals who wanted this kind of protection told us of the fear in which they live.

H.R. 1741, sponsored by my good friend, Representative ELIJAH CUMMINGS, is an important legislative initiative; and I would ask my colleagues to, likewise, support it. It joins right together with H. Res. 454 that will be on this House floor in a few minutes that deals with the 25th anniversary of the National Center For Missing and Exploited Children and has a lot to do with the protection of our Nation's children, those who have been kidnapped and murdered, and those who have been exploited. Again, it ties back to this whole question of protecting witnesses who provide the necessary testimony to convict those of these heinous crimes.

This may not be the underlying necessity for H. Res. 515; but I rise to also add my support for the legislation that condemns the slaughter and murder of Army Private William Long and the wounding of Army Private Quinton Ezeagwula. That was a terrorist act of which we condemn. It may be that the alleged perpetrator is in prison, but we don't know whether there is a widespread conspiracy. We hear so. Again, H.R. 1741 would allow us to protect these witnesses. The act of killing our military personnel on U.S. soil was an act of terror, and I abhor it. I denounce it. It is a resounding disgrace in this country; and therefore, H. Res. 515 should, in fact, be able to pass. All of these tie to the idea of protecting witnesses in criminal activities because we realize how frightening a prospect it is.

I also add my support to H.R. 2675, the extension of the Antitrust Criminal Penalty Enhancement and Reform Act of 2004. I am also a member of the Subcommittee on Antitrust and view this as an important legislative initiative.

Allow me to close by suggesting that as we saw in my remarks earlier today on the floor in H. Res. 505, condemning the death of Dr. George Tiller, we have conditions here that warrant this legislation, H.R. 1741. It is terrible that violent acts are perpetrated here in America, that violent acts come about through the use of firearms and other manners and, therefore, there will be witnesses that will be necessary to bring these people to justice. I cannot imagine allowing these heinous crimes to be perpetrated without being able to prosecute because a witness is frightened for themselves and their family. The legislation that we are now speaking to provides that protection, and I ask my colleagues to support the legislation.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would yield back the balance of my time and support the passage of this important legislation.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. The great Constitution of the United States of America starts off with a preamble, and that preamble goes as follows:

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

So this bill deals with domestic tranquility; and as you know, Mr. Speaker, the most powerful beast imagined can always be brought down by just a little parasite inside of that particular beast. We too can be subjected to internal parasites, and we can die from that. The question is, are we willing to die to ensure that domestic tranquility is achieved? If we truly care about ourselves, our own safety and the safety of our dear families, neighbors and anyone else, should we not be willing to die to protect our liberties by calling it like it is, street crime? You see something happen—regardless of whether or not you consider that snitching or not, and I would say that it's not. But do you have the courage to be able to do what will really protect your folks? That's the question.

□ 1345

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. JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1741, 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. JOHNSON of Georgia. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANTITRUST CRIMINAL PENALTY ENHANCEMENT AND REFORM ACT OF 2004 EXTENSION ACT

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2675) to amend title II of the Antitrust Criminal Penalty Enhancement and Reform Act of 2004 to extend the operation of such title for a 1-year period ending June 22, 2010. The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2675

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 "Antitrust Criminal Penalty Enhancement and Reform Act of 2004 Extension Act".

SEC. 2. DELAY OF SUNSET.

Section 211(a) of the Antitrust Criminal Penalty Enhancement and Reform Act of 2004 (15 U.S.C. 1 note) is amended by striking "5 years" and inserting "6 years".

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE OF AMENDMENT.

The amendment made by section 2 shall take effect immediately before June 22, 2009.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days 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 Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation extends by 1 year expiring provisions of the Antitrust Criminal Penalty Enhancement and Reform Act of 2004, otherwise known as ACPERA. ACPERA not only increases maximum criminal penalties under the Sherman Act for hardcore antitrust violations but also created whistleblower incentives to spur antitrust cartel detection.

Portions of the 2004 act are set to expire in 2 weeks on June 22. This 1-year extension preserves the penalties and incentives currently in place, while affording Congress time to explore possible improvements to the 2004 act.

I am pleased to have as cosponsors of this bill the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, JOHN CONYERS, as well as full committee Ranking Member LAMAR SMITH and Courts Subcommittee Ranking Member HOWARD COBLE.

Cartel violations are some of the worst crimes perpetrated on the American consumer; yet they are too often crimes we cannot see, as all of this criminal activity takes place in secret meetings behind closed doors. In the previous bill, we were talking about crime in the streets, and now we are talking about crime in the suites.

Price-fixing cartels can go undetected for years, possibly forever. With hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars worth of unlawful profits at stake, these criminal cartels are very effective at finding ways to keep their actions secret. But 5 years ago, Congress gave the Justice Department's Antitrust Division a new weapon to attack this secrecy head-on. ACPERA promotes the detection and prosecution of illegal cartel behavior by giving participants in a price-fixing cartel powerful incentives to report the cartel to the Justice Department and cooperate in the prosecution of the cartel.

Before ACPERA, the Justice Department could offer leniency to a coconspirator who exposed a cartel and helped bring it to justice. But the cooperating party remained fully liable to paying treble damages to the cartel's victims and potentially exposed to having to pay the entire amount.