

I rise in support of H.R. 4119, the Border Tunnel Prevention Act of 2012. In 2006, I authored the House version of the original Border Tunnel Prevention Act, which criminalized the construction of illegal border tunnels into the United States with fines and imprisonment of up to 20 years. The law also carries a prison sentence of up to 10 years for those who recklessly allow others to build these tunnels on their land. In addition, the law doubled the sentence for using a tunnel to smuggle aliens, weapons, drugs, terrorists or illegal goods.

While the Border Tunnel Prevention Act of 2006 gave law enforcement agencies powerful tools to combat the construction of illegal border tunnels, they are still being used by criminals to smuggle drugs and other materials into our country. For example, last fall, in my home state of California, I was troubled to learn that an elaborate tunnel was discovered in San Diego that linked to a warehouse in Tijuana. The tunnel contained wooden flooring, a rail system and an elevator. Its discovery led to the seizure of more than 32 tons of marijuana. Unfortunately, this is just one example of the more than 40 tunnels that have been discovered in California in the last five years. H.R. 4119 will give law enforcement additional ability to investigate and prosecute criminals using these tunnels. The bill also prohibits attempts to use, construct or finance a cross-border tunnel. Finally, it provides for the forfeiture of cash and merchandise that is illegally brought into our country through a tunnel.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 4119 is a common sense solution that helps combat those who attempt to illegally bring goods into our country. I urge all my colleagues to support this important legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4119, 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. SMITH of Texas. Madam 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 question will be postponed.

NATIONAL BLUE ALERT ACT OF 2012

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 365) to encourage, enhance, and integrate Blue Alert plans throughout the United States in order to disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 365

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 “National Blue Alert Act of 2012”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **COORDINATOR.**—The term “Coordinator” means the Blue Alert Coordinator of the Department of Justice designated under section 4(a).

(2) **BLUE ALERT.**—The term “Blue Alert” means information relating to the serious injury or death of a law enforcement officer in the line of duty sent through the network.

(3) **BLUE ALERT PLAN.**—The term “Blue Alert plan” means the plan of a State, unit of local government, or Federal agency participating in the network for the dissemination of information received as a Blue Alert.

(4) **LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.**—The term “law enforcement officer” shall have the same meaning as in section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796b(6)).

(5) **NETWORK.**—The term “network” means the Blue Alert communications network established by the Attorney General under section 3.

(6) **STATE.**—The term “State” means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

SEC. 3. BLUE ALERT COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK.

The Attorney General shall establish a national Blue Alert communications network within the Department of Justice to issue Blue Alerts through the initiation, facilitation, and promotion of Blue Alert plans, in coordination with States, units of local government, law enforcement agencies, and other appropriate entities.

SEC. 4. BLUE ALERT COORDINATOR; GUIDELINES.

(a) **COORDINATION WITHIN DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.**—The Attorney General shall assign an existing officer of the Department of Justice to act as the national coordinator of the Blue Alert communications network.

(b) **DUTIES OF THE COORDINATOR.**—The Coordinator shall—

(1) provide assistance to States and units of local government that are using Blue Alert plans;

(2) establish voluntary guidelines for States and units of local government to use in developing Blue Alert plans that will promote compatible and integrated Blue Alert plans throughout the United States, including—

(A) a list of the resources necessary to establish a Blue Alert plan;

(B) criteria for evaluating whether a situation warrants issuing a Blue Alert;

(C) guidelines to protect the privacy, dignity, independence, and autonomy of any law enforcement officer who may be the subject of a Blue Alert and the family of the law enforcement officer;

(D) guidelines that a Blue Alert should only be issued with respect to a law enforcement officer if—

(i) the law enforcement agency involved—

(I) confirms—

(aa) the death or serious injury of the law enforcement officer; or

(bb) the attack on the law enforcement officer and that there is an indication of the death or serious injury of the officer; or

(II) concludes that the law enforcement officer is missing in the line of duty;

(ii) there is an indication of serious injury to or death of the law enforcement officer;

(iii) the suspect involved has not been apprehended; and

(iv) there is sufficient descriptive information of the suspect involved and any relevant vehicle and tag numbers;

(E) guidelines—

(i) that information relating to a law enforcement officer who is seriously injured or

killed in the line of duty should be provided to the National Crime Information Center database operated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation under section 534 of title 28, United States Code, and any relevant crime information repository of the State involved;

(ii) that a Blue Alert should, to the maximum extent practicable (as determined by the Coordinator in consultation with law enforcement agencies of States and units of local governments), be limited to the geographic areas most likely to facilitate the apprehension of the suspect involved or which the suspect could reasonably reach, which should not be limited to State lines;

(iii) for law enforcement agencies of States or units of local government to develop plans to communicate information to neighboring States to provide for seamless communication of a Blue Alert; and

(iv) providing that a Blue Alert should be suspended when the suspect involved is apprehended or when the law enforcement agency involved determines that the Blue Alert is no longer effective; and

(F) guidelines for—

(i) the issuance of Blue Alerts through the network; and

(ii) the extent of the dissemination of alerts issued through the network;

(3) develop protocols for efforts to apprehend suspects that address activities during the period beginning at the time of the initial notification of a law enforcement agency that a suspect has not been apprehended and ending at the time of apprehension of a suspect or when the law enforcement agency involved determines that the Blue Alert is no longer effective, including protocols regulating—

(A) the use of public safety communications;

(B) command center operations; and

(C) incident review, evaluation, debriefing, and public information procedures;

(4) work with States to ensure appropriate regional coordination of various elements of the network;

(5) establish an advisory group to assist States, units of local government, law enforcement agencies, and other entities involved in the network with initiating, facilitating, and promoting Blue Alert plans, which shall include—

(A) to the maximum extent practicable, representation from the various geographic regions of the United States; and

(B) members who are—

(i) representatives of a law enforcement organization representing rank-and-file officers;

(ii) representatives of other law enforcement agencies and public safety communications;

(iii) broadcasters, first responders, dispatchers, and radio station personnel; and

(iv) representatives of any other individuals or organizations that the Coordinator determines are necessary to the success of the network;

(6) act as the nationwide point of contact for—

(A) the development of the network; and

(B) regional coordination of Blue Alerts through the network; and

(7) determine—

(A) what procedures and practices are in use for notifying law enforcement and the public when a law enforcement officer is killed or seriously injured in the line of duty; and

(B) which of the procedures and practices are effective and that do not require the expenditure of additional resources to implement.

(c) **LIMITATIONS.**—

(1) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The guidelines established under subsection (b)(2), protocols developed under subsection (b)(3), and other programs established under subsection (b), shall not be mandatory.

(2) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—The guidelines established under subsection (b)(2) shall, to the maximum extent practicable (as determined by the Coordinator in consultation with law enforcement agencies of States and units of local government), provide that appropriate information relating to a Blue Alert is disseminated to the appropriate officials of law enforcement agencies, public health agencies, and other agencies.

(3) PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES PROTECTIONS.—The guidelines established under subsection (b) shall—

(A) provide mechanisms that ensure that Blue Alerts comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local privacy laws and regulations; and

(B) include standards that specifically provide for the protection of the civil liberties, including the privacy, of law enforcement officers who are seriously injured or killed in the line of duty and the families of the officers.

(d) COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES.—The Coordinator shall cooperate with the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of Transportation, the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, and appropriate offices of the Department of Justice in carrying out activities under this Act.

(e) RESTRICTIONS ON COORDINATOR.—The Coordinator may not—

(1) perform any official travel for the sole purpose of carrying out the duties of the Coordinator;

(2) lobby any officer of a State regarding the funding or implementation of a Blue Alert plan; or

(3) host a conference focused solely on the Blue Alert program that requires the expenditure of Federal funds.

(f) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Coordinator shall submit to Congress a report on the activities of the Coordinator and the effectiveness and status of the Blue Alert plans that are in effect or being developed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam 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 H.R. 365, as amended, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, in 1962, at the request of Congress, President Kennedy proclaimed today as National Peace Officers Memorial Day. Every May 15 we honor our Nation's law enforcement officers who have been killed in the line of duty. Earlier today, on the west front of the Capitol, we honored those

officers who were killed last year while protecting us and enforcing the law.

H.R. 365, the National Blue Alert Act of 2012, establishes a nationwide system for distribution of time-sensitive information to help identify a violent suspect when a law enforcement officer is injured or killed in the line of duty.

Each year, hundreds of law enforcement officers are killed or seriously injured in the line of duty. America's law enforcement officers courageously put their lives on the line every day. They often work long and irregular hours in demanding and dangerous conditions. These officers run a high risk of being injured or killed by the same criminals that prey on Americans.

Just last month, in my home State of Texas, an Austin police officer was shot and killed while responding to a call about a drunk man shoplifting at the local Walmart. What seemed to be a routine call turned out to be a dangerous and deadly situation. We cannot bring Officer Padron back, but we can honor his sacrifice by helping to apprehend and bring to justice criminals who harm our men and women in blue.

In 1789, President George Washington appointed America's first law enforcement officers, 13 United States Marshals. Since then, over 21,000 local, State, and Federal law enforcement officers have been killed in the line of duty.

Despite the fact that national crime rates continue to drop, in 2011, 163 law enforcement officers were killed in the line of duty, a 14 percent increase over the previous year. Unfortunately, criminals are becoming even more violent, and their contempt for law enforcement and the rule of law is more evident than ever.

This bill encourages expansion of an integrated Blue Alert communications network throughout the United States, much like the well-known AMBER Alert system used to locate missing and abducted children. A Blue Alert broadcasts information and speeds apprehension of violent criminals when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty. Blue Alerts use the same principle as AMBER Alerts for missing children and Silver Alerts for missing seniors.

The Blue Alert system is a cooperative effort among local, State, and Federal authorities, law enforcement agencies, and the general public. A Blue Alert provides a description of an offender who is still at large and may include a description of the offender's vehicle and license plate information. Like AMBER Alerts, Blue Alerts will help hinder the offender's ability to escape and will facilitate their capture.

The bill directs the Department of Justice to designate an existing officer as the Blue Alert national coordinator, who will encourage those States that have not already done so to develop Blue Alert plans and establish voluntary guidelines. As of today, 14 States have Blue Alert networks in place, and Ohio will implement its network in June.

An integrated nationwide Blue Alert system ensures that when tragedy strikes, the public is on notice and suspects can be more quickly apprehended and brought to justice. A nationwide Blue Alert network will be particularly effective when a suspect flees across State lines.

I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GRIMM) and Mr. REICHERT of Washington for their work on this issue. This is a bipartisan, bicameral bill. Similar legislation was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee last September.

Supporters of this legislation include the National Fraternal Order of Police, the National Sheriffs' Association, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, and the Sergeants Benevolent Association.

Too often, criminals in our society have no respect for authority and the rule of law. The goal of the Blue Alert is to immediately notify the entire community to assist in the location and apprehension of violent criminals who injure or kill police officers. This bill reaffirms our determination to ensure the future safety of our law enforcement men and women and the communities they serve to protect every day.

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

□ 1640

Mr. PIERLUISI. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 365, and I yield myself such time as I may consume to explain the bill and to respectfully urge my colleagues to vote for it.

The National Blue Alert Act of 2012 has strong bipartisan backing and was approved unanimously by the Judiciary Committee on April 25. I am proud to join my colleague, Mr. GRIMM, as the lead Democratic sponsor of this legislation, and I want to thank the gentleman from New York, a former FBI agent, for his leadership on this and on other law enforcement issues.

This bill constitutes an effort to protect and defend the men and women of law enforcement, who protect and defend us, our families, and our communities. The bill has been endorsed, as has been stated by the gentleman from Texas, by the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Association of Police Organizations, the National Sheriffs' Association, and the Sergeants Benevolent Association. In our sister Chamber, an identical companion bill to H.R. 365 has been approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee and currently awaits floor consideration.

The legislation before us directs the Attorney General to establish a national Blue Alert communications network within the Department of Justice to disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is killed or seriously injured in the line of duty and when the suspect has not yet been apprehended. A Blue Alert would provide

a physical description of the suspect and may include a description of the suspect's vehicle and license plate information.

The Blue Alert system is a cooperative effort among Federal, State, and local authorities, law enforcement agencies, and the general public. The Blue Alert system would use the same infrastructure as AMBER Alerts, which are disseminated for missing children, and Silver Alerts, which are disseminated for missing seniors.

Pursuant to the bill, the Attorney General will assign an existing DOJ officer to serve as the national coordinator for the Blue Alert communications network. The national coordinator's duties will include: encouraging State, territory, and local governments to develop Blue Alert plans; establishing voluntary guidelines for these government entities to use in developing such plans; developing protocols for efforts to apprehend suspects; and establishing an advisory group to assist State and local governments and law enforcement agencies to create, facilitate, and promote Blue Alert plans.

In the last 220 years, nearly 21,000 law enforcement officers have been killed in the line of duty in the United States, and many more have been seriously injured. In Puerto Rico, which is the jurisdiction I represent, over 325 law enforcement officers have been killed in the line of duty since 1900, with over 40 island officers killed between the year 2000 and the year 2010.

This year, two veteran Puerto Rico police officers were fatally shot in the line of duty—Abimael Castro Berrocal and Francis Crespo Mandry. Although at least one suspect has been apprehended, other suspects in both of these killings remain at large. This morning, these two officers, along with over 160 of their brothers and sisters in law enforcement who lost their lives in the line of duty in the past year, were honored in front of the Capitol as part of the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service.

The overriding purpose of this legislation is to help deter violent acts against police officers and, in the event such a violent act occurs, to ensure that the perpetrator is quickly apprehended and brought to justice. Police officers, unlike young children and seniors, are not a vulnerable population group in the traditional sense. They are strong, capable, and brave, but every day, they put themselves in harm's way to protect us. They have our backs, and it's important that we have theirs.

I encourage all of my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GRIMM), who is the sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. GRIMM. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

This is truly a very special opportunity for me to speak on this bill,

H.R. 365, the National Blue Alert Act of 2012. As a former FBI special agent, it makes it a very special honor to have the House consider this important legislation, especially during National Police Week. Think about it. Thousands of law enforcement officers from around the world and this country are going to converge on our Nation's Capitol to honor those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice: to protect the citizens back at home.

On a personal note, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to New York City's police commissioner, Ray Kelly, and to the very brave men and women of the NYPD for their service to our great city. I encourage all of my colleagues to treat every week as if it were National Police Week, because it is truly those sacrifices made by these individuals that have inspired me to introduce this important legislation.

During my career in the FBI, I witnessed firsthand the danger posed by criminals who attack law enforcement officers and the particular threat that they pose to our communities. Time and time again, we have seen, if criminals are willing to attack police officers to avoid apprehension, then there is no limit to the lengths they will go or to the victims they will target simply to avoid being brought to justice.

According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 173 officers were killed in the line of duty in 2011. As Members of Congress representing New York City and Puerto Rico, it is a sad fact for me and for my friend and colleague, Congressman PIERLUISI, who is the lead cosponsor of this bill, that the New York City Police Department and the Puerto Rico Police Department both lost four officers—the most of any other agency—in 2011. Now, it is impossible to completely transform the hazardous nature of the work our law enforcement officers carry out every single day, but there are steps that we can take to enhance their safety and to quickly apprehend those who put them at risk.

The National Blue Alert Act does this by creating a national Blue Alert communications network within the United States Department of Justice to disseminate information on suspects who are being sought in connection with the death or injury of a law enforcement officer. Similar to the nationwide AMBER Alert system for missing children, the Blue Alert would rapidly notify law enforcement agencies, as well as the media and the public, in order for them to help aid in the apprehension of these extremely violent criminals. Additionally, this legislation would further encourage the expansion of the Blue Alert program beyond the handful of States where it currently exists by helping develop the Blue Alert plans, the regional coordination, and the development and implementation of new technologies to improve Blue Alert communications.

This legislation, as we have heard, is supported across the board by many

law enforcement organizations, and I am certain that the National Blue Alert Act will enhance the safety of our communities as well as the law enforcement officers who protect them. I encourage its swift passage in the full House of Representatives, and I would like to thank my lead cosponsor and friend, Mr. PIERLUISI.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I would certainly be remiss if I did not extend my commendation to the gentleman from New York and to my good friend and colleague from Puerto Rico for their leadership and their service in bringing this legislation to the floor, also and more especially to Chairman SMITH and our ranking member, Mr. CONYERS, for their support in bringing this bill to the floor for consideration.

Madam Speaker, I fully support the fundamental purpose of this bill, which is to create and integrate Blue Alert plans throughout the 50 States and the U.S. territories in order to disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured in the line of duty. This program is similar to the Silver Alert public notification system, which broadcasts information about missing persons, especially seniors with Alzheimer's disease; or the America's Missing: Broadcasting Emergency Response, known mainly as the AMBER Alert, a public notification system about a missing child.

□ 1650

Similarly, the intent of this legislation is to expeditiously apprehend the offenders that kill or hurt law enforcement officers.

Law enforcement officers put their lives on the line every day to protect and to serve the public. Each year, hundreds of law enforcement officers are killed or seriously injured in the line of duty. On average, one law enforcement officer is killed in the line of duty every 53 hours. Last year, 173 officers had been killed, up to 13 percent from 153 killed in the line of duty 2 years ago.

The Blue Alert system is a cooperative effort among local, State, Federal authorities, law enforcement agencies, and the general public. It provides a description of an offender who is still at large and may include the description of the offender's vehicle and license plate information.

Madam Speaker, I am concerned to learn just this morning that the initial provision for a grant program to be made available to States and territories in support of the Blue Alert system is nowhere to be found in the language of the bill. Instead, the current bill language will only provide that the Attorney General shall assign an existing officer of the Department of Justice to act as the national coordinator

of the Blue Alert communications network.

Madam Speaker, while knowing that the Blue Alert system is not mandatory, resources should be made available to the 50 States and territories in order for the Blue Alert system network to work effectively and efficiently, otherwise the initial purpose of this bill will not be met under the current bill text before us today. However, I fully support the needs of the Blue Alert system. I urge that a grant program be made available to ensure that the law enforcement officers in the 50 States and territories are provided equal and fair treatment.

Again, I want to thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member CONYERS for their support of this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Madam Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES).

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, I just wanted to add my support for this legislation and thank my colleagues from New York and Puerto Rico for introducing this very important piece of legislation.

As a former Border Patrol agent and chief in the United States Border Patrol, I had the experience of working both as an agent with all the other law enforcement agencies and then as a chief. I can tell you that there isn't a worse feeling than that phone call in the middle of the night that one of your agents or one of your officers has been injured or killed. That's why this legislation is so important not just to officers and agents across the country, but to their families.

I strongly urge that our colleagues support this very important piece of legislation and agree with my colleague from American Samoa that more than just the legislation, we ought to do everything we can to provide the funding to actually bring this critical program to fruition.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues and also Chairman SMITH for bringing this legislation to the floor, and I ask all our colleagues to strongly support it.

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time as well.

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker. I rise today in strong support of H.R. 365, the National Blue Alert Act.

This important bill directs the Attorney General to establish a national Blue Alert communications network within the Department of Justice to broadcast information when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty.

It would also assign a Department of Justice officer to act as the national coordinator of the Blue Alert Communications Network.

The Blue Alert System would operate in a similar fashion as the "Amber Alert" system and would be implemented by law enforcement agencies and officers at all levels—local, State, and Federal.

Law enforcement officers and officials are among the bravest individuals in today's society.

Each day, they knowingly risk their personal safety and their lives to ensure that our communities are safer and more secure.

As such, we need to be sure to do all that we can to ensure their safety when possible.

Building and expanding on the existing blue alert networks in various states will ensure that important information is sent out in an efficient and timely manner.

I am proud to stand here today and offer my support for this important legislation.

I want to thank the gentleman from New York, Mr. GRIMM, for his hard work in bringing this important legislation before us today.

And I also want to thank all the brave men and women who work in law enforcement and sacrifice day in and day out for our safety.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, today I rise up in support of H.R. 365, the National Blue Alert Act of 2011. This bill would create a Federal information network that would make it easier to track down and prosecute those who seriously injure or kill State and Federal law enforcement officers.

In 2011 a total of 72 law enforcement officers were killed by perpetrators, 10 of which were in my home state of California. For the first time in 14 years there were more officers killed by gunfire than officers killed in traffic accidents.

Gun violence against law enforcement had declined in recent decades; however there was a 70 percent increase from 2008 to 2011. The cause for this increase is unknown, but with technology growing better each day, and methods becoming more sophisticated, these statistics should be going in the opposite direction.

Some officers attribute the rise in deaths to budget cuts and officers not having the necessary resources to ensure their own safety. Others believe that the new trend of sending officers to the most violent areas of the city as a preventative measure has led to the spike. Regardless, this is a problem that needs an immediate solution.

Due to this dramatic increase in only a few short years, the FBI conducted a study which showed many of the officers were killed while attempting to arrest or subdue a suspect who already had a history of violent crimes. With this information they implemented a new Federal program so that now when an officer pulls over a car and runs the license plate they will be informed if the suspect has a violent criminal record so they can be properly prepared.

While this new program is a step in the right direction, law enforcement officers will always be put in high risk situations. It is simply the nature of the job. They put their lives on the line everyday to protect the citizens of this country, and they deserve to know their government is doing everything it can to provide them with as much safety as possible.

The National Blue Alert Act of 2011 would ease the minds of officers, reassuring them of a quick and efficient response should anything happen to them while on duty. The bill would also increase the likelihood of catching a perpetrator who injures or kills an officer.

Madam Speaker, every stop an officer makes can be potentially fatal. Yet these men and women go to work every day because they know their service will save the lives of countless others. With this level of self sacrifice the very least we can do as elected officials is provide them with the reassurances within the National Blue Alert Act.

Today, I ask my colleagues to rise up in support of the National Blue Alert Act of 2011. A quick response may be all it takes to save the life of an officer who gives so much, and asks for so little in return.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 365, 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. GRIMM. Madam 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 question will be postponed.

SECURITY IN BONDING ACT OF 2012

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3534) to amend title 31, United States Code, to revise requirements related to assets pledged by a surety, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3534

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 "Security in Bonding Act of 2012".

SEC. 2. SURETY BOND REQUIREMENTS.

Chapter 93 of subtitle VI of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by adding at the end the following:

"§9310. Individual sureties

"If another applicable law or regulation permits the acceptance of a bond from a surety that is not subject to sections 9305 and 9306 and is based on a pledge of assets by the surety, the assets pledged by such surety shall—

"(1) consist of eligible obligations described under section 9303(a); and

"(2) be submitted to the official of the Government required to approve or accept the bond, who shall deposit the assets with a depository described under section 9303(b)."; and

(2) in the table of contents for such chapter, by adding at the end the following:

"9310. Individual sureties."

SEC. 3. GAO STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall carry out a study on the following:

(1) All instances during the 10-year period prior to the date of the enactment of this Act in which a surety bond proposed or issued by a surety in connection with a Federal project was—

(A) rejected by a Federal contracting officer; or

(B) accepted by a Federal contracting officer, but was later found to have been backed by insufficient collateral or to be otherwise deficient