

and screening agreements in place, efficiencies will be realized and our screeners can focus more attention on those items we know least about.

That is the kind of risk based screening that I and my fellow members of the Committee on Homeland Security have been calling for. Thankfully, under Administrator Pistole's leadership, are calls are being heeded.

This legislation represents the kind of common sense security measure this Congress must focus on to make both the Department of Homeland Security and its components work more efficiently and effectively.

It is my hope that in the next Congress we will see more proposals on the House floor regarding the Transportation Security Administration that can garner bipartisan support.

During the 111th Congress, during my tenure as Chair of the Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Transportation Security, the House considered and passed the TSA Authorization bill that I authored with overwhelming bipartisan support.

Unfortunately, no such legislation was produced for consideration by the House this Congress.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Committee in the next Congress to ensure we get back to the work of authorizing the critical programs of the TSA.

Our airports are a critical point of entry to our nation, and our airplanes remain vulnerable to terrorist plots as a result of their inherent potential to cause massive destruction and human casualties.

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks, which exposed significant vulnerabilities in our airport security, the 107th Congress moved quickly to pass the Aviation and Transportation Security Act.

The Transportation Security Act created the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and mandated a federalized workforce of security screeners to inspect airline passengers and their baggage. The act gave TSA broad authority to assess vulnerabilities in aviation security and take steps to mitigate these risks.

As Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Transportation on the Committee on Homeland Security, I have an acute understanding of TSA's role in aviation security, which has been the subject of considerable congressional oversight.

Moreover, this issue is one that impacts my constituents immensely, as my district is home to the Houston Airport System, which is one of North America's largest public airport systems and includes George Bush Intercontinental Airport, William P. Hobby Airport, and Ellington Airport.

In 2010, the Houston Airport System served more than 49.5 million passengers, including more than 8.5 million international travelers.

The American people expect Members of Congress to ensure that when they board a plane for business or pleasure, all passengers and their accompanying baggage have been thoroughly screened so as to prevent terrorists and their tools of destruction from posing a danger to passengers.

This issue is something that we understand as Members of Congress; many of us, including myself, fly on commercial airlines when we travel to and from our respective districts. Like the rest of the public, we expect that when we board a flight, it is secure and that we will safely arrive at our destinations within a reasonable amount of time.

While we should balance the need for thorough screening with the ideals of speed and convenience, we must continue to ensure that we are doing whatever is necessary to protect passengers on commercial flights from the dangers of terrorism. We know that many Americans and others traveling to our country are often frustrated by the time it may take to have themselves and their baggage processed through airports.

This bill intends to ameliorate some of these delays associated with the rescreening of baggage transported on commercial flights originating from international locations.

This would be achieved by giving the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security the discretion to waive rescreening pursuant to a preclearance agreement between the United States and a foreign nation that seeks to ensure that adequate screening procedures were undertaken at the point of origin.

The idea is that baggage that has already been adequately screened by one airport does not need to be screened again once it arrives at one of our airports.

As Members of Congress, we should continue to look for areas in our airport security procedures that we can modify in order to make travel more convenient for passengers that do not compromise their safety.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 3542.

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.

DHS AUDIT REQUIREMENT TARGET ACT OF 2012

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1998) to obtain an unqualified audit opinion, and improve financial accountability and management at the Department of Homeland Security.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1998

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 "DHS Audit Requirement Target Act of 2012" or the "DART Act".

SEC. 2. IMPROVING FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND MANAGEMENT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term "Department" means the Department of Homeland Security;

(2) the term "financial management systems" has the meaning given that term under section 806 of the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 (31 U.S.C. 3512 note);

(3) the term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Homeland Security; and

(4) the term "unqualified opinion" mean an unqualified opinion within the meaning given that term under generally accepted auditing standards.

(b) REACHING AN UNQUALIFIED AUDIT OPINION.—In order to ensure compliance with the

Department of Homeland Security Financial Accountability Act (Public Law 108-330; 118 Stat. 1275) and the amendments made by that Act, the Secretary shall take the necessary steps to ensure that the full set of consolidated financial statements of the Department for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and each fiscal year thereafter, are ready in a timely manner and in preparation for an audit as part of preparing the performance and accountability reports required under section 3516(f) of title 31, United States Code, (including submitting the reports not later than November 15, 2013, and each year thereafter) in order to obtain an unqualified opinion on the full set of financial statements for the fiscal year.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS ON PROGRESS OF MEETING AUDIT REQUIREMENTS.—In order to ensure progress in implementing the Department of Homeland Security Financial Accountability Act (Public Law 108-330; 118 Stat. 1275), and the amendments made by that Act, during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date on which an unqualified opinion described in subsection (b) is submitted, each report submitted by the Chief Financial Officer of the Department under section 902(a)(6) of title 31, United States Code, shall include a plan—

(1) to obtain an unqualified opinion on the full set of financial statements, which shall discuss plans and resources needed to meet the deadlines under subsection (b);

(2) that addresses how the Department will eliminate material weaknesses and significant deficiencies in internal controls over financial reporting and provides deadlines for the elimination of such weaknesses and deficiencies; and

(3) to modernize the financial management systems of the Department, including timelines, goals, alternatives, and costs of the plan, which shall include consideration of alternative approaches, including modernizing the existing financial management systems and associated financial controls of the Department and establishing new financial management systems and associated financial controls.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1998, the DART Act, introduced by Senator SCOTT BROWN of Massachusetts. This important legislation will improve financial accountability and management at the Department of Homeland Security.

Since the Department opened its doors on March 1, 2003, financial management of all 22 merged agencies has

been one of the most significant challenges. Fiscal year 2012, over 9 years since DHS was created, was the first time the Department was able to complete a financial audit and receive a qualified opinion on all five financial statements covering the entire Department.

Unfortunately, DHS has been unable to get an unqualified, or clean, opinion stating that there are no material weaknesses in its financial systems. Until such time as there is confidence in the DHS financial structure, questions will remain on how DHS accounts for taxpayer money. This important legislation is needed because it will require the Department to create a plan to meet the audit requirements to reach an unqualified opinion.

Specifically, the bill requires the Secretary to take all necessary steps to ensure that all financial statements of the Department are consolidated and ready in a timely manner in preparation for an audit.

Second, the DHS CFO is to report to Congress on its efforts to reach an unqualified opinion. This legislation requires this reporting requirement until such time as the Department is able to reach an unqualified opinion.

Also, DHS is to report to Congress on its progress, including resources needed, plans to eliminate material weaknesses, deadlines for addressing deficiencies, and efforts to modernize DHS' financial management systems.

It is essential that DHS obtain control over its financial systems and address the identified weaknesses. This legislation sets the Department on the right path to obtain an unqualified opinion.

I would also like to thank Chairman Issa and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform for working with the Committee on Homeland Security in getting this important legislation to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support S. 1998 and reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,

Washington, DC, December 7, 2012.

Hon. PETER T. KING,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On November 28, 2012, the Senate passed S. 1998, the "Department of Homeland Security Improved Financial Accountability Act of 2011." Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with regard to S. 1998 on those matters within the committee's jurisdiction. I am writing to confirm our mutual understanding with respect to the consideration of S. 1998.

In the interest of expediting the House's consideration of S. 1998, I will forego consideration of the bill. However, I do so only with the understanding that this procedural route will not be construed to prejudice the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform's jurisdictional interest and prerogatives on this bill or any other similar legislation and will not be considered as precedent for consideration of matters of jurisdictional interest to my Committee in the future.

I respectfully request that you include our exchange of letters on this matter in the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill on the House floor. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, December 7, 2012.

Hon. DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ISSA: Thank you for your letter regarding S. 1998, the "DHS Audit Requirement Target Act of 2012." I appreciate your willingness to support expediting floor consideration of this legislation.

I agree that while you are waiving formal consideration of this bill, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is in no way diminishing its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this measure or any other similar legislation and will not be considered as precedent for consideration of matters of jurisdictional interest to your Committee in the future.

I will include our letter on S. 1998 in the Congressional Record during House floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,

PETER T. KING,
Chairman.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1998, the DHS Audit Requirement Target Act of 2012 and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, since it was established nearly a decade ago, the Department of Homeland Security has been unable to obtain a "clean" or unqualified audit of its financial statements. This is simply unacceptable.

When I was chairman last Congress, the Committee on Homeland Security conducted significant oversight of the deficiencies that have plagued the Department's financial management efforts since its creation.

While we understand that DHS has taken many of the steps necessary to obtain a clean audit, more remains to be done. S. 1998 would direct DHS to take the necessary steps to obtain a clean audit by the end of fiscal year 2013. It also requires DHS to report to Congress on its plans to strengthen its financial controls and modernize its financial management systems.

Madam Speaker, S. 1998 helps put DHS on a path toward sound financial management, and for that reason, I plan to support the bill today.

With that, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of New York. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman, and I rise to support S. 1998 and commend the basis of this legislation, which will look for a clean audit report and in particular as it relates to Congress submit a report on

the plan to obtain an unqualified opinion annually until an unqualified opinion is submitted, and submit to Congress and the Comptroller General a report on DHS' plans and resources needed to modernize DHS' financial system.

Let me be clear that we know that it takes resources to secure the homeland, but this is a Department that has \$40 billion in the annual budget and 200,000 employees. DHS is the Nation's third-largest Federal Department. It demands a clean audit.

I would also indicate that one of the issues that we have continued to work on in the committee is to ensure the access of small, minority, and women-owned businesses to the vast contracting needs that DHS is engaged in. In particular, when there are natural disasters, we are often seeing where those who live in the area who would benefit from being able to be the contractors or to be able to work on the restoration and remove the debris cannot access DHS in a fair way to be able to secure a contract to put people to work.

So even as we are talking about audits, I'm talking about management processes, as well. And I would hope that this legislation, as it begins to look at audits and making sure that we have an unqualified audit, will also look at process as we go forward in the 113th Congress, because as we secure the homeland, we want to make sure that we have a Department of Homeland Security that has had very fine leadership in Secretary Napolitano to be able to assure that the infrastructure that runs this agency is parallel to the infrastructure that is securing America. I think that will be a perfect system.

So I do support this legislation, and I hope the comments about small, minority, and women-owned businesses are taken to heart and that we will find a way to ensure that our resources, tax dollars, are utilized by the American people in the right and appropriate way.

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers. If the gentleman from Mississippi has no further speakers, I am prepared to close.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I have no more speakers, and I am prepared to close.

In summary, S. 1998 is another step in Congress' effort to put DHS on a sound financial path.

Speaking of a path, Madam Speaker, this is probably the chair's last official act on the floor, and I want to just say to him today that I have enjoyed his chairmanship on the committee, and I'm certain whatever the future holds in Congress, he will be a worthy participant in the process.

I would like to personally say that I have enjoyed working with him.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. I yield to the gentlelady from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Ranking Member, I knew that Mr. KING would have other opportunities to be on the floor. We are going to be here through Christmas, but if that is not the case, then he has kind of a smile of Santa Claus, but I just want to say to Chairman KING, as well, just to thank you for your service. There is no doubt of your commitment to America's security, and I have enjoyed having the opportunity to work with you on the committee.

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Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time, I urge my colleagues to support the bill and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to thank Senator BROWN for introducing this legislation to address the ongoing DHS financial management challenges. Also, let me thank the ranking member, Mr. THOMPSON, and the ranking member of the subcommittee, Ms. JACKSON LEE, for their kind words. This probably will be my last appearance on the floor as chairman of the committee.

I want to thank the ranking member. It has now been over 7 years we have worked together as chairman and ranking member. I enjoyed working with you. I enjoyed it a lot more when I was chairman, and I'm sure you enjoyed it a lot more when you were chairman. But no matter what our capacities were, I always found it a privilege to be able to work with you. When we could cooperate, we did. When we had honest differences, I think we expressed them in a very gentlemanly way. I certainly know that you did, and I want to thank you for that.

I want to also thank the committee staff, especially Mike Russell, Mandy Bowers, and Kerry Ann Watkins, for the tremendous job they did, and all the members of the staff of both the majority and the minority. And, Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you for your years of service in the House here as well.

Again, it's been a great privilege being chairman. I believe we achieved a lot. I think most importantly what the ranking member has tried to do and what I've tried to do is establish the significance of this committee and to prove that on major issues affecting the country, that both parties can work together in a bipartisan way. And I thank the gentleman for his cooperation on that.

Going back to business, I urge support of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1998, the "DART Act," the purpose of which is to obtain an unqualified audit opinion, and improve financial accountability and management at the Department of Homeland Security.

The DART Act will permit Congress to effectively perform its oversight duties with respect to the Department of Homeland Security.

As a Member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Ranking Member of its Subcommittee on Transportation, tasked with oversight of the Department, I am a strong supporter of the work that the Department does on behalf of the American people.

It is important that the public understand the vital work that the Department has done and continues to do to assess and counter threats and to maintain the security of our homeland.

S. 1998 directs the Secretary of Homeland Security, in order to comply with the Department of Homeland Security Financial Accountability Act, to ensure that the balance sheet of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and associated statement of custodial activity for FY2012 and FY2013, and the full set of consolidated financial statements of DHS for FY2014 through FY2016, are ready in a timely manner and in preparation for an audit as part of preparing required performance and accountability reports.

Furthermore, S. 1998 directs the Chief Financial Officer of DHS to:

(1) Submit a report on the plans to obtain an unqualified opinion annually until an unqualified opinion is submitted, and

(2) Submit to Congress and the Comptroller General a report on DHS's plans and resources needed to modernize DHS's financial systems.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was created in 2003, with the vital mission of ensuring that, in the wake of the September 11th, 2001 attacks, the American homeland is safe, secure, and protected against terrorists who would do us harm.

Our domestic security is our nation's top priority; a mission that includes terrorism prevention and security enhancements, border management and security, immigration administration and enforcement, cyberspace security, and disaster response.

With a \$40 billion annual budget and more than 200,000 employees, DHS is the nation's 3rd largest federal department.

Consequently, this Congress must pay close attention and give careful consideration to the activities of the Department of Homeland Security as we assist it in becoming a more sound, lower-risk, more efficient, and more effective department.

Given the relatively new nature of the Department, along with the fact that it originated as an amalgamation of 22 federal agencies, it is no surprise that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has consistently designated—as recently as December 2011—the implementation and transformation of the Department as high-risk with respect to waste, fraud, abuse mismanagement, or needing reform.

Unfortunately, since its inception, the Department has been unable to obtain what is known as a "clean" or "unqualified" audit of its financial statements (i.e. a finding by an objective reviewer that the Department's finances are in conformity with generally accepted accounting standards). The DART Act seeks to address this issue by directing the Department to take the steps necessary to obtain a clean audit by the end of fiscal year 2013.

In order for Congress to be able to effectively monitor and oversee DHS's efforts in this area, S. 1998 also requires DHS to provide Congress with specific details on its plans to achieve a clean audit, through eliminating material weaknesses in its internal financial

controls and by modernizing its financial management systems.

While DHS has previously stated that it can obtain an unqualified opinion on all of its financial statements by the end of fiscal year 2013, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has noted that "there is no clear plan for how auditability will be achieved" by the end of 2013.

As we evaluate the progress of the Department, I want to ensure that the Department has sufficient funding and its finances are managed and structured properly such that our nation is safe and secure from all threats.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1998.

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.

FRANK BUCKLES WORLD WAR I MEMORIAL ACT

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6364) to establish a commission to ensure a suitable observance of the centennial of World War I, to designate memorials to the service of members of the United States Armed Forces in World War I, including a National World War I Memorial on the National Mall in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6364

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Frank Buckles World War I Memorial Act".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings.
- Sec. 3. Definitions.
- Sec. 4. Establishment of World War I Centennial Commission.
- Sec. 5. Duties of Centennial Commission.
- Sec. 6. Powers of Centennial Commission.
- Sec. 7. Centennial Commission personnel matters.
- Sec. 8. Termination of Centennial Commission.
- Sec. 9. Designation of National World War I Museum and Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri.
- Sec. 10. Establishment of National World War I Memorial in the District of Columbia.
- Sec. 11. Prohibition on obligation of Federal funds.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) From 2014 through 2018, the United States and nations around the world will mark the centennial of World War I, including the entry of the United States into the war in April 1917.

(2) America's support of Great Britain, France, Belgium, and its other allies in