

declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1659

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MEADOWS) at 4 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

KILAH DAVENPORT CHILD PROTECTION ACT OF 2013

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3627) To require the Attorney General to report on State law penalties for certain child abusers, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3627

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 "Kilah Davenport Child Protection Act of 2013".

SEC. 2. ATTORNEY GENERAL REPORT.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and again 3 years thereafter, the Attorney General shall publish and submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the United States Senate a report on the penalties for violations of laws prohibiting child abuse in each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and each territory of the United States, including whether the laws of that State, District, or territory provides for enhanced penalties when the victim has suffered serious bodily injury, or permanent or protracted loss or impairment of any mental or emotional function.

SEC. 3. EXPANSION OF PREDICATE FOR INCREASED PENALTIES FOR CERTAIN DOMESTIC ASSAULTS.

Section 117(a)(1) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting "or against a child of or in the care of the person committing the domestic assault" after "intimate partner".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all

Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 3627, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

The bill under consideration today, the Kilah Davenport Child Protection Act of 2013, is named after a young girl from North Carolina who was brutally beaten by her stepfather last year. Her stepfather was charged with felony child abuse and awaits trial. Kilah, who was only 3 years old at the time of the attack, will face a lifetime of brain damage and paralysis at the hands of someone who was supposed to love and protect her.

Stories like Kilah's are absolutely tragic, but they are not uncommon across our country. Approximately 3.5 million cases of child abuse involving 6 million children are reported every year in the United States. In my own State of Georgia, there were over 37,000 reports of child abuse and neglect with over 15,000 substantiated incidents of abuse in 2009 alone. And the rates of child abuse are even higher in Indian Country, where Indian children experience child abuse at a significantly higher rate than the rest of the population.

Adding to those and these tragedies is the fact that child abuse cases are not always reported and oftentimes not prosecuted with the same vigor as other crimes. Studies have found that charges are less likely to be filed against perpetrators in child abuse cases than most other felonies, and these cases have lower incarceration rates than other crimes.

H.R. 3627, introduced by Mr. PITTINGER of North Carolina, will help draw attention to how child abuse cases are handled across the country by requiring the Judiciary Department to issue reports on the criminal penalties for child abuse in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories.

This report focused on State statutes because most child abuse cases are handled at the State level. However, there are parts of the country where the Federal Government has an increased law enforcement role, such as including in Indian Country. H.R. 3627 helps to strengthen the Federal response to child abuse and other forms of domestic violence in Indian Country and the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction by amending 18 U.S.C., section 117 to allow prior convictions for the abuse of a child to trigger the offense of domestic assault by a habitual offender. This is a small but important change to the statute that will permit the Federal Government to prosecute more violent offenders.

I commend the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PITTINGER) for

drawing attention to the terrible crime of child abuse and encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Today we rise to consider H.R. 3627, the Kilah Davenport Child Protection Act of 2013. This legislation is part of the continuing effort to stamp out the scourge of child abuse in our society.

According to the organization Childhelp, each year there are more than 3 million reports of child abuse in the United States. At least 6 million children are impacted on an annual basis. Every day an average of four to seven children die in this great country as a result of child abuse and neglect, and more than 78 percent of reported child fatalities resulting from abuse and neglect were caused by one or more of the victim's parents.

We must do everything in our power to change this sad reality. Our effort, of course, must be comprehensive and should include both robust criminal justice enforcement and parental education and prevention efforts. In other words, our approach should be balanced. Those who abuse children must understand that the consequences connected to their criminal behavior will be significant.

We must also aggressively take steps to prevent child victimization before it occurs. In doing so, we can mitigate the severe trauma of child abuse and simultaneously channel precious taxpayer resources away from the criminal justice system.

H.R. 3627 requires the Attorney General to issue a report regarding the penalties for violations of laws prohibiting child abuse in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. This report must consider, of course, whether those laws provide enhanced penalties when the victim has suffered serious bodily injury or permanent or protracted loss or impairment of any mental or emotional function, as occurred in this tragic case referred to in North Carolina. This reporting requirement is a good step toward helping Congress accurately evaluate the statutory landscape in the child abuse context and govern in a more informed fashion.

In addition, the legislation permits prior convictions for assault, sexual abuse, or serious violent felonies to be used to trigger additional penalties for habitual domestic abusers on Native American reservations and in special maritime and territorial jurisdictions. This trigger will better protect potential child abuse victims from repeat offenders.

For the above-referenced reasons, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PITTINGER),

the author of this legislation, the gentleman who has a great passion for this issue.

Mr. PITTENGER. Thank you, Mr. COLLINS.

Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of precious Kilah Davenport, a sweet little girl at the age of 3 years old, who was taken by her caregiver and bashed her head against the wall. As a result, Kilah has suffered irreparable damage to the extent that at this point she is immobile, she is paralyzed and has suffered severe brain damage.

You can see pictures right here of Kilah, a young girl, and then the next day the condition that she is in. She has made some progress. Her family is encouraged. They assist her 24/7. It has changed their lives.

But to the credit of the Davenport family, they wanted what occurred to their child to make sure that that never happened again. They focused their intention and their efforts, their commitment, to passing a law in North Carolina where I live. Now we have a statute that gives a minimum sentence of 10 years to anyone who is convicted of this type of egregious child abuse. Prior to this time, the minimum sentence for such an abuse was 4 years, maximum 6 years. This type of severe cruelty warrants a measure of sentencing commensurate with what has been enacted.

So I congratulate my colleagues, whom I served with at one time in the North Carolina Senate and the House—Senator Tarte, Senator Tucker, and Senator Curtis; and House members Horn and Arp—for the leadership that they gave in North Carolina and provided what will be, I truly believe, a role model for the rest of the country because, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the Kilah Davenport Child Protection Act is to give a basis for other States, appealing to them through their attorney generals, to issue these reports, the first one in 6 months, the next one 3 years following, of their current statutes on child abuse in their sentencing.

We have found in many States that there are very minimum and lax sentences. In the South, there is one State that a year and a day could be the maximum sentence; one State in the Northeast is 7 years; one State out west, 5 years is the max sentence. This shouldn't be. We feel like there are many States who once they understand how limited the scope is of their sentencing that they would want to change it.

And yes, Mr. Speaker, I do believe that these types of bills are better addressed in our States. I believe that other States will take the proper action as North Carolina did. As I consulted with law enforcement and with judges who handle child abuse daily, that is why I introduced H.R. 3627, which is bipartisan legislation that will address this severe need to make sure that children in the future are not harmed in the same way.

This bill will ensure that those who suffer serious bodily injury, mental and

emotional disparity and function, would be addressed with the types of sentencing that would warrant the type of crime committed.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, as we enact this bill, that we will see a tremendous impact throughout the country to prevent this type of scourge from occurring again. So I commit it to our Congress—I thank the great support of the Members—to make sure that this bill is enacted, and I thank Senator BURR for his leadership in the Senate.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers and am prepared to close.

Let me just simply say, I commend the gentleman from North Carolina for putting forth this measure in the House and helping to shepherd it hopefully into swift passage and then into law. I also commend the Davenport family for their courage, their strength, and their perseverance, and I wish them Godspeed as it relates to the recovery of their child moving forward.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, just in closing, again, it is good to be with my friend down here. Also, the bill that Mr. PITTENGER is bringing forward is also commonsense legislation I think that strengthens their home, strengthens their family, and addresses an issue such as child abuse and the real consequences the Davenport family are finding, but not just them, but many across our country.

With that, I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation, and 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. COLLINS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3627.

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.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Washington, DC, December 9, 2013.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: On December 4, 2013, pursuant to section 3307 of title 40, United States Code, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met in open session to consider resolutions to authorize five lease prospectuses included in the General Services Administration's (GSA) FY2011 and FY2014 Capital Investment and Leasing Programs (CILP).

Our Committee continues to work to cut waste and the cost of federal property and leases. The resolutions approved by the Committee will save the taxpayer \$12.9 million annually or \$193.6 million over the terms of the Leases. These resolutions ensure savings through lower rents and shrinking the space requirements of agencies. With these resolutions, the total savings for GSA prospectuses approved by the Committee this year is over \$668 million.

One of the resolutions approved on December 4 is for a lease replacement for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in Rockville, Maryland. This was an outstanding lease prospectus submitted as part of the FY2011 CILP. While other agencies agreed to reduce their space footprint and reduce costs, NRC had not done so. After working with the NRC and GSA, the Committee brokered an agreement that will put 1,100 additional employees into NRC's buildings by having space backfilled by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). As a result, FDA has agreed to relinquish four leases that will save the taxpayer \$145.8 million. Letters from the NRC and FDA acknowledging this agreement are enclosed.

I have also enclosed copies of the five resolutions adopted by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on December 4, 2013.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

Enclosures

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION, SUBURBAN MARYLAND

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 348,000 rentable square feet of space, including 20 parking spaces, for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, currently located at Two White Flint, 11545 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland, at a proposed total annual cost of \$11,832,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, for which a prospectus and overall Housing Strategy amending such prospectus is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus and overall Housing Strategy constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Food and Drug Administration, currently occupying four locations under leases expiring between 2014 and 2016 in Bethesda and Rockville, MD, backfill no less than 186,313 usable square feet in the building known as Three White Flint North at an annual rental rate of not more than \$7,825,146.

Provided that, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission shall be responsible for the rental costs for Three White Flint North which exceed the rental rate paid by the Food and Drug Administration, or any subsequent backfill tenant, for the term of the lease for Three White Flint North.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 200 and 170 square feet or less per person, respectively.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 200 square feet