of the House of Representatives that I have been served with a subpoena, issued by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will determine whether compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the privileges and rights of the House.

Sincerely,

MICHELLE ANDERSON-LEE,
Director of Appropriations.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1610

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. FOXX) at 4 o'clock and 10 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 motions 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.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

DIGITAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2014

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 994) to expand the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 to increase accountability and transparency in Federal spending, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 994

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 ''Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014'' or the ''DATA Act''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are to—

(1) expand the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note) by disclosing direct Federal agency expenditures and linking Federal contract, loan, and grant spending information to programs of Federal agencies to enable taxpayers and policy makers to track Federal spending more effectively;

(2) establish Government-wide data standards for financial data and provide consistent, reliable, and searchable Government-wide spending data that is displayed accurately for taxpayers and policy makers on USASpending.gov (or a successor system that displays the data);

(3) simplify reporting for entities receiving Federal funds by streamlining reporting requirements and reducing compliance costs while improving transparency;

(4) improve the quality of data submitted to USASpending.gov by holding Federal agencies accountable for the completeness and accuracy of the data submitted; and

(5) apply approaches developed by the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board to spending across the Federal Government.

SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE FEDERAL FUNDING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2006.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note) is amended—

(1) in section 2—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''this section'' and inserting ''this Act'';

(ii) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) as paragraphs (2), (4), and (7), respectively;

(iii) by inserting before paragraph (2), as so redesignated, the following:

''(1) DIRECTOR.—The term 'Director' means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.'';

(iv) by inserting after paragraph (2), as so redesignated, the following:

''(3) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term 'Federal agency' has the meaning given the term 'Executive agency' under section 105 of title 5, United States Code.'';

(v) by inserting after paragraph (4), as so redesignated, the following:

''(5) OBJECT CLASS.—The term 'object class' means the category assigned for purposes of the annual budget of the President submitted under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, to the type of property or services purchased by the Federal Government.

''(6) PROGRAM ACTIVITY.—The term 'program activity' has the meaning given that term under section 1115(h) of title 31, United States Code.''; and

(vi) by adding at the end the following:

''(8) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Treasury.'';

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (3), by striking ''of the Office of Management and Budget''; and

(ii) in paragraph (4), by striking ''of the Office of Management and Budget'';

(C) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (4), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(ii) in paragraph (5), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) shall have the ability to aggregate data for the categories described in paragraphs (1) through (5) without double-counting data; and

''(7) shall ensure that all information published under this section is available—

''(A) in machine-readable and open formats;

''(B) to be downloaded in bulk; and

''(C) to the extent practicable, for automated processing.'';

(D) in subsection (d)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking ''of the Office of Management and Budget'';

(ii) in paragraph (2)—

(I) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''of the Office of Management and Budget''; and

(II) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''of the Office of Management and Budget'';

(E) in subsection (e), by striking ''of the Office of Management and Budget''; and

(F) in subsection (g)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking ''of the Office of Management and Budget''; and

(ii) in paragraph (3), by striking ''of the Office of Management and Budget''; and

(2) by striking sections 3 and 4 and inserting the following:

''SEC. 3. FULL DISCLOSURE OF FEDERAL FUNDS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014, and monthly when practicable but not less than quarterly thereafter, the Secretary, in consultation with the Director, shall ensure that the information in subsection (b) is posted on the website established under section 2.

''(b) INFORMATION TO BE POSTED.—For any funds made available to or expended by a Federal agency or component of a Federal agency, the information to be posted shall include—

''(1) for each appropriations account, including an expired or unexpired appropriations account, the amount—

''(A) of budget authority appropriated;

''(B) that is obligated;

''(C) of unobligated balances; and

''(D) of any other budgetary resources;

''(2) from which accounts and in what amount—

''(A) appropriations are obligated for each program activity; and

''(B) outlays are made for each program activity;

''(3) from which accounts and in what amount—

''(A) appropriations are obligated for each object class; and

''(B) outlays are made for each object class; and

''(4) for each program activity, the amount—

''(A) obligated for each object class; and

''(B) of outlays made for each object class.

''SEC. 4. DATA STANDARDS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS.—The Secretary and the Director, in consultation with the heads of Federal agencies, shall establish Government-wide financial data standards for any Federal funds made available to or expended by Federal agencies and entities receiving Federal funds.

''(2) DATA ELEMENTS.—The financial data standards established under paragraph (1) shall include common data elements for financial and payment information required to be reported by Federal agencies and entities receiving Federal funds.

''(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The data standards established under subsection (a) shall, to the extent reasonable and practicable—

''(1) incorporate widely accepted common data elements, such as those developed and maintained by—

''(A) an international voluntary consensus standards body;

''(B) Federal agencies with authority over contracting and financial assistance; and

''(C) accounting standards organizations;

''(2) incorporate a widely accepted, nonproprietary, searchable, platform-independent computer-readable format;

''(3) include unique identifiers for Federal awards and entities receiving Federal awards that can be consistently applied Government-wide;

''(4) be consistent with and implement applicable accounting principles;

''(5) be capable of being continually upgraded as necessary;

''(6) produce consistent and comparable data, including across program activities; and

''(7) establish a standard method of conveying the reporting period, reporting entity, unit of measure, and other associated attributes.

''(c) DEADLINES.—

''(1) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014, the Director and the Secretary shall issue guidance to Federal agencies on the data standards established under subsection (a).

''(2) AGENCIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), not later than 2 years after the date on which the guidance under paragraph (1) is issued, each Federal agency shall report financial and payment information data in accordance with the data standards established under subsection (a).

''(B) NONINTERFERENCE WITH AUDITABILITY OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Upon request by the Secretary of Defense, the Director may grant an extension of the deadline under subparagraph (A) to the Department of Defense for a period of not more than 6 months to report financial and payment information data in accordance with the data standards established under subsection (a).

''(ii) LIMITATION.—The Director may not grant more than 3 extensions to the Secretary of Defense under clause (i).

''(iii) NOTIFICATION.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives of—

''(I) each grant of an extension under clause (i); and

''(II) the reasons for granting such an extension.

''(3) WEBSITE.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which the guidance under paragraph (1) is issued, the Director and the Secretary shall ensure that the data standards established under subsection (a) are applied to the data made available on the website established under section 2.

''(d) CONSULTATION.—The Director and the Secretary shall consult with public and private stakeholders in establishing data standards under this section.

''SEC. 5. SIMPLIFYING FEDERAL AWARD REPORTING.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director, in consultation with relevant Federal agencies, recipients of Federal awards, including State and local governments, and institutions of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)), shall review the information required to be reported by recipients of Federal awards to identify—

''(1) common reporting elements across the Federal Government;

''(2) unnecessary duplication in financial reporting; and

''(3) unnecessarily burdensome reporting requirements for recipients of Federal awards.

''(b) PILOT PROGRAM.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014, the Director, or a Federal agency designated by the Director, shall establish a pilot program (in this section referred to as the 'pilot program') with the participation of appropriate Federal agencies to facilitate the development of recommendations for—

''(A) standardized reporting elements across the Federal Government;

''(B) the elimination of unnecessary duplication in financial reporting; and

''(C) the reduction of compliance costs for recipients of Federal awards.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The pilot program shall—

''(A) include a combination of Federal contracts, grants, and subawards, the aggregate value of which is not less than $1,000,000,000 and not more than $2,000,000,000;

''(B) include a diverse group of recipients of Federal awards; and

''(C) to the extent practicable, include recipients who receive Federal awards from multiple programs across multiple agencies.

''(3) DATA COLLECTION.—The pilot program shall include data collected during a 12-month reporting cycle.

''(4) REPORTING AND EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS.—Each recipient of a Federal award participating in the pilot program shall submit to the Office of Management and Budget or the Federal agency designated under paragraph (1), as appropriate, any requested reports of the selected Federal awards.

''(5) TERMINATION.—The pilot program shall terminate on the date that is 2 years after the date on which the pilot program is established.

''(6) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the pilot program terminates under paragraph (5), the Director shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on the Budget of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program, which shall include—

''(A) a description of the data collected under the pilot program, the usefulness of the data provided, and the cost to collect the data from recipients; and

''(B) a discussion of any legislative action required and recommendations for—

''(i) consolidating aspects of Federal financial reporting to reduce the costs to recipients of Federal awards;

''(ii) automating aspects of Federal financial reporting to increase efficiency and reduce the costs to recipients of Federal awards;

''(iii) simplifying the reporting requirements for recipients of Federal awards; and

''(iv) improving financial transparency.

''(7) GOVERNMENT-WIDE IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the Director submits the report under paragraph (6), the Director shall issue guidance to the heads of Federal agencies as to how the Government-wide financial data standards established under section 4(a) shall be applied to the information required to be reported by entities receiving Federal awards to—

''(A) reduce the burden of complying with reporting requirements; and

''(B) simplify the reporting process, including by reducing duplicative reports.

''SEC. 6. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR FEDERAL FUNDING.

''(a) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with paragraph (2), the Inspector General of each Federal agency, in consultation with the Comptroller General of the United States, shall—

''(A) review a statistically valid sampling of the spending data submitted under this Act by the Federal agency; and

''(B) submit to Congress and make publically available a report assessing the completeness, timeliness, quality, and accuracy of the data sampled and the implementation and use of data standards by the Federal agency.

''(2) DEADLINES.—

''(A) FIRST REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date on which the Director and the Secretary issue guidance to Federal agencies under section 4(c)(1), the Inspector General of each Federal agency shall submit and make publically available a report as described in paragraph (1).

''(B) SUBSEQUENT REPORTS.—On the same date as the Inspector General of each Federal agency submits the second and fourth reports under sections 3521(f) and 9105(a)(3) of title 31, United States Code, that are submitted after the report under subparagraph (A), the Inspector General shall submit and make publically available a report as described in paragraph (1). The report submitted under this subparagraph may be submitted as a part of the report submitted under section 3521(f) or 9105(a)(3) of title 31, United States Code.

''(b) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with paragraph (2) and after a review of the reports submitted under subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress and make publically available a report assessing and comparing the data completeness, timeliness, quality, and accuracy of the data submitted under this Act by Federal agencies and the implementation and use of data standards by Federal agencies.

''(2) DEADLINES.—Not later than 30 months after the date on which the Director and the Secretary issue guidance to Federal agencies under section 4(c)(1), and every 2 years thereafter until the date that is 4 years after the date on which the first report is submitted under this subsection, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit and make publically available a report as described in paragraph (1).

''(c) RECOVERY ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY BOARD DATA ANALYSIS CENTER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may establish a data analysis center or expand an existing service to provide data, analytic tools, and data management techniques to support—

''(A) the prevention and reduction of improper payments by Federal agencies; and

''(B) improving efficiency and transparency in Federal spending.

''(2) DATA AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary shall enter into memoranda of understanding with Federal agencies, including Inspectors General and Federal law enforcement agencies—

''(A) under which the Secretary may provide data from the data analysis center for—

''(i) the purposes set forth under paragraph (1);

''(ii) the identification, prevention, and reduction of waste, fraud, and abuse relating to Federal spending; and

''(iii) use in the conduct of criminal and other investigations; and

''(B) which may require the Federal agency, Inspector General, or Federal law enforcement agency to provide reimbursement to the Secretary for the reasonable cost of carrying out the agreement.

''(3) TRANSFER.—Upon the establishment of a data analysis center or the expansion of a service under paragraph (1), and on or before the date on which the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board terminates, and in addition to any other transfer that the Director determines is necessary under section 1531 of title 31, United States Code, there are transferred to the Department of the Treasury all assets identified by the Secretary that support the operations and activities of the Recovery Operations Center of the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board relating to the detection of waste, fraud, and abuse in the use of Federal funds that are in existence on the day before the transfer.

''SEC. 7. CLASSIFIED AND PROTECTED INFORMATION.

''Nothing in this Act shall require the disclosure to the public of—

''(1) information that would be exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5,

United States Code (commonly known as the 'Freedom of Information Act'); or

''(2) information protected under section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the 'Privacy Act of 1974'), or section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

''SEC. 8. NO PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.

''Nothing in this Act shall be construed to create a private right of action for enforcement of any provision of this Act.''.

SEC. 4. EXECUTIVE AGENCY ACCOUNTING AND OTHER FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORTS AND PLANS.

Section 3512(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''and make available on the website described under section 1122'' after ''appropriate committees of Congress''.

SEC. 5. DEBT COLLECTION IMPROVEMENT.

Section 3716(c)(6) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(A)'' before ''Any Federal agency'';

(2) in subparagraph (A), as so designated, by striking ''180 days'' and inserting ''120 days''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) The Secretary of the Treasury shall notify Congress of any instance in which an agency fails to notify the Secretary as required under subparagraph (A).''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. 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 materials on the bill under consideration.

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of S. 994, the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act, or DATA Act.

As chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, I have looked to tackle major problems pervasive in the Federal Government.

Over the past 4 years, our committee, the majority and the minority, has taken up and moved several bills designed to reform the Federal Government.

Majority Leader CANTOR has worked with leaders on both sides of the aisle to take most of those reforms and advance them through the full House, often on a unanimous basis.

All Members of the House can be proud of the work we have done to improve the Federal Government. Without a doubt, the most important transparency reform we have pushed over the last 4 years has been the DATA Act. The DATA Act is but a first shot of a technological revolution that will transform the way we govern.

Just 3 weeks ago, the GAO's Comptroller General Gene Dodaro came before our committee and testified that the status of the Federal data programs is abysmal. Agencies have no standardized performance metrics for their programs. Agencies cannot tell us how many programs they have. But most importantly, agencies do not and usually cannot tell us how much taxpayer money has been spent on any given program.

The spending information that is provided is often incomplete, out-of-date, and very often inaccurate. The American people deserve to know if their taxpayer dollars are being wasted or whether they are being spent wisely. Even the meager amount of performance information collected today is useless if it cannot determine how much resources any given program truly consumes.

This information disadvantages not only Congress, but in fact the President's administration. Presidential administrations one after another consist of but a few thousand officials to oversee a workforce of nearly 2 million people and trillions of dollars.

Regardless of political party affiliation, each Congress and every President is frustrated by this large, permanent, unaccountable class of bureaucrats.

□ 1615

Some scholars have even deemed the permanent bureaucracy as the ''fourth branch'' of the Federal Government.

In order to better oversee the Federal Government, Congress, and even the President and his appointees, must better leverage the technology available today. The DATA Act will allow us to do just that.

I introduced the first version of the DATA Act in 2011. Its inspiration came from a relatively small expense in the Obama administration's 2009 stimulus spending bill, a bill that I overall did not approve of but which did have this important accountability standard.

The stimulus temporarily established an entity called the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board. The Board was chaired by a respected inspector general, Earl Devaney. Under Chairman Devaney's leadership, the Board established direct reporting requirements for stimulus projects and standardized Federal agency reporting. This allowed inspector generals and other law enforcement agencies to more effectively prosecute fraud and prevent improper payments.

Furthermore, this information was made available to the public online in an easy-to-download, easy-to-manipulate format so that journalists, academics, and government watchdogs could more easily analyze stimulus spending.

I met with Vice President JOE BIDEN in November of 2010, prior to even becoming the chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. Despite possible disagreements on some aspects of the stimulus, we found ourselves very much in support of the Recovery Board's successes and knew that it could be replicated across the entire Federal Government.

I want to thank Vice President BIDEN for his continued public and private support for the kinds of reforms embedded in this legislation today, and particularly for continuing to be a champion of the Recovery Board's work and the transparency it brought.

In order to do what we agreed to back in 2010, the Federal Government would need standardized data and reporting by all Federal agencies and improved recipient reporting. That is the only way that you could accomplish this, and legislative action was needed.

After months of working with leading experts in the field of standardized reporting, I introduced in July of 2011 the first version of the DATA Act, H.R. 2146. Later that year, I joined with Ranking Member ELIJAH CUMMINGS to refine the legislation and mark it up through our committee.

I want to thank Representatives on both sides of the aisle here today for the bipartisan nature in which we worked on this kind of transparency work. It is technical. It is sometimes hard. Of course, it is a pushback from bureaucrats, but it is what Congress is supposed to do: make the institutional changes that make government more accountable.

In April 2012 we brought it to the floor on a bipartisan basis and passed the first version of the DATA Act unanimously. While a companion version, S. 3600, was introduced by Senator MARK WARNER of Virginia and Senator ROB PORTMAN of Ohio that year, the Senate did not act on either it or the House-passed bill.

Last year we reintroduced the DATA Act as H.R. 2061 and approved it unanimously out of our committee. We made significant changes to streamline the bill, but we maintained the focus on its core elements. Simultaneously, Senator WARNER and Senator PORTMAN introduced a new Senate companion, S. 994, the bill before us today. The House acted quickly again and approved H.R. 2061 by a vote of 388–1.

Knowing that the legislative calendar was short, House and Senate sponsors worked with Senator CARPER and Senator COBURN in a preconference process that ensured the bill would be taken up by the full Senate and which anticipates our passage here today.

We also were able to bring to the table those reformers in the administration—both political appointees and career civil servants—to offer technical improvements to the bill, and they are incorporated in this legislation.

While the bill does not contain all reforms the House advanced in its two previous votes on the DATA Act, the bill before us today does contain the core elements of the two prior versions of the bill and maintains the most important step: common data standards and recipient reporting.

The DATA Act is more than just better tools to fight waste and fraud. It requires agencies to report their financial information in standard formats program by program. The DATA Act also gives policymakers in Congress and in the executive branch better information to make better decisions. More importantly, we give the American people better information to evaluate our performance.

In addition to the strong data standards and requirements for agencies to produce program-by-program information, the House-Senate agreement contains two key provisions from previous versions of the DATA Act.

First, the bill authorizes the Treasury Department to establish a cutting-edge data analysis center modeled specifically after the successful Recovery Operations Center, also known as the ROC. This is the center I spoke earlier about that was established by now-retired but still-distinguished friend of government Earl Devaney as part of the Recovery Board's stimulus transparency efforts.

This new center will build on the innovative technology and ideas of the ROC and expand their use throughout the Federal Government. The DATA Act specifically provides for the transfer of that technology still in place at the ROC.

This new Treasury Department data analysis center will be a vital tool for law enforcement agencies and the IGs in their criminal and other investigations. The new center will also serve agencies who strive to prevent improper payments.

Second, the DATA Act agreement before you today establishes a pilot program to develop consolidated reporting for recipients of Federal funds. And I want to emphasize that, Madam Speaker. Federal recipients, people who get taxpayer money, will now have a transparent and consolidated way to send the information as to how they are spending it so you and the public will know.

Hundreds of billions of Federal taxpayer dollars are spent every year by State, local, tribal governments, universities, and private institutions. These institutions end up inevitably wasting millions of taxpayer dollars complying with duplicative and complicated reporting requirements.

At the end of a 2-year pilot program where some recipients will report to a single entity in a standardized manner, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget will issue guidance to all Federal agencies on how to streamline and consolidate reporting requirements. Just like with stimulus funds, the same data standards that apply to Federal agency reporting will apply to recipient reporting.

The DATA Act will give the American people the ability to track how we spend their tax dollars. Instead of sifting through PDFs—a form of visual, nondata-based standard—posted online that only let's you see a picture of the spending—and many different formats—you now will in fact have all Federal spending information available for bulk download in a single, machine-readable format.

That is a big mouthful, Madam Speaker, but what it really means is that both individuals and entities, large and small, will be able to create tools where, on your iPhone or Android, you will be able to ask a question and get back an answer as successfully as the programs that have previously been made available.

The DATA Act will give lawmakers and public watchdogs powerful tools to identify and root out fraud, waste, and excess spending in the government. It will put at the American people's fingertips today the kind of information that only long and arduous research could unveil.

More importantly, by simply opening up this information, we will enable journalists, academics, and even private sector businesses to use the data to create products that will deliver real value to the American people.

This is just one example:

The National Weather Service some years ago did just what we are proposing by opening up their data, making it freely available to the public some years ago. Today it supports a multibillion-dollar weather analysis industry, and every American with a smartphone or a computer can find out what the weather is and what it is forecasted to be at any location in America. That wouldn't be possible without that open data standard.

I am very proud that it was a start, but there is more to do.

The DATA Act will have the same ability to create jobs, which is why this bill is so important. It is endorsed by dozens of private sector technology companies.

New York University Business School Professor Joel Gurin wrote in a recent book that ''the value of government open data is that it's a long-term, permanent resource that innovators can use for decades, developing new ideas and new companies as technology makes them possible.''

That is a mouthful, but it says what we need to say, which is that this is going to create new industries that are able to leverage the information that today is not available to the American people and not available to the innovators in Silicon Valley and around America.

I ask that my colleagues join with me today in sending this bill to the President for his signature, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to rise in support of S. 994, the DATA Act. This is a landmark piece of bipartisan and bicameral legislation that will change the way the government operates.

I applaud the sponsor of S. 994, Senator MARK WARNER, who put a lot of passion and hard work into this legislation; as did the principal sponsor here, whom you have just heard from, House Oversight Committee Chairman DARRELL ISSA, who put considerable energy into this bill over more than one session; as well as Senate Chairman TOM CARPER of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee; and House Oversight Committee Ranking Member ELIJAH CUMMINGS, who worked very diligently to get us to the House floor today.

The DATA Act will provide the public with information about how the government is spending money, pure and simple. This will hold agencies accountable for their spending, and it will result in a more effective government.

On April 8, 2014, the Comptroller General of the United States, Gene Dodaro, testified in support of this legislation. Here is what he said: ''I think the DATA Act is one of the biggest single things that could be done in order to provide more transparency on the costs of these program activities.''

The Comptroller General went on to say that the DATA Act would ''standardize the data''—and that is the operative word, ''standardize the data''—''so that you would be able to compare data across agencies, which you can't do right now. It would also provide more consistent information and at a lower program spending level that we found to be a big obstacle in us identifying additional savings opportunities.''

The DATA Act will require the Secretary of the Treasury and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to establish government-wide data standards. This will improve the quality of the data that agencies make available about their spending.

Under this bill, spending data will be available through a single Web site. The bill will require that spending data be available for each agency and each program activity in a searchable, downloadable format.

The DATA Act is a bipartisan bill across both Chambers that will improve transparency and, in turn, make government work better. I urge every Member to support this legislation.

□ 1630

I would like, again, to express my strong support for this bill and to thank Chairman ISSA for his many efforts to get it passed and through committee more than once.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, in closing, this last weekend, the Associated Press talked about the waning days of this Congress and expected to have a do-nothing Congress.

That is easy to say, but in this case, today, we are showing, on a bipartisan, bicameral basis, with our friends in the Senate, that there are major pieces of legislation that will save countless billions of dollars and provide better information to the American people and

to the watchdogs who want to root out waste, fraud, and abuse in our government.

So this is not a controversial bill because it has taken years of hard work to get it right. But, in fact, this is a major piece of legislation.

I want to close by thanking Senator CARPER, Senator COBURN, Senator PORTMAN, and Senator WARNER, the author of the bill today, in addition to Delegate ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, and of course, my ranking member, Congressman CUMMINGS.

This has been bipartisan. It is one of the many pieces of bipartisan legislation that take a long time, they hold a lot of hearings, but at the end of the day, the American people can trust that the American people's work does get done, in spite of some of the things we are unable to do. This is a major piece of legislation.

I want to thank, lastly, leadership for bringing this to the floor today in a timely fashion so that we can get it to the President's desk for signing next week.

Madam Speaker, I urge support and yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BLACK). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 994.

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.

CLARIFICATION OF RULES APPLYING TO HUMAN OCCUPANCY OF PENTHOUSES IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BUILDINGS

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4192) to amend the Act entitled ''An Act to regulate the height of buildings in the District of Columbia'' to clarify the rules of the District of Columbia regarding human occupancy of penthouses above the top story of the building upon which the penthouse is placed, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4192

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

SECTION 1. CLARIFICATION OF RULES APPLYING TO HUMAN OCCUPANCY OF PENTHOUSES IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BUILDINGS.

(a) PERMITTING HUMAN OCCUPANCY OF PENTHOUSES WITHIN CERTAIN HEIGHT LIMIT.—The eighth paragraph of section 5 of the Act entitled ''An Act to regulate the height of buildings in the District of Columbia'', approved June 1, 1910 (sec. 6–601.05(h), D.C. Official Code) is amended—

(1) by striking ''penthouses over elevator shafts,'' and inserting ''penthouses,''; and

(2) by striking ''and no floor or compartment thereof shall be constructed or used for human occupancy above the top story of the building upon which such structures are placed'' and inserting ''and, except in the case of a penthouse which is erected to a height of one story of 20 feet or less above the level of the roof, no floor or compartment thereof shall be constructed or used for human occupancy above the top story of the building upon which such structures are placed''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill hereto under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, in 1910, the Height of Buildings Act was signed into Federal law. That bill, in fact, envisioned a prevention of New York-style skyscrapers from being erected here in the Nation's Capital. That bill is every bit as important today as it was in 1910.

The District of Columbia has a unique visual requirement. We should not, cannot, and will not obstruct the Mall and the major parts of this historic city.

It is important that we maintain the skyline and the access, and we do so in every single consideration in this city. The memorials and monuments and public safety must be considered.

However, over the last two Congresses, the committee has been working on several small modifications that, really, time has said its time has come. After 100 years, the current legislation makes a small but meaningful change. Let me put it in words the American people can easily understand.

One hundred years ago, they put a limit on the height of these buildings, and then they put 20 feet beyond that limit of occupancy for water towers, coal stacks for the chimneys, and, of course, the tops of elevators. Those water towers, elevator shafts, chimneys, they were certainly pretty hideous, but they were necessary.

It is now 100 years later, and, in fact, the absence of other uses for these buildings often means that these tops of these buildings are not considered to be an aesthetically important part, and there is no funding and no source of revenue to make them better.

Under this modification to the Height Act, we allow for what have been called penthouses but, in fact, are simply industrial rooftop air conditioners and the like to be covered, wrapped, if you will, by architecturally pleasing structures.

These structures may be occupied. They may be offices, cafeterias, or, in the case of a residential apartment complex, it could be a top apartment.

Under the legislation, they have to have a setback. The setback is roughly 1 foot per foot of height, or 20 feet of setback if they go to the full 20 feet. So these are not a monolithic increase and, in fact, a setback consistent with that 100-year-old law.

Last Congress, the committee held numerous hearings on the Height Act and listened to countless witnesses. I subsequently wrote to the National Capital Planning Commission, often called the NCPC, and the mayor's office, asking them to jointly study modifications to the Height Act and recommend any changes they saw appropriate. For those who are unaware, NCPC is the regional planning commission that includes representatives of both the Federal interests and local interests.

The Height Act study is impressive. Aside from the research work, a series of meetings were held featuring considerable input from experts and the general public alike. Afterward, the mayor's office and NCPC provided separate recommendations.

The mayor's specific recommendation: increase the height limits in downtown. The mayor also recommended that the city and NCPC work together to be able to use the city comprehensive plan as a tool to adjust height limits outside the L'Enfant city region.

This is not in today's proposal. Ultimately, only after considering these broader changes, NCPC's only recommendation from the overall plan submitted by the mayor is, in fact, the modest proposal before you today.

Let's understand: the height of buildings in this city will not change by 1 foot under this act, but the beauty of the tops of buildings and the usability will.

The revenue to the city can increase because of the value of these top floors, and, yet, we will cover up mechanical penthouses that, today, are simply elevator shafts, rooftop air conditioners, water towers and the like.

So long as that ratio of setback and the other provisions of the 100-year-old act are maintained, the city will have the ability to approve structures.

But let's understand: those structures will still go through a rigorous program before they can be approved, and they will continue to be consistent with the 1910 Height Act.

NCPC itself recommended that human occupancy be allowed in such rooftop penthouses, so long as the setback ratio was maintained and that the penthouse does not exceed one story and that no more than 20 feet of height be maintained.

Our bill does everything in the NCPC recommendation. So this bill simply gives the city a little more latitude in