

Although we are reauthorizing NAHASDA, none of us should be fooled at all that this will in any way deal with the tremendous need for affordable housing within Native American communities.

I, again, am very, very empathetic with the issues, particularly that the ranking member has raised, and I am really hopeful that many of these issues, particularly the issue of the Cherokee Freedmen, will be dealt with. It seems promising to me because of some of the decisions that have been made in courts so far.

We do seem to have a Cherokee chairman who is more open, it would seem, to providing membership and retaining membership of the Cherokee Freedmen.

I, again, am happy that the Native Hawaiians are in this bill. I think that as we move forward, we should be ever mindful to make sure that nothing that we have done here will preempt the Native Americans' sovereignty or sovereignty status.

Again, I want to thank all of my partners.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE), who is a tireless advocate for Native Americans and Native American housing.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

I rise to support the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determined Reauthorization Act of 2014.

I want to begin by thanking my friend Mr. PEARCE. Nobody has worked harder on this legislation and, frankly, cared more and done more to make sure that a part of our population that historically has not done well, to say the least, has the opportunity to not only receive some benefits that are appropriately and rightfully theirs, but to take more control over their own destiny and their own housing. I think this legislation does just that.

I want to thank Members on both sides of the aisle. I see my good friend from Wisconsin over there who, we worked together on VAWA. I know what her commitment is on Native American issues, and I appreciate that very, very much.

This legislation provides Native American tribes with much greater efficiencies when deploying NAHASDA funding. We all know government, however well intentioned, quite often is a pretty clumsy and pretty bureaucratic instrument. Consolidating the environmental review requirements, requiring the HUD Secretary to study and recommend to Congress standards to streamline the construction of Indian housing, recommendations for HUD to establish alternative reporting requirements for tribes, these are all good things that will speed the development of housing and allow tribes to deploy their funds more efficiently.

There is also legislation in here to deal with taxpayer protections and

tribal accountability to make sure the HUD Secretary has the authority to recoup unexpended funds that are held for too long; it strengthens tribal flexibility and sovereignty; and, finally, it allows tribes to pursue alternative funding sources by encouraging private investment, something that is desperately needed.

I know, and happened to come in the last part of the debate, there was some discussion about the Cherokee Freedmen issue. That is an issue I know a fair amount about since the tribe is located in my home State of Oklahoma. I want to agree with Ms. MOORE that we do have a chief, Chief Baker, who is extremely concerned about this issue and is trying to work it through.

The bill itself, the language, is really just an update from what we did in 2008. We are trying to allow the courts and the tribe to solve the issue. I think they genuinely have made progress that the people here that have had legitimate concerns about this issue can be proud of. I think they will continue to do that. But there is no substantive change in what my friend Mr. PEARCE has brought forward and what existing law was in this area.

I just want to end once more by thanking my friend Mr. PEARCE. Frankly, this bill would not have been on this floor without his diligent work. I certainly want to thank Mr. HENSARLING for working with my friend Mr. PEARCE, and I want to thank my friends on the other side of the aisle who also have focused a great deal of attention and concern on this issue to try and make sure that the first Americans aren't the last Americans in almost every category. So, again, I thank my friends, and I look forward to the passage of this legislation.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma and, again, appreciate his leadership.

As you have heard, there is no shortage of debate on the bill, but there is also no shortage of people coming together and saying let's pass this bill.

I listened with interest to the ranking member. The points that she made today were made during the markup, and, again, I appreciate and respect that and have not set those concerns off on the side. It was absolutely essential that we move the bill forward in order to get this passed in this session, so I appreciate all of the support from our partners across the aisle.

This support that you are hearing from Native Americans across the country from people in this Chamber is no coincidence. It comes from hard work, and that hard work has come from both sides of the aisle, but especially from Ms. MOORE, Mr. HECK, Mr. KILDEE, and, again, Ms. WATERS. So thank you all for that dedicated effort. On our side, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. COLE, and Mr. HENSARLING have been just vital in getting this kind of pulled together in a fashion that we could bring it here today on suspension.

For the past 2 years, my office and I have worked with countless tribal leaders and housing associations nationwide; we have worked with other Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle; we have worked with HUD and the administration—all for one end result, and that is to create greater prosperity for Native Americans. It is that simple.

I am proud to cosponsor H.R. 4329 because it does so much to accomplish this goal. For generations, prosperity and growth has evaded many Native American communities. NAHASDA is not designed as an entitlement but, rather, as a tool of empowerment and growth. To date, each reauthorization has built upon the past to make alterations and updates designed to provide greater autonomy and prosperity on tribal lands. H.R. 4329 is no exception.

I ask that you join me today in reauthorizing this commonsense yet transformative legislation, which will help millions realize the dream of prosperity. Vote "yes" and help break a perpetual cycle of poverty through self-determination and independence.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4329, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE EFFICIENCY ACT

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2790) to authorize private nonprofit organizations to administer permanent housing rental assistance provided through the Continuum of Care Program under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2790

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 "Housing Assistance Efficiency Act".

SEC. 2. AUTHORITY TO ADMINISTER RENTAL ASSISTANCE.

Subsection (g) of section 423 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11383(g)) is amended by inserting "private nonprofit organization," after "unit of general local government,".

SEC. 3. REALLOCATION OF FUNDS.

Paragraph (1) of section 414(d) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11373(d)(1)) is amended by striking "twice" and inserting "once".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) and the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials for the RECORD on H.R. 2790, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Housing Assistance Efficiency Act was introduced by SCOTT PETERS in July of 2013 as a technical correction to the 2009 HEARTH Act amendments to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Changes include restoring nonprofit organizations' ability to administer rental assistance programs, as well as alter the way in which HUD reallocates funds.

Originally enacted in 1987 as the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, this legislation created a number of new programs to assist homeless Americans' needs, including food, shelter, health care, and education.

Since 1987, it has twice been reauthorized. In 2000, it came to be known as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, with updates including the creation of the HUD Homeless Assistance Grants, the Department of Labor Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, and others. In 2009, the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing, the HEARTH Act, amended McKinney-Vento Homeless to combine the Shelter Plus Care and the Supportive Housing Programs into a single, competitive program.

Supported by HUD and the administration, the bill before us today will correct unintended consequences created by the HEARTH Act by allowing existing nonprofits that operate CoC programs for leased housing to homeless families and individuals to continue to manage their McKinney-Vento grants as rental assistance.

It restores nonprofit participation and maximum community flexibility by delegating authority to these institutions to administer rental assistance. It allows Innovation of Promising Practices. Providing nonprofits with administration of rental assistance will allow these groups to implement new housing practices, which would better assist the communities they are in. It reduces administrative work by allowing reallocation to occur once a year instead of semiannually.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I really rise to congratulate and thank the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) for championing this bill and bringing to our attention a real tremendous cost savings in this HUD program with H.R. 2790, and really providing, using the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to provide services to the homeless rather than just additional legal fees, operating costs, additional insurance issues, establishing new internal controls and tracking systems. This is really innovative in terms of how it maximizes the McKinney-Vento moneys. The bill does not include more money, Mr. Speaker. It just allows us to use the small "c" that we have more effectively.

I yield as much time as he might consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS), the author of H.R. 2790.

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, many laws are intended to ensure efficiency in Federal agencies but often have unintended consequences, preventing agencies from serving the public and costing taxpayer money. Currently, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Continuum of Care Program spends too much time fulfilling administrative obligations instead of helping individuals and families transition out of homelessness and putting them on a path to independent living.

Twice a fiscal year, HUD has to reallocate emergency solutions grant program funds that are unused, returned, or otherwise become available in the program, but because almost no funds are unused or become available under the program, the reallocation of funds takes a lot of time and unwarranted human capital to complete.

It is administratively more efficient to reallocate funds only once a year. This frees up HUD employees to provide more human resources toward providing better service to constituents, and we shouldn't saddle HUD with more administrative work that isn't helping anyone.

In addition to mandatory fund allocations, HUD also faces a mountain of paperwork when it comes to administering rental assistance. Prior to 2009, private nonprofits could administer rental assistance through HUD's Continuum of Care. The HEARTH Act, however, obfuscated rental assistance laws, and private nonprofits were left off the list of entities allowed to administer rental assistance.

Currently, only States, units of general local government, or public housing agencies can dispense housing assistance despite nonprofits' substantial experience and their ability to reach vulnerable populations. Private nonprofits can still execute other homelessness programs, but they have to go through public housing agencies or another layer of bureaucracy to get rental assistance to their clients or the landlord. This creates more bureaucratic burdens when individuals and families really need the help quickly to stay in their homes.

H.R. 2790, the Housing Assistance Efficiency Act, would remedy both these problems, would make HUD a more efficient agency and get homelessness assistance to those that need it more quickly. This is important in particular to San Diego. We have the third largest homeless population, and it is widely supported in my district and across the country.

I thank the gentleman from New Mexico.

In their statement supporting this legislation, the San Diego Housing Federation said this bill removes barriers to helping get important resources to those who need it the most, and that is what it is all about.

So I urge my colleagues to help pass this legislation to take substantive action to improve government efficiency and help fight chronic homelessness in our country.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I would again like to thank the gentleman for his hard work in this area and for bringing this bill forward.

We have no other speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2790.

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.

WORLD WAR I AMERICAN VETERANS CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2366) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of World War I, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2366

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 "World War I American Veterans Centennial Commemorative Coin Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) The year 2018 is the 100th anniversary of the signing of the armistice with Germany ending World War I battlefield hostilities.

(2) On the 6th of April 1917, the United States of America entered World War I by declaring war against Germany.

(3) Two million American soldiers served overseas during World War I.

(4) More than four million men and women from the United States served in uniform during World War I.

(5) The events of 1914 through 1918 shaped the world and the lives of millions of people for decades.