

which to revise and extend their remarks and add extraneous materials on this bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), the primary author of this bill, who has worked tirelessly to make sure that these advisory committees have transparency.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman for yielding to me. I thank him for his support in regard to my legislation and for all the work he does on Financial Services, as well as the support from the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services. I am grateful to them as well.

As we gather in this Chamber, I don't think it is very often that we come in in a kumbaya moment in regard to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. I think those who follow our committee would recognize that there are a few differences in how the CFPB is structured and how it should move forward. We have had that debate. All of us agree that consumers should be protected, and they should have a strong advocate in that protection.

Though we have disagreed on some elements of the CFPB, I am proud today that we have a bipartisan group coming in talking about some straightforward reforms that make some of the rules from the CFPB work a lot better and help consumers out, help Americans out, help our constituents out.

In regard to my bill, in the last Congress, I tried to go to one of the advisory committees at the CFPB. Now, most of these are usually open in government. There are only a couple of exceptions. If you work at the CIA, the CIA doesn't open up their advisory committee meetings for obvious purposes and reasons; and the Fed, with the FOMC, when they are setting monetary policy, they too don't open up their meetings, community advisory meetings, for obvious purposes.

But when I tried to go to a CFPB meeting in the last Congress, I was told by the CFPB that they would not accommodate my request because their meetings were closed. That concerned me because the CFPB has said that "transparency is at the core of our agenda, and it is the key part of how we operate." On their Web site, they say that "you deserve to know what we're doing for the American public and how we are doing it."

So I had some concern that when the rest of government opens up their meetings, the CFPB wouldn't open up their meetings and allow the public to hear the conversation and the dialogue that was going on. I highly doubt the information is as sensitive as what is taking place at the CIA or setting monetary policy, and if we are protecting consumers, that should be an open conversation and debate.

When I introduced a similar bill in the last Congress, I actually received a phone call from the Director, who said: You know what? This is a good bill. You know, we have had some disagreement on how the CFPB is run, but we will open up our meetings.

Well, I don't know if in that phone call we had we weren't on the same page or what. I am not going to say it was trickery on the Director's part, but what happened was the CFPB opened up only a small portion of their advisory committee meetings, about an hour and a half, and in the other vast majority of the meetings, they moved them into what was called a subcommittee so they wouldn't be open. What my bill today does is make sure these meetings are open to the public, that we as a community, as an American family, get to see the conversation that is taking place in the advisory committees to the CFPB. It makes complete sense.

I am proud and honored that my friends across the aisle were supportive of this measure. The ranking member, Ms. WATERS, actually spoke kind of in favor of my proposal. I mean, I took it that way. She voted for it and recommended a vote in favor of it. I appreciate her bipartisanship.

I think this is about making good work, making it accountable, making it transparent, and that is a start, at least in the advisory meetings that our government takes part in.

I am grateful for the support; I am grateful for the time, and I urge my colleagues to support this great piece of bipartisan, transparent legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill. As Mr. DUFFY just said, on occasion, we can come to an agreement. This is the second CFPB bill we have done in a row. There are many things we would like to work together on.

We do wish, however, that on some of the other items on the CFPB, some of the members of the Financial Services Committee would kind of get off the horse a little bit and come on down and work with us.

These two bills are very good bills, as far as I am concerned. The CFPB already does some of the things this act would impose, but they should do them all. There is no question about it. That is why this is an easy bill to support. I thank Mr. DUFFY for offering it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Wisconsin's work on this. Some of the points that he made is that this is about transparency. Why that is important is because this agency, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, is making the important decisions about the kinds of financial products that American families can access.

Quite honestly, some people think that, in many ways, the actions of this

agency have been beginning to reduce some of the availability of some of those financial products.

I think it is important to have these advisory groups. I want to commend the agency for having those, but I think it is important, also, for the American people to hear the comments and the discussions that are going on that could inevitably affect the kinds of financial products that they are going to be able to access in the future.

Now, the fact is that many of the other agencies have to fall under the FACA, but because this agency is tucked inside the Federal Reserve—and the Federal Reserve currently is exempt—but, quite honestly, the only other agencies that are exempt from it are the CIA, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Federal Reserve as they are talking about monetary policy. I hardly believe that the CFPB falls in the same category of any of these other agencies that are exempt.

This is a commonsense piece of legislation. It allows that same transparency available in all other agencies across the government and allows the American people to hear those important discussions about their future and about the financial products that they are going to be able to access in the future.

Again, I want to remind everybody this was a bipartisan bill that passed 56–2 out of our committee.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1265.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### EXPEDITED FUNDS AVAILABILITY ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1367) to amend the Expedited Funds Availability Act to clarify the application of that Act to American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1367

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

#### SECTION 1. APPLICATION OF THE EXPEDITED FUNDS AVAILABILITY ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Expedited Funds Availability Act (12 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 602(20) (12 U.S.C. 4001(20)) by inserting “, located in the United States,” after “ATM”;

(2) in section 602(21) (12 U.S.C. 4001(21)) by inserting “American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,” after “Puerto Rico,”;

(3) in section 602(23) (12 U.S.C. 4001(23)) by inserting “American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,” after “Puerto Rico,”; and

(4) in section 603(d)(2)(A) (12 U.S.C. 4002(d)(2)(A)), by inserting “American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,” after “Puerto Rico.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2016.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and add extraneous materials on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is a noncontroversial, bipartisan bill. It was carried by the Democratic Representative from American Samoa last Congress.

This is a proconsumer measure that would improve the check clearing wait times in American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands. Other non-contiguous U.S. States and territories are already subject to this act. This bill provides parity and helps improve financial services in American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands.

This bill passed the House on suspension last Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of this bill as well. Again, it is a simple, straightforward bill that simply says that American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands are part of America, as is every other part of America. They should be treated the same.

This bill corrects a law that currently does not allow them to be treated the same in financial services matters. It should be passed immediately.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I will read a statement that Mrs. RADEWAGEN of American Samoa submitted to me in reference to this. She is the primary sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1367, to amend the Expedited Funds Avail-

ability Act to clarify the application of that act to American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands.

I would first like to thank Chairman Hensarling and Ranking Member Waters, as well as the House Financial Services Committee staff, who worked so hard to get this bill to the floor. I appreciate their dedication, as do the people of American Samoa and the CNMI.

As you know, the isolation of American Samoa, both geographically and economically, lends itself to difficulties in financial transactions that take place between American Samoa and those off island.

Many times, our citizens and businesses must wait an exorbitant amount of time before they can receive off-island funds that have been sent to them. These delays often cause hardships that are both unnecessary and unfounded.

H.R. 1367 will eliminate the excessive delays that the people of American Samoa must currently deal with in order to receive funds sent to them from off-island.

Again, I would like to thank Chairman Hensarling and Ranking Member Waters for their consideration of this measure that will greatly improve the lives of the people of American Samoa.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members of the House of Representatives to vote in favor of this bill that will bring American Samoa and the CNMI into the fold financially in regards to off-island transactions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SABLAR. Mr. Speaker, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands deserve the same protections of federal law as other Americans. Making sure my people get equal treatment is one of the reasons I came to Congress and equivalent treatment brings me to the floor today in support of H.R. 1367.

As we have heard, H.R. 1367 extends the protections of the Expedited Funds Availability Act to the people of the Northern Marianas and American Samoa. This would mean that account holders in the Northern Marianas and American Samoa would have timely access to their money when they deposit a check in their bank.

The same banking rules would apply in the Northern Marianas and American Samoa as apply in Alaska, Hawai‘i, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands—the areas of our nation not directly connected to the contiguous forty-eight states.

It may be that in 1987, when the Expedited Funds Availability Act was first adopted, the Northern Marianas and American Samoa seemed remote from the rest of America. Back then, paper checks may have been bundled up and sent through the mail. So delays were inevitable.

But today banking is handled electronically. With a smart phone many banking customers can take a picture of a check and deposit it in their account without even going to the bank.

I have checked with the major banks in my district; none has any problem with having this federal law apply to their operations—because they all do business electronically and make deposits quickly available.

So, clearly, it is time to update federal banking laws with respect to the Northern Marianas and American Samoa and join the 21st century.

I want to thank my friend, Congresswoman AUMUA AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN, for introducing H.R. 1367. And I want to congratulate

her for getting her bill moved through the Financial Services Committee and brought to the floor quickly and early in the 114th Congress.

This same language has passed the House before, but died in the Senate. But the quick start that Congresswoman RADEWAGEN has given her bill will allow the Senate more time—and, we hope, enough time—to make this simple correction to the way federal law applies in two of our nation’s insular areas.

I would also like to thank Chairman JEB HENSARLING, Ranking Member MAXINE WATERS, and all the members of the Financial Services Committee for recognizing that creating a uniform application of federal banking law—at least with respect to how quickly depositors have access to their funds—is an area of bipartisan consensus.

I ask all Members of the House to agree and vote today in favor of H.R. 1367.

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1367, to amend the Expedited Funds Availability Act to clarify the application of that Act to American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands.

I would first like to thank Chairman HENSARLING, and Ranking Member WATERS as well as the House Financial Services Committee staff who worked so hard to get this bill to the floor. I appreciate their dedication as do the people of American Samoa and the CNMI.

As you know, the isolation of American Samoa, both geographically and economically, lends itself to difficulties in financial transactions that take place between American Samoa and those off island.

Many times, our citizens and businesses must wait an exorbitant amount of time before they can receive off-island funds that have been sent to them. These delays often cause hardships that are both unnecessary and unfounded.

H.R. 1367, will eliminate the excessive delays that the people of American Samoa must currently deal with in order to receive funds sent to them from off-island.

Again, I would like to thank Chairman HENSARLING and Ranking Member WATERS for their consideration of this measure that will greatly improve the lives of the people of American Samoa.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members of the U.S. House of Representatives to vote in favor of this bill that will bring American Samoa and the CNMI into the fold financially in regards to off island transactions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1367.

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.

□ 1645

#### SAFE ACT CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVILEGE ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1480) to ensure access to certain information for financial services