

achievable plan. The legislation under consideration seeks to do just that. If enacted, this legislation would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit to Congress an updated plan for St. Elizabeths to inform future funding decisions.

Importantly, H.R. 1640 requires the submission of a proposed occupancy plan for St. Elizabeths that includes a list of components and offices to be housed there. A key consequence of the Department having to scale down the breadth of its consolidation plans is the reality that its portfolio of leased space will need to remain large.

In fact, with up to 69 percent of DHS' commercial leases in the national capital region expiring between fiscal years 2016 to 2020, we should all be aware that DHS will be forced to embark on the expensive process of re-competing and possibly relocating its operations and personnel.

Before I reserve the balance of my time, I would like to acknowledge that I am pleased that the bill includes an amendment I offered to give the Department adequate time to engage the General Services Administration, the construction manager for the project, in preparing the updated plans, assessments, and estimates.

GSA's participation in the development of these key materials is essential to ensuring that what is transmitted to Congress is realistic and achievable.

As a supporter of the St. Elizabeths project and DHS' Unity of Effort initiative, I urge passage of H.R. 1640. Collocation of DHS' personnel in one headquarters has the potential of not only achieving cost savings, but fostering an environment where integration and collaboration drives more effective and efficient operations.

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

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I appreciate the bipartisan approach taken on this legislation. The St. Elizabeths project is about more than real estate; it is about ensuring the Department of Homeland Security has a home where diverse components can come together.

That is the thinking behind the Secretary's Unity of Effort initiative. Enactment of this legislation will help to ensure that DHS has a realistic plan for St. Elizabeths.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman MCCAUL and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) for their work on this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I, once again, urge my colleagues to support this strong bipartisan piece of legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1640, the "Department of Homeland Security Headquarters Consolidation Accountability Act of 2015."

I support this bipartisan legislation which directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit to Congress a report on the Department of Homeland Security headquarters consolidation project in the National Capital Region.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues on the Homeland Security Committee for unanimously supporting the inclusion of my amendments to H.R. 1640.

Together, the Jackson Lee amendments offered a comprehensive look at the Department's real estate obligations related to its headquarters consolidation project at St. Elizabeths, as well as its leased portfolio in the National Capital Region.

Further, the Jackson Lee amendments help clarify how DHS will relocate its personnel and operations at the headquarters level and across its components at St. Elizabeths as construction continues on the headquarters consolidation project.

Mr. Speaker, since DHS initiated its headquarters consolidation in 2006, it has progressed despite changes in senior leadership and waning funding support from Congress.

As a result, in April 2015, DHS and GSA announced that the construction sequence and timetable for the headquarters consolidation would be adjusted to reflect reduced funding by Congress.

DHS must now re-compete up to 69 percent of its commercial leases in the National Capital Region as they are scheduled to expire between 2016 and 2020.

My first amendment directs DHS to provide information related to the expected timing and terms of any lease renewals in the National Capital Region.

My second amendment requires the Department to report on the numbers of its full-time equivalents who are expected to occupy each DHS-leased or owned property, which will guide the Department in adjusting its expenditures on the headquarters consolidation project.

Together, they will ensure that DHS and GSA develop a comprehensive picture of which employees and operations will migrate to St. Elizabeths and which will not.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in strong support of the suspension bill, H.R. 1640, the "Department of Homeland Security Headquarters Consolidation Accountability Act of 2015."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1640, 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.

DHS PAID ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 1633) to provide for certain improvements relating to the tracking and reporting of employees of the Department of Homeland Security placed on administrative leave, or any other type of paid non-duty status without charge to leave, for personnel matters, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1633

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "DHS Paid Administrative Leave Accountability Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY IMPROVED INTERNAL TRACKING AND REPORTING OF ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE FOR PERSONNEL MATTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296; 6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 104. INTERNAL TRACKING AND REPORTING OF ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE FOR PERSONNEL MATTERS.

"(a) INTERNAL REPORTING.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the DHS Paid Administrative Leave Accountability Act of 2015, and quarterly thereafter, the head of each component of the Department shall submit to the Chief Human Capital Officer of the Department—

"(1) the number of employees of the component who had been on administrative leave, or any other type of paid non-duty status without charge to leave, for personnel matters for a period of six consecutive months or longer as of the last day of the period covered by the report;

"(2) the total cost to the component associated with such administrative leave and such paid non-duty status (including salary and benefits) for the period covered by the report; and

"(3) the average duration that employees are placed on administrative leave, or any other type of paid non-duty status without charge to leave, for personnel matters for a period of six consecutive months or longer, as of the last day of the period covered by the report for the component.

"(b) CHCO TRACKING.—The Chief Human Capital Officer shall—

"(1) maintain records of the number of employees of the Department who are placed on administrative leave or paid non-duty status without charge to leave for personnel matters and the costs (including salary and benefits) associated with such leave or non-duty status; and

"(2) in consultation with the head of each of the components of the Department, determine any appropriate actions to be taken by the Department to resolve any personnel matter objectively, appropriately, and expeditiously or to reduce the use of administrative leave and paid non-duty status without charge to leave in addressing any personnel matter.

"(c) PERSONNEL MATTERS DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'personnel matters' means, with respect to an employee, any personnel investigation (including any investigation into misconduct and any national security or suitability investigation), any criminal matter, or any adverse action proposed or taken by the Department, including any action under chapter 75 of title 5, United States Code.

"(d) LEVERAGE OF EXISTING SYSTEMS.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary is

encouraged to leverage systems and operations in use on the date of enactment of the DHS Paid Administrative Leave Accountability Act of 2015 to implement the requirements of this section.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 103 the following new item:

“Sec. 104. Internal tracking and reporting of administrative leave for personnel matters.”.

SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY POLICY RELATING TO EMPLOYEES ON ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE.

By not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief Human Capital Officer of the Department of Homeland Security shall develop and implement a Department-wide policy in accordance with existing Federal guidance specifically related to the use of administrative leave, or any other type of paid non-duty status without charge to leave, for personnel matters. Such policy shall include the responsibilities of the components of the Department for reporting information relating to such administrative leave and such paid non-duty status to the Chief Human Capital Officer, as required under section 104(a) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296), as added by section 2. Such policy shall provide guidance on expediting the resolution of a personnel matter for which an employee has been on administrative leave or any other type of paid non-duty status without charge to leave for a period of six consecutive months or longer in an objective and appropriate manner.

SEC. 4. REPORTS TO CONGRESS ON DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY EMPLOYEES ON ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE FOR PERSONNEL MATTERS.

(a) QUARTERLY REPORTS.—Not later than 30 days after the last day of each calendar quarter of 2016, 2017, and 2018, the Chief Human Capital Officer of the Department of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the number of Department employees on administrative leave, and any other type of paid non-duty status without charge to leave, for personnel matters for a period of six consecutive months or longer as of the last day of the quarter covered by the report. Each such report shall include—

(1) the costs to the Department associated with the placement of such employees on administrative leave or such paid non-duty status (including salary and benefits) for the period covered by the report; and

(2) a description of any actions taken by the Department to resolve any personnel matter for which an employee has been placed on administrative leave or paid non-duty status without charge to leave.

(b) PERSONNEL MATTERS.—In this section, the term “personnel matters” has the meaning given such term in section 104(c) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296), as added by section 2.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within

which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I believe our children and grandchildren deserve a better government than the one that we are passing on to them. Families are struggling due to a lagging economy. Government intrusion and senseless regulations on businesses are pushing jobs overseas. With the recent rash of scandals within our Federal Government, the American people are continually losing their faith in representatives of our government.

I know we can do better, and the American people expect to see change. I came to Congress to make a difference, to cut spending, to eliminate waste, and to hold Big Government bureaucrats accountable and make this Nation a place that is more free, safe, and full of opportunity.

This is what the American people expect from us, and now is the time for us to take bold and decisive action, and that is why I am standing here today.

The Department of Homeland Security has roughly 240,000 employees who work around the clock to protect the lives and liberties of Americans, and I am grateful for their dedicated service.

However, due to a lack of proper management and accountability, there are numbers of DHS employees who are staying at home and drawing a paycheck while being investigated for acts of misconduct.

In May of 2014, the former deputy inspector general at the Department of Homeland Security was accused of altering reports and delaying investigations. One of those investigations was the Secret Service prostitution scandal that occurred in 2012.

The Senate Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight delved into this case, which also led to further investigations. However, even though the former deputy inspector general was being investigated for gross misconduct, he was placed on administrative leave, receiving full pay and benefits for almost an entire year.

We all know that there are occasional incidents like this in any organization. However, if this was an isolated case, I would not be standing here today presenting this bill, but there are numerous cases like it.

The Government Accountability Office reported that from 2011 to 2013, the Department of Homeland Security provided its employees with over 1.5 million days of paid administrative leave, equating to over \$380 million in taxpayer dollars. Most of this paid leave was granted to employees who were on administrative leave for reasons of misconduct.

Unfortunately, the Department has no agencywide standards or reporting

policies regarding paid administrative leave for employees being investigated for misconduct. This lack of management and accountability allows employees with disciplinary issues, like the former deputy inspector general, to fall through the cracks.

This bill, H.R. 1633, the DHS Paid Administrative Leave Accountability Act of 2015, requires the Chief Human Capital Officer to implement an agency-wide policy regarding those who are on paid administrative leave for more than 6 months being investigated for misconduct. In addition, it requires the Department to report to Congress the number of employees on administrative leave during investigation, as well as the associated costs.

Having a commonsense policy, as mandated by this bill, will potentially save the Department millions of dollars and provide for critical oversight and accountability.

The bill will also require the Chief Human Capital Officer to submit quarterly reports to the House and Senate Homeland Security Committees. These reports will allow more oversight by Congress and ensure DHS is no longer squandering hard-working taxpayer dollars.

DHS must do a better job of tracking employees under investigation for misconduct and, in a timely manner, take appropriate action to hold them accountable. Employees who tarnish the Department's reputation do not deserve paid vacations at taxpayer expense.

Americans are tired of government carelessly giving away their future through mismanagement and thoughtless spending habits.

I encourage my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 1633, a commonsense bill that will help prevent fraud, alleviate waste, and better safeguard taxpayer dollars.

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

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and rise in strong support of H.R. 1633, the DHS Paid Administrative Leave Accountability Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, this measure which was unanimously approved in committee, seeks to enhance how certain paid administrative leave is tracked and managed by the Department of Homeland Security.

H.R. 1633 was introduced in response to a 2014 Government Accountability Office report that looked at paid administrative leave expenditures across government between fiscal years 2011 and 2014.

In that report, GAO found that, overall, agencies spent \$3.1 billion on paid administrative leave. Of that amount, the Department of Homeland Security spent \$380 million on this category of leave. Agencies approve administrative leave for a variety of reasons, from severe weather events, to jury duty, to voting, to disciplinary matters subject to investigation.

H.R. 1633 focuses on helping to improve DHS' management of just one segment of paid administrative leave expenditures, leave that is paid for 6 or more consecutive months to an employee that is under investigation by the Department for a conduct or criminal matter.

This legislation directs the Department's Chief Human Capital Officer to maintain records from throughout the Department on the number of employees who are paid leave for 6 or more consecutive months during a DHS personnel investigation; the total costs, including salaries and benefits associated with this leave; and the average length of time that an employee in these circumstances is on paid administrative leave.

H.R. 1633 also directs the Department's Chief Human Capital Officer to develop and implement department-wide policy on how components can comply with this recordkeeping requirement and guidance and on how components can expedite the resolution of personnel matters for an employee in these circumstances.

In committee, language I authored was accepted to ensure that when a component expeditiously works to resolve personnel matters, as directed by this bill, that component must do so in a way that is objective and fair.

□ 1630

The addition of this language is important because we do not want to create the impression that Congress values expediency and cost-cutting over fairness.

Even as we look to foster greater accountability, we must not lose sight of the fact that we are talking about people's careers here.

Before I close, I would add that this legislation does nothing to disturb the discretion that the Department has to make leave decisions, and this bill should not impact the availability of paid administrative leave to the DHS workforce.

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

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT), my good friend.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1633, the DHS Paid Administrative Leave Accountability Act of 2015, introduced by my colleague from Georgia, BARRY LOUDERMILK.

Over the span of 2 years, Department of Homeland Security employees racked up approximately 1.5 million days of paid administrative leave, which amounts to hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. Some of these employees were placed on leave due to investigations into alleged misconduct.

Stopping wasteful government spending has been a top priority for me during my time in Congress, which is why I am proud to cosponsor this piece of legislation.

This bill increases government transparency by establishing an accountability system within the Department of Homeland Security. This system is essential in safeguarding against waste, fraud, and abuse.

I am glad that it is a bipartisan measure. I look forward to its passage, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1633 and stand with this common-sense legislation that saves taxpayer dollars.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), my colleague, friend, and fellow member of the Homeland Security Committee.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1633.

From 2011 to 2013, over 200 DHS employees were placed on paid administrative leave. While administrative leave may be necessary on a case-by-case basis, more frequently, we hear of Federal employees who are under investigation for conduct-related actions. These investigations can last for several months, which can result in a substantial cost to taxpayers.

For example, in 2013, a DHS employee was placed on paid administrative leave for running a Web site that predicted and advocated a race war. Such action should not involve paid leave. It clearly should involve termination of employment.

Another example involves former Acting and Deputy DHS Inspector General Charles Edwards. Mr. Edwards was placed on paid leave in May of 2014. As of October 2014, he was still on paid administrative leave.

This bill protects precious taxpayer dollars by requiring DHS to track and report on employees placed on administrative leave for personnel matters. By keeping track of who is on paid administrative leave, we can better ensure we are not using the taxpayers' dime to pay for DHS employee misconduct.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned before, this legislation would do nothing to disturb the availability of paid administrative leave for DHS workers who need it to vote or to serve on a jury. It is narrowly focused on getting a handle on how much the Department is spending on paid administrative leave for individuals under investigation for 6 or more months.

These circumstances are often tough for all involved. The sooner there is an appropriate resolution, the better it is for everyone involved. If enacted, H.R. 1633 would help to ensure that such matters are resolved in a timely and appropriate manner.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, once again, I urge my colleagues to support this strong, commonsense, and bipartisan piece of legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1633, the "DHS Paid Administrative Leave Accountability Act of 2015."

This bill makes needed improvements relating to the tracking and reporting of employees of the Department of Homeland Security including administrative leave, or any other type of paid non-duty status without charge to leave, and personal matters, and for other purposes.

I support this bipartisan legislation, which amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the head of each component of the Department of Homeland Security to submit on a quarterly basis two reports to the Chief Human Capital Officer of DHS.

Mr. Speaker, Title I of Homeland Security Act would be amended by adding Section 104 which provides for the improvement of internal tracking and reporting for administrative leave.

First, this bill directs that the number of employees who had been on administrative leave, or any other type of paid non-duty status without charge to leave, for personnel matters for six consecutive months or longer be reported.

Second, DHS agency heads must report the total cost to the component associated with such leave and paid non-duty status for that quarter.

The Chief Human Capital Officer is responsible for determining appropriate actions to be taken by DHS to resolve any personnel matter expeditiously or to eliminate or reduce the use of such leave and paid non-duty status in addressing any personnel matter.

The Chief HCO is also to develop and implement a department-wide policy in accordance with existing federal guidance specifically related to the use of such leave of paid non-duty status for personnel matters.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1633 enhances transparency and allows for more fiscally conservative policy in regards to the costs associated with paid administrative leave.

However, it may be more difficult to accomplish this level of transparency in regards to how data for leave is extracted and recorded.

These are time sensitive additions which will require that within 90 days of the enactment of this Act, and quarterly thereafter, the department heads are required to submit their reports to the Chief Officer.

In that same time span the Chief HC Officer is to promulgate a department-wide policy in accordance with existing Federal guidance specifically related to the use of administrative leave.

I join my colleagues in working to strengthen efficiency in all areas of government and supporting fiscally conservative methods to achieve this goal.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting the passage of H.R. 1633.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1633, 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.

HOMELAND SECURITY DRONE ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS ACT

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1646) to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to research how small- and medium-sized unmanned aerial systems could be used in an attack, how to prevent or mitigate the effects of such an attack, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1646

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 “Homeland Security Drone Assessment and Analysis Act”.

SEC. 2. DRONE ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Energy, and the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission research how commercially available small and medium sized unmanned aircraft, excluding aircraft over 1,300 pounds could be used to perpetuate an attack and, based on such research, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall develop policies, guidance, and protocols for the Department of Homeland Security to prevent such an attack or mitigate the risks of such an attack. Not later than 180 days after the completion of the research required under this subsection, the Secretary of Homeland Security may provide, as appropriate, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Energy, and the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission information, based on such research, regarding how to best prevent and mitigate the risk of such an attack.

(b) DISSEMINATION TO STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall disseminate information to State, local, and tribal law enforcement officials and State and major urban area fusion centers, as appropriate, regarding how such officials may bolster preparedness for and responses to attacks perpetrated by commercially available small and medium sized unmanned aircraft, excluding aircraft over 1,300 pounds.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation of the Senate an assessment of the security risk associated with commercially available small and medium sized unmanned aircraft, excluding aircraft over 1,300 pounds. Such assessment shall be informed by research conducted in accordance with subsection (a), shall contain recommendations, if applicable, to prevent and mitigate the risk of an unmanned aircraft system attack, and may be developed in coordination with the Centers of Excellence of the Department of Homeland Security and other academic institutions.

(d) PROHIBITION ON NEW FUNDING.—No funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act. This Act shall be carried out using amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for such purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1646.

The rapid increase of commercially available small-and medium-sized unmanned aerial systems, or UAS, most often referred to as drones, poses an emerging security threat. This is further evidenced by recent high-profile events at the White House, French nuclear power plants, and numerous airports and sports venues. Drones have been a part of foiled terrorist plots, used to smuggle drugs across our borders, and the negligent use of this technology presents a public safety risk.

During this Congress, bills have been introduced that focus on topics such as the commercial uses of drones and the privacy concerns associated with their use. However, nobody has tackled the security implications of expanding the use of drones. H.R. 1646, the Homeland Security Drone Assessment and Analysis Act, requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to research how commercially available small- and medium-sized drones could be used in an attack and to develop policies, guidance, and protocols for the Department of Homeland Security to prevent an attack.

By the end of fiscal year 2015, the Federal Aviation Administration is expected to establish new rules to remove the waiver requirement and allow the operation of drones for nonrecreational purposes in U.S. airspace. Undoubtedly, these regulations would be better informed by a DHS assessment of the potential security risks associated with the expanded use of small- and medium-sized drones. H.R. 1646 is a good first step towards protecting the country and the American people from this emerging threat.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, WASHINGTON, DC, JUNE 9, 2015.

Hon. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL: I write concerning H.R. 1646, the Homeland Security Drone Assessment and Analysis Act. This legislation includes matters that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

In order to expedite floor consideration of H.R. 1646, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will forgo action on this bill. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding that forgoing consideration of the bill does not prejudice the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation that fall within the Committee's Rule X jurisdiction. In addition, the bill's sponsor and the Committee on Homeland Security have agreed to include two changes to the bill in a Manager's Amendment on the House Floor. Finally, I request you urge the Speaker to name members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to any conference committee named to consider H.R. 1646.

Please place a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging our jurisdictional interest into the Congressional Record during consideration of the measure on the House floor.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, June 10, 2015.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER, Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 1646, the “Homeland Security Drone Assessment and Analysis Act.” I appreciate your support in bringing this legislation before the House of Representatives, and accordingly, understand that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will forego further action on the bill.

The Committee on Homeland Security concurs with the mutual understanding that by foregoing further action on this bill at this time, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this bill or similar legislation in the future. In addition, should a conference on this bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure represented on the conference committee.

I will insert copies of this exchange in the report on the bill and in the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill on the house floor. I thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 1646, the Homeland Security Drone Assessment and Analysis Act, and in support of the House's adoption of H.R. 1646. I introduced this legislation in response to testimony that we received in committee this past March on gaps in our