

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1615, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. 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.

DHS IT DUPLICATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2015

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1626) to reduce duplication of information technology at the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1626

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 IT Duplication Reduction Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. DHS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DUPLICATION REDUCTION.

(a) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DUPLICATION REDUCTION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief Information 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 that includes the following:

(1) The number of information technology systems at the Department of Homeland Security.

(2) An assessment of the number of such systems exhibiting duplication or fragmentation.

(3) A strategy for reducing such duplicative systems, including an assessment of potential cost savings or cost avoidance as a result of such reduction.

(4) A methodology for determining which system should be eliminated when there is duplication or fragmentation.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) The term “duplication or fragmentation” of information technology systems means two or more systems or programs that deliver similar functionality to similar user populations.

(2) The term “information technology” has the meaning given such term in section 11101 of title 40, United States Code.

(c) NO NEW AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDING.—This section shall be carried out using amounts otherwise appropriated or made available to the Department of Homeland Security. No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HURD of Texas. 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1626.

Call me crazy, but it just doesn't make sense to me to have Federal agencies using multiple IT systems that do the same thing. As chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Information Technology Subcommittee and a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I see these cost overruns and hear stories of duplicative systems on a daily basis. It is a ridiculous and outrageous waste of taxpayer dollars.

This year, the GAO's annual High Risk report designated information technology as a new area of high risk within the government. Federal agencies spend nearly \$80 billion a year on IT projects, and nearly 80 percent of them are on outdated and legacy systems. In the Department of Homeland Security, there are more than 600 IT systems in FEMA alone.

The DHS IT Duplication Reduction Act is designed to change that. My bill requires the DHS Chief Information Officer to identify all IT systems in the Department, figure out which ones are redundant, and then come up with a strategy to reduce their number.

Mr. Speaker, when I was building a cybersecurity firm in the private sector, things like this didn't happen because there is no way that a small business trying to grow would ever waste their money like this.

Washington should have the same mentality, especially since this money being wasted isn't Washington's in the first place. I believe Washington can and should be much better stewards of the dollars taxpayers have entrusted to them. It is past time to change the “it is not my money, so let's spend it” culture here in Washington that leads to this kind of waste.

Taxpayers should be able to trust that every dollar is being used carefully and thoughtfully on effective and efficient government that works for them. I believe this legislation is a good start in reining in Federal IT spending and getting our government back on track.

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

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of H.R. 1626, the DHS IT Duplication Reduction Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1626 seeks to address duplication or fragmentation within the Department of Homeland Security's information technology systems. Specifically, H.R. 1626 requires the Department's Chief Information Officer to report on the number of IT systems throughout the Department and identify and address those areas where duplication or fragmentation may exist.

This undertaking at the headquarters level should help inform the Department's IT budget planning which, in light of sequestration and the downward trend of the Department's budget, becomes all the more important when considered in the critical missions entrusted to DHS.

This legislation is in the spirit of the Department's Unity of Effort initiative and has the potential of fostering more coordinated IT planning and management among the Department's components. In committee, a number of technical refinements authored by Democrats were accepted to ensure that reducing redundancy frees up resources for DHS' operations.

Mr. Speaker, I do urge support for this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I, once again, want to point out the bipartisan efforts in regards to this measure. This measure has the potential of fostering more coordinated IT planning and management among the Department's components.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage and support of this measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman MCCAUL, Ranking Member THOMPSON, Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN, and my colleagues on the Homeland Security Committee for their support on this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1626, 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.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SUNSHINE ACT OF 2015

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1637) to require annual reports on the activities and accomplishments of federally funded research and

development centers within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1637

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 “Federally Funded Research and Development Sunshine Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. ANNUAL REPORTS ON PROJECTS OF FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTERS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall annually submit to the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate a list of ongoing and completed projects that federally funded research and development centers within the Department of Homeland Security have been tasked to complete.

(b) PROHIBITION ON NEW AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDING.—This section shall be carried out using amounts otherwise appropriated or made available to the Department of Homeland Security. No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RATCLIFFE. 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1637, the Federally Funded Research and Development Sunshine Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent 700,000 north and east Texans. They have sent me here to Washington to pull the curtain back and shine a light into this Federal bureaucracy.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that Federal agencies can be inefficient, ineffective, and resistant to oversight. They don't like to be held accountable, not by the American people or by individuals like me who are elected to represent those folks here in Congress.

As a committed conservative who is fighting to secure the American homeland, I believe that increased transparency is a national security issue, and because of that, every taxpayer

dollar that we spend must be scrutinized.

We have to evaluate the government's programs and activities to see if they are worthwhile and to craft reforms that eliminate waste and bolster our national defense. A sluggish national security apparatus simply won't suffice. The American people deserve more.

Congress can't even begin to conduct effective oversight and cut waste, fraud, and abuse if we don't know what is going on behind closed doors. That is why I introduced H.R. 1637. This bill will increase transparency at the Department of Homeland Security by directing the Secretary to give Congress a detailed account each year of the ongoing and completed projects that federally funded research and development centers, or FFRDCs, within the Department of Homeland Security have been assigned.

FFRDCs conduct specialized research and development for the Federal Government. The two FFRDCs within the Department of Homeland Security provide independent analysis of homeland security issues. Currently, the Homeland Security Committee is expected to oversee these FFRDCs; yet the committee doesn't even receive an account of the status of ongoing or completed projects. It is hard to be a vigilant steward of hard-earned taxpayer dollars when you have a blindfold on.

My legislation will enable the committee to have visibility into the scope of FFRDC projects that the DHS has tasked them to meet their mission needs. This detailed accounting will allow committee members to have insight into current research and development projects and be able to further scrutinize them, thereby increasing oversight and transparency of the entire Science and Technology Directorate operation at DHS.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that Congress is aware of the Department of Homeland Security's research and development efforts and funding priorities to ensure that it is meeting the mission needs of its components, and this bill today will shed light on those activities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bill. I think that we all agree that we can support increased transparency and a stronger, more secure homeland.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY,

Washington, DC, June 23, 2015.

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

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing concerning H.R. 1637, the “Federally Funded Research and Development Sunshine Act of 2015,” which your Committee ordered reported on May 20, 2015.

H.R. 1637 contains provisions within the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology's Rule X jurisdiction. As a result of

your having consulted with the Committee and in order to expedite this bill for floor consideration, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology will not seek a sequential referral. This is being done on the basis of our mutual understanding that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with respect to the appointment of conferees, or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would request that you include a copy of this letter and your response in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, June 23, 2015.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 1637, the “Federally Funded Research and Development Sunshine Act.” I appreciate your support in bringing this legislation before the House of Representatives, and accordingly, understand that the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology will not seek a sequential referral on the bill.

The Committee on Homeland Security concurs with the mutual understanding that by foregoing a sequential referral of this bill at this time, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology 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 a request by the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology for conferees on those provisions within your jurisdiction.

I will insert copies of this exchange 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.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of H.R. 1637, the Federally Funded Research and Development Act of 2015, and.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation would require the Department of Homeland Security to prepare annual status reports on the research activities of federally funded research and development centers, or FFRDCs, on behalf of the Department.

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DHS looks to these institutions that are largely operated by universities and not-for-profit organizations to help meet special long-term research and development needs.

In addition to the two FFRDCs that DHS sponsors, there are 17 national labs managed by the Department of Energy that provide research and technical assistance in support of the Nation's homeland security.

Among the areas of research expertise offered by these labs are critical

infrastructure protection; cybersecurity; chemical, biological, and nuclear forensics; biodefense countermeasures; biodetection; and emergency preparedness.

I believe that timely and regular information about how DHS is utilizing these institutions is important to assessing progress on a wide range of homeland security challenges. That is why I support H.R. 1631 and urge passage.

I want to commend members of the Homeland Security Committee on the bipartisan nature in which this legislation has been crafted. It is important for us to know how DHS is using federally funded research and development centers to address homeland security challenges.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I, once again, urge my colleagues to support this strong, commonsense 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. 1637, the "Federally Funded Research and Development Sunshine Act of 2015."

I support this bipartisan legislation which requires annual reports on the activities and accomplishments of federally funded research and development centers within the department of Homeland Security.

The bill requires that the secretary of Homeland Security annually submit to Congressional oversight committees a list of ongoing and completed projects lead by federally funded research and development centers within the Department of Homeland Security have been assigned or completed.

Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) act as a vehicle for special research and development contracting within the federal government.

The FFRDCs provide DHS with independent and objective advice and quick response on critical issues throughout the Homeland Security Enterprise.

Homeland Security Systems Engineering and Development Institute (HSSEDI) and Homeland Security Studies and Analysis Institute (HSSAI) perform high-quality research and provide advice that is authoritative, objective and free from conflicts of interest caused by competition.

I support H.R. 1637, which provides much needed transparency on the research conducted by the Department of Homeland security.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in strong support of the suspension bill, H.R. 1637, the "Federally Funded Research and Development Sunshine Act of 2015."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1637.

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.

HOMELAND SECURITY UNIVERSITY-BASED CENTERS REVIEW ACT

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2390) to require a review of university-based centers for homeland security, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2390

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 University-based Centers Review Act".

SEC. 2. REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY-BASED CENTERS.

(a) GAO STUDY OF UNIVERSITY-BASED CENTERS.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall initiate a study to assess the university-based centers for homeland security program authorized by section 308(b)(2) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 188(b)(2)), and provide recommendations to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate for appropriate improvements.

(b) SUBJECT MATTERS.—The study under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A review of the Department of Homeland Security's efforts to identify key areas of study needed to support the homeland security mission, and criteria that the Department utilized to determine those key areas for which the Department should maintain, establish, or eliminate university-based centers.

(2) A review of the method by which university-based centers, federally funded research and development centers, and Department of Energy national laboratories receive tasking from the Department of Homeland Security, including a review of how university-based research is identified, prioritized, and funded.

(3) A review of selection criteria for designating university-based centers and a weighting of such criteria.

(4) An examination of best practices from other agencies' efforts to organize and use university-based research to support their missions.

(5) A review of the Department of Homeland Security's criteria and metrics to measure demonstrable progress achieved by university-based centers in fulfilling Department taskings, and mechanisms for delivering and disseminating the research results of designated university-based centers within the Department and to other Federal, State, and local agencies.

(6) An examination of the means by which academic institutions that are not designated or associated with the designated university-based centers can optimally contribute to the research mission of the Directorate of Science and Technology of the Department of Homeland Security.

(7) An assessment of the interrelationship between the different university-based centers and the degree to which outreach and collaboration among a diverse array of academic institutions is encouraged by the De-

partment of Homeland Security, particularly with historically Black colleges and universities and minority serving institutions.

(8) A review of any other essential elements of the programs determined in the conduct of the study.

(c) INFORMATION RELATING TO UNIVERSITY-BASED CENTERS.—Subparagraph (D) of section 308(b)(2) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 188(b)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

"(D) ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this subparagraph and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of this section. Each such report shall—

"(i) indicate which center or centers have been designated pursuant to this section;

"(ii) describe how such designation or designations enhance homeland security;

"(iii) provide information on any decisions to revoke or modify such designation or designations;

"(iv) describe research that has been tasked and completed by each center that has been designated during the preceding year;

"(v) describe funding provided by the Secretary for each center under clause (iv) for that year; and

"(vi) describe plans for utilization of each center or centers in the forthcoming year."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RATCLIFFE. 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 any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon in support of H.R. 2390, the Homeland Security University-based Centers Review Act of 2015, authored by the ranking member, the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will require the Government Accountability Office to initiate a study to assess the university-based centers for homeland security and provide recommendations to Congress on improvements.

The Department of Homeland Security Centers of Excellence play a vital role in providing long-term research and support of technology development in areas of emerging threats.

Additionally, these centers play key roles in supporting the Department of Homeland Security and its mission in protecting our homeland. I look forward to seeing the results of this study and how we can better improve the effectiveness of these university centers.

I reserve the balance of my time.