The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 35, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 35, the Low-Dose Radiation Research Act of 2015, will increase our understanding of low-dose radiation. This research is critical for physicians and decisionmakers to more accurately assess potential health risks in this area.

I want to thank my friend, Mr. HULTGREN, for introducing this legislation along with Mr. LIPINSKI of Illinois. A virtually identical bill passed the House by a voice vote this past November in the previous Congress.

Many Americans are exposed to a broad range of low doses of ionizing radiation. These range from cosmic background radiation to medically-based procedures which include x rays and CT scans. However, our current approach of radiation safety relies on an outmoded assumption that because high doses of radiation are harmful, it necessarily follows that much lower radiation doses are also harmful.

This assumption is not based on a reliable scientific foundation, prevents patients from making informed decisions about diagnostic exams, and can lead to overly restrictive regulations.

The Department of Energy's Low Dose Radiation Research Program within the Office of Science focuses on the health effects of ionizing radiation and helps to resolve the uncertainties in this area that currently exist. Unfortunately, this program has not been a priority at DOE over recent years and has seen systematic de-emphasis. H.R. 35 ensures the continuance and enhancement of this important research program.

This legislation also directs the National Academies to formulate a long-term strategy to resolve uncertainties surrounding whether and to what extent low-dose radiation may pose health risks to humans. The bill stipulates that the academies must consider the most up-to-date studies in this field of research.

□ 1400

Finally, the bill requires the Department of Energy to develop a 5-year research plan that responds to the Academies' recommendations. I again thank the gentlemen from Illinois, Representatives HULTGREN and LIPINSKI, for their leadership on this issue. I also want to commend Congressmen SENSENBRENNER, POSEY, BUCSHON, and CRAMER for joining me in cosponsoring this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 35, the Low-Dose Radiation Research Act of 2015. I would like to begin by thanking my colleagues from Illinois, Mr. HULTGREN and Mr. LIPINSKI, for introducing this bipartisan legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

H.R. 35 authorizes an important research program carried out by the Department of Energy's Office of Science to examine the health impacts of exposure to low doses of radiation, such as doses resulting from certain medical tests, nuclear waste cleanup activities, or even terrorism events like dirty bombs. This program builds on the Department of Energy's unique biological research expertise and capabilities, which led to the establishment of the successful Human Genome Project that paved the way for important breakthroughs in modern medicine.

This bill authorizes a National Academies study to identify current scientific challenges in this area and to help guide the program's long-term research agenda well into the next decade. A similar bill passed the House late last Congress with overwhelming support, and it is my hope that this will again pass and move to the Senate for their consideration.

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN), the lead sponsor of this bill, and also a distinguished member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge support for H.R. 35, the Low-Dose Radiation Research Act, and I want to thank the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Chairman SMITH, for helping me to bring this legislation to the floor.

While it may sound scary, we come in contact with small amounts of radiation every day from the cosmic background which many Americans are probably unaware of. Of course, radiation has been a useful tool which has led to innovation for medical imaging, like x rays and treatments. Numerous processes used by manufacturers in my home State of Illinois, for instance, include low-dose radiation to carry out precise and accurate measurements. But it is time that the regulatory structure surrounding exposure to low-dose radiation relies on sound science.

Currently, the assumption is that because high doses of radiation are harmful to human health, lower doses must be, too. This is similar to saying that jumping down one step in a flight of stairs is harmful to your health because we already know that it is harmful to jump down an entire flight of stairs at one time.

While there is little doubt that there is a threshold above which humans should avoid exposure to radiation, this legislation will ensure that the Department of Energy's Office of Science prioritizes the research necessary to understand what that level actually is. My bill directs the agency to work with the National Academies to formulate a long-term research plan to do this work.

As I continue to represent my constituents of the 14th Congressional District of Illinois, I will always champion the things we are doing right in Illinois. Our State has a long history of innovation in this space. For many years we have led the Nation in nuclear power generation, and the work we continue to do in our national labs is pushing the boundaries in our frontiers of knowledge.

Fermilab, in my district, helped establish neutron therapy as a viable radiation treatment for many difficult-to-treat cancers. Harnessing the continued benefits of radiation requires that we clarify what the potential harms are. That is why I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. BONAMICI. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have no other individuals who wish to comment on this bill, so we are prepared to close when my friend is prepared to close as well.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. SMITH, and the ranking member, Ms. JOHNSON, and the sponsors of this bill, Mr. HULTGREN and Mr. LIPINSKI.

The bill before us today represents a true bipartisan effort and will help protect the health of our constituents. Passage of this bill is a positive way to start this new Congress, and I urge its adoption.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) for her comments, and I yield back the balance of my time as well.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 35.

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.

NATIONAL WINDSTORM IMPACT REDUCTION ACT REAUTHORIZATION OF 2015

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 23) to reauthorize the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 23

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 ''National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act Reauthorization of 2015''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

(a) DIRECTOR.—Section 203(1) of the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 15702(1)) is amended by striking ''Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy'' and inserting ''Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology''.

(b) LIFELINES.—Section 203 of the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 15702) is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (4) as paragraphs (3) through (5), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph:

''(2) LIFELINES.—The term 'lifelines' means public works and utilities, including transportation facilities and infrastructure, oil and gas pipelines, electrical power and communication facilities and infrastructure, and water supply and sewage treatment facilities.''.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL WINDSTORM IMPACT REDUCTION PROGRAM.

Section 204 of the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 15703) is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (a), (b), and (c) and inserting the following:

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program, the purpose of which is to achieve major measurable reductions in the losses of life and property from windstorms through a coordinated Federal effort, in cooperation with other levels of government, academia, and the private sector, aimed at improving the understanding of windstorms and their impacts and developing and encouraging the implementation of cost-effective mitigation measures to reduce those impacts.

''(b) RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROGRAM AGENCIES.—

''(1) LEAD AGENCY.—The National Institute of Standards and Technology shall have the primary responsibility for planning and coordinating the Program. In carrying out this paragraph, the Director shall—

''(A) ensure that the Program includes the necessary components to promote the implementation of windstorm risk reduction measures by Federal, State, and local governments, national standards and model building code organizations, architects and engineers, and others with a role in planning and constructing buildings and lifelines;

''(B) support the development of performance-based engineering tools, and work with appropriate groups to promote the commercial application of such tools, including through wind-related model building codes, voluntary standards, and construction best practices;

''(C) request the assistance of Federal agencies other than the Program agencies, as necessary to assist in carrying out this Act;

''(D) coordinate all Federal post-windstorm investigations; and

''(E) when warranted by research or investigative findings, issue recommendations to assist in informing the development of model codes, and provide information to Congress on the use of such recommendations.

''(2) NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY.—In addition to the lead agency responsibilities described under paragraph (1), the National Institute of Standards and Technology shall be responsible for carrying out research and development to improve model building codes, voluntary standards, and best practices for the design, construction, and retrofit of buildings, structures, and lifelines.

''(3) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION.—The National Science Foundation shall support research in—

''(A) engineering and the atmospheric sciences to improve the understanding of the behavior of windstorms and their impact on buildings, structures, and lifelines; and

''(B) economic and social factors influencing windstorm risk reduction measures.

''(4) NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION.—The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall support atmospheric sciences research to improve the understanding of the behavior of windstorms and their impact on buildings, structures, and lifelines.

''(5) FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY.—The Federal Emergency Management Agency shall—

''(A) support—

''(i) the development of risk assessment tools and effective mitigation techniques;

''(ii) windstorm-related data collection and analysis;

''(iii) public outreach and information dissemination; and

''(iv) promotion of the adoption of windstorm preparedness and mitigation measures, including for households, businesses, and communities, consistent with the Agency's all-hazards approach; and

''(B) work closely with national standards and model building code organizations, in conjunction with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, to promote the implementation of research results and promote better building practices within the building design and construction industry, including architects, engineers, contractors, builders, and inspectors.'';

(2) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (c), and by striking subsections (e) and (f); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (c), as so redesignated, the following new subsections:

''(d) BUDGET ACTIVITIES.—The Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Director of the National Science Foundation, the Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall each include in their agency's annual budget request to Congress a description of their agency's projected activities under the Program for the fiscal year covered by the budget request, along with an assessment of what they plan to spend on those activities for that fiscal year.

''(e) INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON WINDSTORM IMPACT REDUCTION.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established an Interagency Coordinating Committee on Windstorm Impact Reduction, chaired by the Director.

''(2) MEMBERSHIP.—In addition to the chair, the Committee shall be composed of—

''(A) the heads of—

''(i) the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

''(ii) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

''(iii) the National Science Foundation;

''(iv) the Office of Science and Technology Policy; and

''(v) the Office of Management and Budget; and

''(B) the head of any other Federal agency the chair considers appropriate.

''(3) MEETINGS.—The Committee shall meet not less than 2 times a year at the call of the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

''(4) GENERAL PURPOSE AND DUTIES.—The Committee shall oversee the planning and coordination of the Program.

''(5) STRATEGIC PLAN.—The Committee shall develop and submit to Congress, not later than one year after the date of enactment of the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act Reauthorization of 2015, a Strategic Plan for the Program that includes—

''(A) prioritized goals for the Program that will mitigate against the loss of life and property from future windstorms;

''(B) short-term, mid-term, and long-term research objectives to achieve those goals;

''(C) a description of the role of each Program agency in achieving the prioritized goals;

''(D) the methods by which progress towards the goals will be assessed; and

''(E) an explanation of how the Program will foster the transfer of research results into outcomes, such as improved model building codes.

''(6) PROGRESS REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act Reauthorization of 2015, the Committee shall submit to the Congress a report on the progress of the Program that includes—

''(A) a description of the activities funded under the Program, a description of how these activities align with the prioritized goals and research objectives established in the Strategic Plan, and the budgets, per agency, for these activities;

''(B) the outcomes achieved by the Program for each of the goals identified in the Strategic Plan;

''(C) a description of any recommendations made to change existing building codes that were the result of Program activities; and

''(D) a description of the extent to which the Program has incorporated recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Windstorm Impact Reduction.

''(7) COORDINATED BUDGET.—The Committee shall develop a coordinated budget for the Program, which shall be submitted to the Congress at the time of the President's budget submission for each fiscal year.''.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WINDSTORM IMPACT REDUCTION.

Section 205 of the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 15704) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 205. NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WINDSTORM IMPACT REDUCTION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology shall establish an Advisory Committee on Windstorm Impact Reduction, which shall be composed of at least 7 members, none of whom may be employees of the Federal Government, including representatives of research and academic institutions, industry standards development organizations, emergency management agencies, State and local government, and business communities who are qualified to provide advice on windstorm impact reduction and represent all related scientific, architectural, and engineering disciplines. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee shall be considered by Federal agencies in implementing the Program.

''(b) ASSESSMENTS.—The Advisory Committee on Windstorm Impact Reduction shall offer assessments on—

''(1) trends and developments in the natural, engineering, and social sciences and practices of windstorm impact mitigation;

''(2) the priorities of the Program's Strategic Plan;

''(3) the coordination of the Program; and

''(4) any revisions to the Program which may be necessary.

''(c) COMPENSATION.—The members of the Advisory Committee established under this section shall serve without compensation.

''(d) REPORTS.—At least every 2 years, the Advisory Committee shall report to the Director on the assessments carried out under subsection (b) and its recommendations for ways to improve the Program.

''(e) CHARTER.—Notwithstanding section 14(b)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), the Advisory Committee shall not be required to file a charter subsequent to its initial charter, filed under section 9(c) of such Act, before the termination date specified in subsection (f) of this section.

''(f) TERMINATION.—The Advisory Committee shall terminate on September 30, 2017.

''(g) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—An Advisory Committee member shall recuse himself from any Advisory Committee activity in which he has an actual pecuniary interest.''.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 207 of the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 15706) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 207. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''(a) FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for carrying out this title—

''(1) $5,332,000 for fiscal year 2015;

''(2) $5,332,000 for fiscal year 2016; and

''(3) $5,332,000 for fiscal year 2017.

''(b) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the National Science Foundation for carrying out this title—

''(1) $9,682,000 for fiscal year 2015;

''(2) $9,682,000 for fiscal year 2016; and

''(3) $9,682,000 for fiscal year 2017.

''(c) NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the National Institute of Standards and Technology for carrying out this title—

''(1) $4,120,000 for fiscal year 2015;

''(2) $4,120,000 for fiscal year 2016; and

''(3) $4,120,000 for fiscal year 2017.

''(d) NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for carrying out this title—

''(1) $2,266,000 for fiscal year 2015;

''(2) $2,266,000 for fiscal year 2016; and

''(3) $2,266,000 for fiscal year 2017.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 23, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 23, the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act Reauthorization of 2015, reauthorizes the activities of the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program through 2017.

Representative RANDY NEUGEBAUER, my Texas colleague, has championed this program for over a decade. In the last Congress, he and Representative FREDERICA WILSON's bipartisan efforts helped move this legislation through the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and to successfully pass the House. It is because of their past work that we are able to bring this bill to the House floor so early in this Congress.

The National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program supports Federal research and development efforts to help mitigate the loss of life and property due to wind-related hazards. Millions of Americans live in areas vulnerable to hurricanes, tornadoes, and other windstorms. The National Weather Service reported 91 deaths and 892 injuries in 2013 due to tornadoes, thunderstorm wind, and high wind.

We all remember that in 2011 that was the year marred by loss due to windstorms. According to the National Science and Technology Council's biennial report to Congress, in 2011 only, windstorms in the United States took nearly 700 lives, injured nearly 7,000 people, and caused an estimated $11 billion in total direct property losses.

In Texas, we are all too familiar with the harm that excess wind can cause. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Storm Prediction Center, 128 tornadoes and 1,366 windstorms were reported in Texas in the last 2 years. The effects of these disasters can be felt for a long time.

Initially established in 2004, the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program supports activities to improve our understanding of windstorms and their impacts and helps to develop and encourage the implementation of cost-effective mitigation measures.

H.R. 23 establishes the National Institute of Standards and Technology as the lead agency for the program, improves coordination and planning of agency activities in a fiscally responsible manner, and improves transparency for how much money is being spent on windstorm research.

I want to thank Representative NEUGEBAUER for his continued efforts to support this program. I encourage my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 6, 2015.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write concerning H.R. 23, the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act Reauthorization of 2015. Thank you for working with us to incorporate mutually agreeable provisions within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

In order to expedite the House's consideration of H.R. 23, 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. I request you urge the Speaker to name members of the Committee to any conference committee named to consider such provisions.

I would appreciate your response to this letter, confirming this understanding, and would request that you insert our exchange of letters on this matter into the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY.
Washington, DC, January 6, 2015.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 23, the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act Reauthorization of 2015. 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 action on the bill.

The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology concurs with the mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 23 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 Congressional Record during consideration of this bill on the House floor. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with the Transportation Committee as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 23, legislation to reauthorize the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program.

First I want to thank Representatives NEUGEBAUER and WILSON for their hard work on this important legislation that will benefit our constituents.

Americans face significant exposure to windstorms. According to the National Weather Service, between the years of 2003 and 2013, thousands of Americans lost their lives from the impacts of windstorms. Along with the loss of life, windstorms during that time caused billions of dollars of damage to property, including a severely negative impact on agricultural crops.

Although we cannot stop a windstorm from happening, there is much we can do to save both lives and property when windstorms and other natural disasters do happen. In addition to

responding quickly and with sufficient resources in the aftermath of a natural disaster, we must also invest in preparedness and resilience.

Studies of FEMA's Pre-Disaster Mitigation program have shown that for every dollar invested in mitigation activities, $3 to $4 in recovery costs can be saved.

The National Windstorm Reduction Program Act is primarily a mitigation program. It has the potential to lessen the loss of life and economic damage by supporting research and development on windstorms and their impacts and helping to ensure that this research is translated into improving building codes and emergency planning, but this program needs robust investment to achieve that result.

The bill today includes a lower total authorization level than was authorized for this program in fiscal year 2008. We can and we should do better than that. One of our responsibilities as a government should be to assist our constituents with disaster mitigation and response and preparedness, and that means investing in programs we already have in place to carry out these responsibilities. Nevertheless, I understand the need to reauthorize this important program, and I thank my colleagues for agreeing to maintain the authorization levels negotiated last Congress.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER), who is the lead sponsor of this legislation and also a member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act, H.R. 23. I also want to thank Chairman SMITH for his leadership on this issue, and I appreciate him agreeing to bring this back up early in the 114th Congress.

I think we have already heard of a number of people quote a lot of statistics about the amount of damage that occurs from windstorms in this country and the loss of lives. You know, particularly 2011 was a very bad year. As it was pointed out, we had a number of people that were killed that year and over $28 billion in damage to property alone.

What is happening is the risk is growing because our population centers are growing. You know, a tornado that goes through a town center does a lot more damage than one that goes through an empty prairie. As these storms are getting costlier over time, at a time where we are $18 trillion in debt, it is important that we utilize the taxpayers' resources in an effective way. This particular program, as it was mentioned, is reauthorized at a fixed level, the level from previous reauthorization, but also it is designed to make the program more efficient and effective in the future.

When a family loses a home, you know, they don't have to just rebuild the house; they have to rebuild their lives. We know a lot of people have either experienced losses of property or life, loved ones, or they know people that have.

In particular, it is a personal thing for me because, on May 11th of 1970, I had just taken my last final for that semester at Texas Tech University, and 3 hours or 4 hours later, a major tornado ripped through Lubbock, Texas, and killed 26 people, including destroying the apartment complex that I lived in.

I was fortunately unharmed in that event, but what I did get to witness is the tremendous amount of damage that can happen from these storms and the loss of life. You saw things that you didn't think were possible—cars in parking lots that were rolled up and swirled up like an ice cream cone.

So one of the things that later on, to me, in the building business, one of the things that we began to learn is, from important research that was done, that we were able to use certain building techniques that made houses more wind resistant, made buildings more wind resistant, and that is exactly what this bill, NWIRP, does. It takes these four agencies that currently have jurisdiction over that—and those include NOAA, the National Science Foundation, FEMA, and NIST—and makes sure that they are using those funds appropriately and that there is not a lot of duplication in the research going on. Each one of them has an area of expertise. We want to do a better job of predicting these storms. We want to do a better job of learning how we can mitigate the damage from those.

One of the things that happened right after the May 11 tornado in Lubbock is that Texas Tech University began doing research on windstorms and the effects of different materials, and later on they founded the National Wind Institute, which is doing important research on simulating cyclones and different kinds of wind events and the impact that they have on materials and certain building techniques. Certainly that will be important to our country as we move forward.

What does that do for the taxpayers? Well, obviously if we can learn more about predicting the outcomes, we can make our buildings stronger, but, more importantly, save lives. And one of the things I know from a lot of the research that has been going on right now, that designs are being incorporated in a lot of buildings.

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Recently I was at a new elementary school in my district, and one of the things that we learned is that they incorporated certain building techniques within the cafeteria of that new elementary. Basically, the cafeteria became a storm shelter for the students going to that elementary. Those are the kind of things that will be beneficial from this.

I urge my colleagues to help me reauthorize H.R. 23.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WILSON), who is a cosponsor of the bill, and also a member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 23. This legislation would reauthorize the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program, or NWIRP.

The Federal Government has an important role in helping Americans prepare for and recover from natural hazards. H.R. 23 directs four Federal agencies—NIST, NSF, NOAA, and FEMA—to conduct coordinated research and development on the nature of windstorms, their effects, and on ways to mitigate their impact. The legislation also ensures that this research is translated into practice through improved building codes and emergency planning.

I was born and raised in south Florida, and I am a survivor of Hurricane Andrew, so I have seen my share of severe weather. I know firsthand that natural hazards are a leading threat to American lives and America's economy.

While we cannot stop a hurricane or tornado from happening, this Congress can act to make sure our communities have the tools they need to respond and recover from these disasters.

We must begin by investing in preparedness and resilience. Studies of FEMA's pre-disaster mitigation program have shown that for every dollar we invest in mitigation activities we save $3 to $4 in recovery costs.

I was pleased that this bill was considered in the Science Committee last Congress, and we worked in a bipartisan manner to make several improvements to the bill. I want to thank my colleagues, Chairman SMITH and Mr. NEUGEBAUER, for working across the aisle in a smooth and productive process.

We worked together to increase the authorization for FEMA, the NWIRP agency tasked with taking the research conducted at other agencies and developing mitigation techniques and public outreach. Mr. NEUGEBAUER was the lead, and I appreciate his inclusion.

Additionally, we added several social science-related provisions to the bill. We cannot design effective disaster strategies without knowing how people make decisions and respond to disaster warnings.

Often in a compromise, like this one, you do not get everything you would like. I would have liked to see increases in the authorization levels across the board. Unfortunately, this bill includes a lower total authorization level than what was authorized for this program in fiscal year 2008.

When the last few years have been devastating years for windstorms, including Superstorm Sandy and the tornado outbreak last May, it is difficult

to understand why we would cut the total authorization level for this important program.

I do hope that if this bill moves forward, we will continue our bipartisan efforts and work with the Senate to perfect this bill. Nevertheless, I understand the need to reauthorize this important program that can help minimize the number of Americans who are harmed or killed by windstorm disasters and reduce the costs associated * * *

I support H.R. 23 and urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the bill.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no other Members who wish to be heard on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and so in closing, we must help our constituents prepare for and mitigate the impacts of severe weather events, such as windstorms, that threaten their lives and property. This bill takes an important step in that direction, and I urge its adoption.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 23, legislation that would reauthorize the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program—or NWIRP.

The last few years have been devastating years for natural disasters across the country. There were massive tornadoes across the Midwest that resulted in loss of life and significant economic damages. In addition, Hurricane Irene in 2011 and Superstorm Sandy in 2012 caused widespread destruction and death along the Eastern seaboard.

H.R. 23 directs NIST, NSF, NOAA, and FEMA to support activities to improve the understanding of windstorms and their impacts. We can use that knowledge to reduce the vulnerability of our communities to natural disasters. The NWIRP program helps our federal agencies and communities across the nation develop and implement many measures that help minimize the loss of life and property during windstorms and to rebuild effectively and safely after such storms.

I was pleased that when this bill was considered by the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee last Congress, we worked in a bipartisan manner and made several improvements to the bill.

We worked together to increase the authorization for FEMA, the agency tasked with implementing the research conducted by the other NWIRP agencies. Additionally, we added several social science-related provisions to the bill. We cannot design effective disaster preparation strategies without understanding how people make decisions and respond to disaster warnings.

This is a compromise bill and so it doesn't contain as much as I think should be done. In particular, I wish this bill included authorization increases for the NWIRP agencies—increases that are justified by the important activities those agencies carry out. However, it is still a good bill and an important bill for us to act on.

I want to thank my fellow Texans—Chairman SMITH and Mr. NEUGEBAUER—for working across the aisle on this bill and for bringing it to the floor today. And I want to thank Ms. WILSON for her efforts on this legislation. It was good to see Members of the Committee coming together, working out their differences, compromising, and ending up with a bill with bipartisan support.

I support the bill and urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 23.

The question was taken.

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

Ms. BONAMICI. 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.

TSUNAMI WARNING, EDUCATION, AND RESEARCH ACT OF 2015

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 34) to authorize and strengthen the tsunami detection, forecast, warning, research, and mitigation program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 34

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 ''Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO THE TSUNAMI WARNING AND EDUCATION ACT.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3201 et seq.).

SEC. 3. EXPANSION OF PURPOSES OF TSUNAMI WARNING AND EDUCATION ACT.

Section 3 (33 U.S.C. 3202) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''research,'' after ''warnings,'';

(2) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

''(2) to enhance and modernize the existing United States Tsunami Warning System to increase the accuracy of forecasts and warnings, to maintain full coverage of tsunami detection assets, and to reduce false alarms;'';

(3) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) to improve and develop standards and guidelines for mapping, modeling, and assessment efforts to improve tsunami detection, forecasting, warnings, notification, mitigation, resiliency, response, outreach, and recovery;'';

(4) by redesignating paragraphs (4), (5), and (6) as paragraphs (5), (6), and (8), respectively;

(5) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

''(4) to improve research efforts related to improving tsunami detection, forecasting, warnings, notification, mitigation, resiliency, response, outreach, and recovery;'';

(6) in paragraph (5), as so redesignated—

(A) by striking ''and increase'' and inserting '', increase, and develop uniform standards and guidelines for''; and

(B) by inserting '', including the warning signs of locally generated tsunami'' after ''approaching'';

(7) in paragraph (6), as so redesignated, by striking '', including the Indian Ocean; and'' and inserting a semicolon; and

(8) by inserting after paragraph (6), as so redesignated, the following:

''(7) to foster resilient communities in the face of tsunami and other coastal hazards; and''.

SEC. 4. MODIFICATION OF TSUNAMI FORECASTING AND WARNING PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 4 (33 U.S.C. 3203) is amended by striking ''Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico region'' and inserting ''Atlantic Ocean region, including the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico''.

(b) COMPONENTS.—Subsection (b) of such section 4 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''established'' and inserting ''supported or maintained'';

(2) in paragraph (4), by inserting ''and safeguarding port and harbor operations'' after ''communities'';

(3) in paragraph (7)—

(A) by inserting '', including graphical warning products,'' after ''warnings'';

(B) by inserting '', territories,'' after ''States''; and

(C) by inserting ''and Wireless Emergency Alerts'' after ''Hazards Program''; and

(4) in paragraph (8), by inserting ''and commercial and Federal undersea communications cables'' after ''observing technologies''.

(c) TSUNAMI WARNING SYSTEM.—Subsection (c) of such section 4 is amended to read as follows:

''(c) TSUNAMI WARNING SYSTEM.—The program under this section shall operate a tsunami warning system that—

''(1) is capable of forecasting tsunami, including forecasting tsunami arrival time and inundation estimates, anywhere in the Pacific and Arctic Ocean regions and providing adequate warnings;

''(2) is capable of forecasting and providing adequate warnings in areas of the Atlantic Ocean, including the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico, that are determined—

''(A) to be geologically active, or to have significant potential for geological activity; and

''(B) to pose significant risks of tsunami for States along the coastal areas of the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, or Gulf of Mexico; and

''(3) supports other international tsunami forecasting and warning efforts.''.

(d) TSUNAMI WARNING CENTERS.—Subsection (d) of such section 4 is amended to read as follows:

''(d) TSUNAMI WARNING CENTERS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall support or maintain centers to support the tsunami warning system required by subsection (c). The Centers shall include—

''(A) the National Tsunami Warning Center, located in Alaska, which is primarily responsible for Alaska and the continental United States;

''(B) the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center, located in Hawaii, which is primarily responsible for Hawaii, the Caribbean, and other areas of the Pacific not covered by the National Center; and