

on Transportation Security, the gentlewoman from New York (Miss RICE).

Mr. Speaker, the American people have entrusted us with conducting oversight of the agencies like TSA to root out instances of waste. H.R. 719 will hold TSA accountable and save precious tax dollars by ensuring that the inspector general's findings are addressed.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 719, the "TSA Office of Inspection Accountability Act of 2015".

Upon its creation, TSA was given broad authority to hire, fire, and set the terms of employment of its personnel.

This has resulted in employees, such as Transportation Security Officers, lacking the full rights afforded other Federal employees.

It has also resulted, in some cases, of abuses of the system for the gain of a few.

According to the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security, TSA's Office of Inspection has been gaming the system by employing a bloated number of personnel as "criminal investigators" for years.

Those who are designated as "criminal investigators" receive additional compensation and are afforded the right to retire early.

H.R. 719 will put an end to these abuses by requiring the Inspector General to approve the method used by TSA to designate personnel as criminal investigators. It also requires TSA to certify to Congress that only those individuals performing the requisite criminal investigation work are designated as "criminal investigators".

According to the Inspector General, properly classifying individuals within TSA's Office of Inspection could save taxpayers as much as \$17 million over five years.

During Committee consideration of this measure last Congress, I offered an amendment on behalf of Representative LORETTA SANCHEZ that addresses revelations about how some within TSA's Federal Air Marshal Service exploited relationships with private vendors to obtain discounted or free firearms.

Specifically, in April 2014, the Committee became aware that the former director of the Federal Air Marshal Service bought several guns from an employee who is under investigation for using his position to obtain free and discounted firearms.

Unfortunately, TSA was less than forthcoming with Congress regarding this investigation, leaving many questions unanswered about how the investigation was conducted and the number of FAMs officials involved.

The exploitation of official relationships for personal gain is a serious matter.

Such misuse occurring within the Federal Air Marshal Service, the Law Enforcement component within TSA is unacceptable.

To address the lack of transparency regarding the investigation, the Committee accepted language I offered to require TSA to provide information and materials associated with the Office of Inspection's review of the allegations to Congress.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee and a former chair of the Transportation Security Subcommittee, I rise in support of

H.R. 719, the "TSA Office of Inspection Accountability Act of 2015."

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman MCCAUL and Ranking Member THOMPSON for their leadership in bringing this legislation to the floor.

H.R. 719 will save the taxpayers hundreds of thousands dollars annually by requiring the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to conform its personnel classification practices to existing Federal law and regulations regarding criminal investigator positions.

According to a report by the Homeland Security Department's Inspector General (IG), about half of the employees in the Office of Inspection (OI) are classified as criminal investigators even though their duties do not involve responsibilities that can be characterized as criminal investigation activities.

Instead, the responsibilities of these employees primarily consist of administrative duties such as investigating cases of TSA employee misconduct and conducting internal reviews.

Classifying these employees as "law enforcement" personnel, however, makes them eligible for premium pay and other significant economic benefits.

If TSA fails to reclassify criminal investigator positions as noncriminal investigator positions or non-law-enforcement positions, this will cost taxpayers as much as \$17,000,000 over 5 years.

This money could be utilized to ensure that law enforcement agencies, which identify, apprehend, and prosecute criminals, have the tools, resources, and training necessary to do their job efficiently, effectively, and economically.

Mr. Speaker, I have always strongly supported providing the resources needed by law enforcement and first responders and will continue to do so in future.

But we have an obligation to the American people to be responsible stewards of the public trust and it is not responsible to provide premium pay and benefits intended for law enforcement personnel to employees who do not perform the dangerous duties of law enforcement officers.

This bill will obligate the Assistant Secretary of TSA to reclassify criminal investigator positions in the Office of Inspection as noncriminal investigator positions or non-law enforcement positions if the individuals in those positions do not, or are not expected to, spend an average of at least 50 percent of their time performing criminal investigative duties.

This is an important step to bring transparency to the office of inspector with regards to the work of TSA personnel and law enforcement investigative task.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 719, which directs the Office of Inspection to reclassify its current criminal investigator positions to conform to the requirements of applicable law and save the taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars annually.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of H.R. 719, the TSA Office of Inspection Accountability Act of 2015, sponsored by the gentleman from New York, Mr. KATKO.

This bill would increase accountability at TSA and save precious taxpayer dollars by requiring the agency to correctly designate criminal investigators within the TSA Office of In-

spection who are charged with conducting covert tests, inspections, and investigating misconduct among fellow TSA employees.

This bill stems from a 2013 DHS Inspector General (IG) report that found TSA's Office of Inspection does not operate efficiently and does not ensure that its criminal investigators are spending the majority of their time conducting criminal investigations, even though they are receiving premium law enforcement pay and related benefits. The bill addresses the IG's findings by requiring a thorough review of the type of work carried out by TSA criminal investigators, which could save millions of taxpayer dollars over the next several years in law enforcement pay, vehicles, training, and other benefits.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this common sense, bipartisan bill, and would like to thank the chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. KATKO, as well as the Congressman from South Carolina, Mr. SANFORD, for their leadership on this issue. I would also like to thank the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. THOMPSON, and the ranking member of the subcommittee, Miss RICE, for their support of this legislation.

H.R. 719 is substantively identical to H.R. 4803, legislation approved by the Committee on Homeland Security last Congress that subsequently passed the House by voice vote.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 719. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 719.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. KATKO. 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.

GERARDO HERNANDEZ AIRPORT SECURITY ACT OF 2015

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 720) to improve intergovernmental planning for and communication during security incidents at domestic airports, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 720

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 "Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—The term "Assistant Secretary" means the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security) of the Department of Homeland Security.

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—The term "Administration" means the Transportation Security Administration.

SEC. 3. SECURITY INCIDENT RESPONSE AT AIRPORTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Assistant Secretary shall, in consultation with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, conduct outreach to all airports in the United States at which the Administration performs, or oversees the implementation and performance of, security measures, and provide technical assistance as necessary, to verify such airports have in place individualized working plans for responding to security incidents inside the perimeter of the airport, including active shooters, acts of terrorism, and incidents that target passenger-screening checkpoints.

(b) **TYPES OF PLANS.**—Such plans may include, but may not be limited to, the following:

(1) A strategy for evacuating and providing care to persons inside the perimeter of the airport, with consideration given to the needs of persons with disabilities.

(2) A plan for establishing a unified command, including identification of staging areas for non-airport-specific law enforcement and fire response.

(3) A schedule for regular testing of communications equipment used to receive emergency calls.

(4) An evaluation of how emergency calls placed by persons inside the perimeter of the airport will reach airport police in an expeditious manner.

(5) A practiced method and plan to communicate with travelers and all other persons inside the perimeter of the airport.

(6) To the extent practicable, a projected maximum timeframe for law enforcement response.

(7) A schedule of joint exercises and training to be conducted by the airport, the Administration, other stakeholders such as airport and airline tenants, and any relevant law enforcement, airport police, fire, and medical personnel.

(8) A schedule for producing after-action joint exercise reports to identify and determine how to improve security incident response capabilities.

(c) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall report to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the findings from its outreach to airports under subsection (a), including an analysis of the level of preparedness such airports have to respond to security incidents, including active shooters, acts of terrorism, and incidents that target passenger-screening checkpoints.

SEC. 4. DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ON BEST PRACTICES.

The Assistant Secretary shall—

(1) identify best practices that exist across airports for security incident planning, management, and training; and

(2) establish a mechanism through which to share such best practices with other airport operators nationwide.

SEC. 5. CERTIFICATION.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Assistant Secretary shall certify in writing to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate that all screening personnel have participated in practical training exercises for active shooter scenarios.

SEC. 6. REIMBURSABLE AGREEMENTS.

Not later than 90 days after the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Se-

curity of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate an analysis of how the Administration can use cost savings achieved through efficiencies to increase over the next 5 fiscal years the funding available for checkpoint screening law enforcement support reimbursable agreements.

SEC. 7. NO ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act, and this Act shall be carried out using amounts otherwise available for such purpose.

SEC. 8. INTEROPERABILITY REVIEW.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Cybersecurity and Communications, conduct a review of the interoperable communications capabilities of the law enforcement, fire, and medical personnel responsible for responding to a security incident, including active shooter events, acts of terrorism, and incidents that target passenger-screening checkpoints, at all airports in the United States at which the Administration performs, or oversees the implementation and performance of, security measures.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 30 days after the completion of the review, the Assistant Secretary shall report the findings of the review to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. **KATKO**) and the gentlewoman from New York (Miss **RICE**) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. **KATKO**. 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 New York?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 720, the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015.

H.R. 720 is a bipartisan measure I introduced to enhance preparedness at our Nation's airports for responding to active shooters and other security incidents.

The legislation was championed last Congress by my predecessor, the former chairman of the Transportation Security Subcommittee, Mr. **HUDSON**, in response to the tragic shooting at Los Angeles International Airport in November of 2013.

The shooting at LAX took the life of Transportation Security Officer Hernandez and wounded two other TSA officers and one passenger. The event highlighted vulnerabilities in airport preparedness, including in the areas of incident command, communication with travelers, communication between TSA and law enforcement, and

evacuation measures. H.R. 720 would apply lessons learned and help close gaps in preparedness at other U.S. airports around the country.

Mr. Speaker, the time to act is now. Everyone within the airport community—from law enforcement and emergency medical personnel, to airport and airline personnel, to TSA officials and the traveling public—must know how to respond to an active shooter or other threat inside the airport.

If not, we risk repeating the communication and coordination challenges among responding agencies that were well documented in the aftermath of the LAX shooting. There is no excuse for such inaction.

Many airports have taken their own steps following the shooting to strengthen preparedness and response plans, and they should be applauded for that.

H.R. 720 would require TSA to verify that airports maintain plans for evacuating travelers, conducting joint exercises within the airport community, establishing unified command posts during security incidents, and testing radio equipment.

The bill would also make TSA a clearinghouse for security incident response and communications best practices—a key recommendation from the airport community—as well as require the agency to certify to Congress that all screening personnel have participated in active shooter training.

H.R. 720 explicitly does not authorize any new spending to implement these commonsense measures. TSA continues to achieve millions of dollars in cost savings with risk-based programs such as TSA Precheck, and I believe the agency must continually prioritize its resources to address real threats to the traveling public.

This bipartisan bill was developed with public and private sector input following multiple subcommittee hearings, site visits, meetings, and afteraction reviews conducted by both the TSA and Los Angeles World Airports.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman **MCCAUL**, Ranking Member **THOMPSON**, Ranking Member **RICE**, Congressman **HUDSON**, and other bipartisan cosponsors of the bill for joining me in introducing this legislation and for their strong support in getting this legislation to the floor today.

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

Miss **RICE** of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 720, the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015, and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us today is named in honor of Officer Gerardo Hernandez, a Transportation Security Administration officer who was tragically shot and killed in the line of duty on November 1, 2013, at Los Angeles International Airport.

Officer Hernandez was the first TSA employee ever to be killed in the line

of duty, and this bill that bears his name seeks to better prepare our Nation's airports to respond to such security incidents in hopes that we can prevent another TSA officer, airport employee, or passenger from suffering the same fate.

That morning in November 2013, a man entered LAX with a semiautomatic rifle, a bagful of ammunition, and the intent to target TSA officers. After killing Officer Hernandez at the TSA checkpoint, the man proceeded into the secure area of the terminal where he shot and wounded two more TSA officers and a civilian.

Those two TSA officers heroically continued to help passengers escape to safety while the shooter made it as far as the food court at the end of the terminal before he was shot and wounded by LAX police officers.

The men and women of the Los Angeles World Airports Police Department and all emergency responders who arrived on the scene that morning acted bravely and swiftly prevented further loss of life despite tremendous communications challenges.

It is with those men and women and all emergency responders in mind that I rise to support this bill because this incident exposed serious deficiencies in planning, preparedness, and communication that must be corrected for the safety of emergency responders and all who use and work in our airports.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 720 would implement commonsense security measures to ensure that our Nation's airports have in place individualized strategies for responding to a security incident such as an active shooter scenario or an act of terrorism.

This bill also specifically requires TSA to provide information to airports on best practices for responding to a security incident at checkpoints; provide Transportation Security officers with practical training for responding to active shooter scenarios; and conduct a nationwide assessment of the interoperable communications capabilities of the law enforcement, fire, and medical personnel responsible for responding to an active shooter event at an airport.

These requirements are informed by postincident reviews conducted by TSA and LAX, as well as hearings and oversight work conducted by the Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Transportation Security.

Mr. Speaker, prior to my time here in Congress, I understand that the Subcommittee on Transportation Security also visited LAX to see firsthand how the tragedy unfolded and hear from TSA airport officials and the American Federation of Government Employees about how the response to a similar incident can be improved going forward.

I hope that we can continue that productive dialogue with LAX and our other airports and work together to better prepare for such violence in the airport environment.

We will never forget what happened at LAX on November 1, 2013, nor can we

afford to forget the lessons to be learned from that tragic day. The threats to our Nation's airports are ceaseless and constantly evolving. There could be another attack on any given day at any given airport. We must assume that it will happen. We must be more prepared. We must do better. We owe it to Officer Hernandez and his family.

That is why I rise today in support of H.R. 720, and I urge all of my colleagues to pass this important bill.

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

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time and look forward to the comments from the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS).

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), the ranking member on the U.S. House Committee on Financial Services whose district encompasses Los Angeles International Airport.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. I thank the gentlewoman for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H.R. 720, the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015. I would like to thank Congressman JOHN KATKO, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security of the House Committee on Homeland Security, for reintroducing this bill. I was proud to join him as an original cosponsor.

I would like to thank Homeland Security Chairman MICHAEL MCCAUL, Ranking Member BENNIE THOMPSON, and our Subcommittee Ranking Member KATHLEEN RICE for supporting this bill and bringing it to the floor for a vote.

Mr. Speaker, this bipartisan bill was originally introduced last year in response to the horrific November 1, 2013, shooting incident at Los Angeles International Airport in my congressional district.

This bill is named in honor of Gerardo Hernandez, the Transportation Security officer who was killed in the line of duty on that tragic day. As we debate this bill, we offer our deepest condolences to the family of Gerardo Hernandez, and we honor all of the TSOs, police officers, and other first responders who risked their lives to stabilize the situation and protect the public during that terrible incident.

Following the LAX shooting incident, Congress conducted several hearings on the incident, including a field hearing in my district on March 28, 2014. These hearings revealed serious security lapses which interfered with response efforts, such as emergency phones and panic buttons that did not work properly, problems in coordination between various police and fire departments, and incompatible radio systems. These security failures are unacceptable.

The Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act requires the Department of Homeland Security to conduct outreach to airports to verify that they

have working plans to respond to security incidents, including active shooter incidents, acts of terrorism, and incidents that target passenger screening checkpoints like the one where Officer Hernandez was killed.

□ 1730

It is imperative that major airports like LAX have state-of-the-art emergency response systems. The safety and security of our Nation's airports, and of all of the workers and travelers who pass through them, is of paramount importance. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and send it to the President's desk.

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank Subcommittee Chairman KATKO for the bipartisan, inclusive, and constructive way in which he has conducted the subcommittee's response to this incident. I am proud to join Ranking Member THOMPSON and Chairman MCCAUL as an original cosponsor of H.R. 720. This is bipartisan legislation that was unanimously passed by the House last Congress, and I urge my colleagues to do the same with this bill.

I strongly believe that with our votes today, we will not only honor the life of Officer Hernandez, we have the opportunity to save lives, be they transportation security officers, airport workers, or members of the flying public. At the end of the day, saving those lives is the best way we can honor Officer Hernandez and his family. I once again urge my colleagues to pass this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the tragic event that unfolded at LAX in November of 2013 was a stark reminder that much remains to be done in securing America's transit hubs, particularly the non-sterile or nonsecure side of airports that are in many ways just like open shopping malls.

Given this reality, we must ensure that airport communities are prepared to respond swiftly to any major security incidents that threaten the safety of the traveling public. In remembrance of Transportation Security Officer Hernandez, I urge my colleagues to pass this important legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 720, the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015. This bipartisan legislation will help airports nationwide improve their emergency response plans, in order to be better prepared for security incidents like the tragic shooting that occurred at Los Angeles International Airport on November 1, 2013. This legislation will enhance airport security by requiring the Transportation Security Administration to assess security incident preparedness at airports across the country, train its own employees on

how to effectively respond to active shooter incidents, develop plans for testing emergency communications equipment, and act as a clearinghouse for airport security best practices.

I had the opportunity to travel to LAX nearly a year ago for a site visit and field hearing led by the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. HUDSON. During that trip, the Committee gained a better understanding of how relatively easy it is for someone with malicious intent to wreak havoc at one of the world's busiest airports and how important it is to have adequate emergency plans in place to respond to any security incident that may occur.

I would like to commend the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security, Mr. KATKO and the former Chairman of the Subcommittee, Mr. HUDSON for their diligent efforts to address this important issue, and their dedication to strengthening the state of airport security nationwide. I also wish to commend the bipartisan efforts of both the Ranking Member of the Full Committee, Mr. THOMPSON, and the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, Miss RICE, whose support of this legislation is greatly appreciated. Identical language to H.R. 720 was approved by the Committee on Homeland Security last Congress and subsequently passed the House by voice vote.

I urge support for this critical measure.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 720, a bill I am pleased to be a cosponsor of.

The shooting at LAX resulted in the loss of Officer Hernandez's life and served as a stark reminder of the dangers the men and women on the front lines of securing our aviation sector face.

Unarmed and exposed, Transportation Security Officers perform the often thankless task of screening 1.8 million passengers per day.

They do so with limited workplace protections and the great responsibility of preventing another terrorist attack on the scale of 9/11.

Given their vulnerability and the critical role they play in protecting our homeland, it is essential that airports and the law enforcement agencies that serve them have the resources, training, and plans in place to ensure a swift and effective response when an incident that threatens the safety of Transportation Security Officers occurs.

In March of 2014, I had the opportunity to attend the Subcommittee on Transportation Security's site visit and field hearing at Los Angeles International Airport focused on the tragic shooting that occurred there on November 1st of 2013.

While the response of the individual police officers who prevented further loss of life on that tragic day is to be commended, the overall response at LAX left much to be desired.

Panic buttons at the checkpoint were not in working order. The emergency phone Transportation Security Officers have been trained to use did not display the location of the incident to the command center, and the police, firefighters, and emergency medical personnel responding could not communicate via interoperable radios.

The bill before us today represents a bipartisan effort to remedy many of the deficiencies identified following the shooting.

During Committee consideration of the bill last Congress, Representative PAYNE offered

an amendment to the bill requiring TSA to conduct a nationwide assessment of the interoperability capabilities of emergency responders at airports.

I am pleased that the amendment was adopted and is still included in the bill before the House today.

Such an assessment will help inform where communications gaps that may hamper emergency response at airports still exist.

I would like to once again give my condolences for Officer Hernandez.

Under current law, the families of individuals serving a public agency in an official capacity as a law enforcement officer, firefighter, or chaplain receive compensation if their loved one is killed in the line of duty.

The same is true for families of employees of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and members of rescue squads or ambulance crews.

Unfortunately, the law has not been updated to include Transportation Security Officers within the definition of what constitutes a public safety officer.

As a result, the families of TSOs who are killed in the line of duty, such as the Hernandez family, are not entitled to funds from the Public Safety Officer's Benefits Program.

Last Congress, Representative BROWNLEY introduced legislation that would grant Transportation Security Officers the benefits of other law enforcement officers that are killed in the line of duty.

It is my understanding that Representative BROWNLEY intends to reintroduce the "Honoring Our Fallen TSA Officers Act" this Congress.

I implore my colleagues to support the forthcoming legislation so that the families of the men and women on the front lines of protecting our aviation sector are properly compensated when tragedy strikes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. R. 720, The Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015, which improves intergovernmental planning and communication during security incidents at domestic airports.

As a former chair and ranking member of the Homeland Security Committee Transportation Security Subcommittee, I understand how important this bill will be in enhancing safety and protection in the air transit industry, not just for our citizens but for our Transportation Security Officers working in the line of duty.

This legislation, which requires the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to devote more resources for planning and communication during and in case of threats or emergencies, is prompted by the tragic death of Gerardo I. Hernandez, a Transportation Security Officer who was killed in the line of duty at Los Angeles International Airport on November 1, 2013.

At just 39 years old, Gerardo Hernandez was the first TSA officer to lose his life in the line of duty in the 12 year history of the agency.

He died from several gunshot wounds inflicted by an assailant while on duty at the Los Angeles International Airport

Gerardo Hernandez was among those thousands of TSA employees carrying out their mission to keep the airways safe for traveling citizens, and their work across the nation cannot be understated.

Seven victims were treated at the scene of the attack and three victims who were wounded by gunfire, including two TSA officers, identified as 54-year-old James Speer and 36-year-old Tony Grigsby needed hospital treatment.

On average, TSA officers screen 1.7 million air passengers at more than 450 airports across the nation, which averaged over 637.5 million passengers in 2012.

H.R. 720 will help ensure that all screening personnel have received training in how to handle potential shooting threats.

The bill also requires TSA to verify that all airports have plans in place to respond to any security threats, and provide technical assistance as necessary to improve those plans.

The bill also directs the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of Cybersecurity and Communication to report to Congress the capacity of law enforcement, fire, and medical response teams' communication and response to security threats at airports.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates the implementation of H.R. 720 would cost about \$2.5 million in 2015. Of the \$2.5 million, an estimated \$1.5 million would serve to provide additional technical assistance to airports, and the remaining \$1 million would be used to evaluate the interoperability of communication systems used by emergency response teams.

Mr. Speaker, it has been almost 14 years since our country suffered the tragedy of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

We will never forget how that day changed our lives, and the lives of every American generation to follow.

Security measures in airports across the country have been enhanced dramatically, and the resulting inconvenience is a small price to pay for the protective measures needed to keep the travelling public safe.

It is people like Gerardo Hernandez who do their best to make the necessary screening as least intrusive and burdensome as possible, consistent with the mission of ensuring the security of all members of the flying public.

TSA officers willingly risk their lives to make sure the job gets done, and for that we owe these men and women a debt of gratitude.

In honor of Gerardo Hernandez's contribution to his country, I strongly support this bill and urge all my colleagues to join me in voting for its passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 720.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. KATKO. 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.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.