

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bill was signed by Speaker pro tempore COMSTOCK on Friday, December 4, 2015:

H.R. 22, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF
MEMBER, THE HONORABLE MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Paul Ritacco, staff member, the Honorable MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 2, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a grand jury subpoena for testimony issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

PAUL RITACCO.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF
MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from a staff member of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, December 2, 2015.

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Speaker, House of Representatives,
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Sincerely,

NORMAN GUGLIOTTA.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF
MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

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Sincerely,

JOHN NADEAU.

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MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

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Sincerely,

JACQUELINE HURDA.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF
MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

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After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

ANDREW TODD CAULK.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess until approximately 3:45 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 19 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1546

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska) at 3 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

FEDERAL IMPROPER PAYMENTS
COORDINATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 614) to provide access to and use of information by Federal agencies in order to reduce improper payments, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 614

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 "Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. AVAILABILITY OF THE DO NOT PAY INITIATIVE TO THE JUDICIAL AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES AND STATES.

Section 5 of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(3)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking "BY AGENCIES";

(B) by striking "For purposes" and inserting the following:

"(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(B) OTHER ENTITIES.—States and any contractor, subcontractor, or agent of a State, and the judicial and legislative branches of the United States (as defined in paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively, of section 202(e) of title 18, United States Code), shall have access to, and use of, the Do Not Pay Initiative for the purpose of verifying payment or award eligibility for payments (as defined in section 2(g)(3) of the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note)) when, with respect to a State, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget determines that the Do Not Pay Initiative is appropriately established for that State and any contractor, subcontractor, or agent of the State, and, with respect to the judicial and legislative branches of the United States, when the Director of the Office of Management and Budget determines that the Do Not Pay Initiative is appropriately established for the judicial branch or the legislative branch, as applicable.

"(C) CONSISTENCY WITH PRIVACY ACT OF 1974.—To ensure consistency with the principles of section 552a of title 5, United States

Code (commonly known as the 'Privacy Act of 1974'), the Director of the Office of Management and Budget may issue guidance that establishes privacy and other requirements that shall be incorporated into Do Not Pay Initiative access agreements with States, including any contractor, subcontractor, or agent of a State, and the judicial and legislative branches of the United States.'; and

(2) in subsection (d)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking "and" after the semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

"(D) may include States and their quasi-government entities, and the judicial and legislative branches of the United States (as defined in paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively, of section 202(e) of title 18, United States Code) as users of the system in accordance with subsection (b)(3)."

SEC. 3. IMPROVING THE SHARING AND USE OF DATA BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO CURB IMPROPER PAYMENTS.

The Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note) is amended—

(1) in section 5(a)(2), by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

"(A) The death records maintained by the Commissioner of Social Security."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 7. IMPROVING THE USE OF DATA BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES FOR CURBING IMPROPER PAYMENTS.

"(a) PROMPT REPORTING OF DEATH INFORMATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense shall establish a procedure under which each Secretary shall, promptly and on a regular basis, submit information relating to the deaths of individuals to each agency for which the Director of the Office of Management and Budget determines receiving and using such information would be relevant and necessary.

"(b) GUIDANCE TO AGENCIES REGARDING DATA ACCESS AND USE FOR IMPROPER PAYMENTS PURPOSES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, the heads of other relevant Federal, State, and local agencies, and Indian tribes and tribal organizations, as appropriate, shall issue guidance regarding implementation of the Do Not Pay Initiative under section 5 to—

"(A) the Department of the Treasury; and

"(B) each agency or component of an agency—

"(i) that operates or maintains a database of information described in section 5(a)(2); or

"(ii) for which the Director determines improved data matching would be relevant, necessary, or beneficial.

"(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The guidance issued under paragraph (1) shall—

"(A) address the implementation of subsection (a); and

"(B) include the establishment of deadlines for access to and use of the databases described in section 5(a)(2) under the Do Not Pay Initiative."

SEC. 4. DATA ANALYTICS.

Section 5 of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note), is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(h) REPORT ON IMPROPER PAYMENTS DATA ANALYSIS.—Not later than 180 days after the

date of enactment of the Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act of 2015, the Secretary of the Treasury shall submit to Congress a report which shall include a description of—

"(1) data analytics performed as part of the Do Not Pay Business Center operated by the Department of the Treasury for the purpose of detecting, preventing, and recovering improper payments through preaward, postaward prepayment, and postpayment analysis, which shall include a description of any analysis or investigations incorporating—

"(A) review and data matching of payments and beneficiary enrollment lists of State programs carried out using Federal funds for the purposes of identifying eligibility duplication, residency ineligibility, duplicate payments, or other potential improper payment issues;

"(B) review of multiple Federal agencies and programs for which comparison of data could show payment duplication; and

"(C) review of other information the Secretary of the Treasury determines could prove effective for identifying, preventing, or recovering improper payments, which may include investigation or review of information from multiple Federal agencies or programs;

"(2) the metrics used in determining whether the analytic and investigatory efforts have reduced, or contributed to the reduction of, improper payments or improper awards; and

"(3) the target dates for implementing the data analytics operations performed as part of the Do Not Pay Business Center."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is a Senate bill that we take up today, but there has actually been a House bill that is almost exactly the same for the last year or so.

The story behind how this bill comes to the floor is one of those stories that should make folks confident that the system can work. I was on a Facebook townhall meeting about a year and a half ago and got a question from one of the constituents about all the money that they have heard the government wastes by paying the wrong people, paying dead people, or paying people way too much money.

I remember it specifically, Mr. Speaker, because shortly after that, my uncle passed away. When my uncle passed away, I was named executor of his estate. It was the first time I have ever been the executor of an estate. One of the things I remember was that I got a notice 10 days after he had died,

very shortly—2 weeks—from the Social Security Administration saying: You are going to get another check for your uncle. Don't cash it or else you can be in a lot of trouble.

I thought that was really neat. Here is a Federal agency that is actually doing its job in very short order and very efficiently. And I filed that away.

A couple months later, Mr. Speaker, my good friend from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS), who is the subcommittee chairman of the Government Operations on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, was having a hearing about all of these payments that we are not supposed to be making. I had a chance to ask some questions, and I told that story to the government witnesses from the executive branch who were there. I said: Look, how is it that this works so well in the Social Security Administration, but we have all these tales of all these improper payments going to other people?

They said: Well, Mr. Congressman, that is because the Social Security Administration has a really, really good database, and they process the information very well when folks die.

I asked what I thought was a relatively straightforward question: Why don't they share the information with the other Federal agencies?

That was the genesis of this bill. What we set out to try and do is try and take circumstances, take examples of where the Federal Government actually does its job well and use that as a model that can be shared by other parts of the government.

Mr. Speaker, the bill, by the way, that we are talking about is S. 614. There was a House version of it that I worked off of, just because I am a little bit more familiar with it. It is H.R. 2320. The language is almost exactly the same.

I want to thank Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CONNOLLY, and also Mr. CARTER of Georgia and Mr. WESTMORELAND of Georgia, who are the original cosponsors of this.

Mr. Speaker, the bill does two very specific, large things and one small thing. It expands that Social Security database. So it takes this, again, this example of something that actually works the way that it is supposed to, and lets other folks use the information.

What does that mean? States will now be able to use it. State contractors will now be able to gain access to it. The judicial branch will be able to gain access to it, and the legislative branch will as well.

So the example is that this really good information is not being shared broadly throughout governments—local, State, and Federal—and we are seeking to fix that in the bill.

The other thing the bill does is to expand what is called the Do Not Pay portal. This is a database that is managed by the United States Department of the Treasury and contains, again,

really good information about who has passed away, how much money people should be receiving, who has moved, and who is entitled to benefits and who is not.

By the way, there is a third thing that the bill does, Mr. Speaker. It seems inevitable that we cannot pass a bill here without asking for a report that goes along with it. But I think it is probably common sense to say that at some point in the future, we would like the Treasury to tell us if it is actually working.

It is not very often, Mr. Speaker, that I come up here and tell you that there are examples of the Federal Government doing its job well; but when we do find those examples, I am very happy to get up and admit it. As a small government, conservative Republican, ordinarily I am the one that says government never does anything right; but here, actually, parts and parcels of the Federal Government are doing their job well. If we can take that example, take that model and expand it to other parts of the government, we would actually have a chance to solve what is a real problem.

We spent about \$125 billion last year on improper payments, payments to people who should not have received it, payments to people who have passed away, or payments to people in the wrong amount—\$125 billion. We just had a major fight on this floor 2 weeks ago over spending \$80 billion extra in the budget bill, yet we spend that much, half again, on improper payments every single year. In fact, it is one of the fastest growing line items in our budget. That \$125 billion represents a 15 percent increase over the previous year. One of the fastest growing areas of our government is improper payments.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, and Mr. WESTMORELAND in the House for helping bring this bill to the floor. Also, I want to thank Senator CARPER from Delaware and Senator RON JOHNSON from Wisconsin for shepherding it through the Senate.

This is their bill that we are taking. I guess that is another inevitability, that, if the Senate has the same bill as the House does, the Senate gets all the credit. But sometimes it is interesting to see what you can actually accomplish around here, Mr. Speaker, if you don't worry about who gets the credit.

I do want to thank the folks who took the time and the effort to shepherd this very sound, well-considered, and bipartisan bill to the floor today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act before the House this afternoon. I am pleased to join my friend from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY) in sponsoring the House companion of this bipartisan legislation. He has al-

ready mentioned the cosponsors, CHERI BUSTOS, BUDDY CARTER, and LYNN WESTMORELAND among them. I also want to thank our Senate partners for their work on this important initiative.

I want to assure my friend, Mr. MULVANEY, we are going to be marking up a companion bill to this tomorrow in our committee, and hopefully we will send it over to the Senate with a House number on it. Fair is fair.

This is the latest in a series of commonsense, good-government laws we have enacted over the last decade as we work to reduce, if not outright eliminate, billions of taxpayer dollars in improper payments made by Federal agencies. The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY) pointed out just how large a number this is: \$125 billion a year.

Now, over a decade, that is \$1.25 trillion. That exceeds all of sequestration. We wouldn't have to make any cuts to investments or raise any taxes to deal with sequestration if we just dealt with this. With the GAO reporting nearly \$125 billion of improper payments, it is clear that more can and must be done to deal with government waste and fraud.

Today's legislation would expand the use, as Mr. MULVANEY indicated, of the Do Not Pay Initiative to the legislative and judicial branches and to our State partners. That initiative was the result of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, which was also a product of our committee, and I was pleased to cosponsor it at that time.

The Do Not Pay Initiative was launched by Treasury and leverages multiple data sources—many of which were formerly siloed—to create a central, comprehensive list that Federal agencies can quickly reference to determine whether an individual or organization is, in fact, eligible to receive a Federal grant, benefit, or contract; and it also allows them to verify such payments after the fact.

For example, this initiative has prompted agencies to better share the reporting of death information to help reduce Federal payments to those, obviously, we have lost or for those who have had their identities stolen. Today's legislation would require the Departments of Defense and State to report information on deaths that occur overseas more quickly so that the agencies can better detect fraudulent payments or recoup improper payments if necessary.

Just last week, Mr. Speaker, the Office of Management and Budget delivered its first report to Congress on the Do Not Pay Initiative, which it says resulted in more than \$2 billion in stopped payments—that is to say, savings for the U.S. taxpayer. Obviously, we can, with this bill, increase that number even more.

Based on that early success, it makes good sense for us to expand the use of this valuable tool to the legislative and

judicial branches, as well as our State partners, so they have the ability to quickly verify payments or the eligibility of recipients to receive such payments.

This commonsense proposal was a welcomed suggestion from the GAO in its latest report on improper payments. I would also add that the Oversight and Government Reform Committee will continue this work, as I indicated, with a markup tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank my colleague, Mr. MULVANEY, for his leadership on this matter, and I urge our colleagues to support this important reform to our government in making it more efficient and accountable to the taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS), my good friend and the cosponsor of this legislation.

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman CONNOLLY and Congressman MULVANEY for their hard work on this.

Mr. Speaker, as one of the Democratic coleaders of this legislation, I am so proud to rise in support of the Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act of 2015. The goal of this bill is straightforward: simply, to save taxpayer dollars that are currently going to waste and to make the Federal Government more effective and more efficient.

Each year, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government spends billions of dollars in improper payments. This not only wastes taxpayer dollars, but it also erodes the public trust in government. Just last year, as my colleagues have pointed out, improper payments by the Federal Government rose to \$125 billion. That is more than \$1 trillion over a decade. That is according to the Office of Management and Budget. It is also an increase of 15 percent up from the year before, where it was \$106 billion. So we are talking about real money here.

In tough times, working families have to figure out how to cut costs to get their budgets in line. We all know that. I think it is time that Washington do the same thing. That is why our bill takes reasonable—reasonable—steps to improve information sharing between Federal and State agencies to prevent these improper payments.

This also helps modernize Federal agencies by putting 21st century data analytics to work in identifying and eliminating governmentwide waste and fraud. The status quo is, plain and simple, not acceptable.

At a time when so many working families have to tighten their belts and cut costs, they expect Congress to act responsibly with their hard-earned taxpayer dollars. This bipartisan legislation represents a commonsense approach to a problem that is costing the taxpayers billions of dollars. This is undermining the effectiveness and the credibility of the Federal Government.

I thank Congressman MULVANEY and Congressman CONNOLLY. I think this is

an indication that we know how to work together. I want to applaud my colleagues for joining our efforts to protect taxpayers.

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

□ 1600

Mr. CONNOLLY. Again, I want to thank my friend, Mrs. BUSTOS, for her leadership on this very important issue.

I, also, in closing, just want to say to my friend from South Carolina, part of improper payments is also fraud, and the biggest chunk of that is Medicare fraud. We need the help of U.S. Attorney's Offices to go after that. I am aware of one U.S. Attorney's Office last year that identified and recovered \$3 billion of Medicare fraud. Now, I believe there are 99 U.S. Attorney's Offices in the United States. If every one of them made going after this fraud a priority, I assure you, we could significantly reduce improper payments by a commensurate amount. I would be glad to work with him and my friend, Mrs. BUSTOS, on a bipartisan basis to address that aspect of it as well.

Again, I want to thank Mr. MULVANEY for his leadership and for the bipartisan approach we have approached this legislation.

We have no more speakers on our side, Mr. Speaker.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I urge adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 614.

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.

MICROBEAD-FREE WATERS ACT OF 2015

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1321) to prohibit the sale or distribution of cosmetics containing synthetic plastic microbeads, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1321

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 "Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION AGAINST SALE OR DISTRIBUTION OF RINSE-OFF COSMETICS CONTAINING PLASTIC MICROBEADS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 301 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 331) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(ddd)(1) The manufacture or the introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate

commerce of a rinse-off cosmetic that contains intentionally-added plastic microbeads.

"(2) In this paragraph—

"(A) the term 'plastic microbead' means any solid plastic particle that is less than five millimeters in size and is intended to be used to exfoliate or cleanse the human body or any part thereof; and

"(B) the term 'rinse-off cosmetic' includes toothpaste."

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendment made by subsection (a) applies—

(A) with respect to manufacturing, beginning on July 1, 2017, and with respect to introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce, beginning on July 1, 2018; and

(B) notwithstanding subparagraph (A), in the case of a rinse-off cosmetic that is a non-prescription drug, with respect to manufacturing, beginning on July 1, 2018, and with respect to the introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce, beginning on July 1, 2019.

(2) NONPRESCRIPTION DRUG.—For purposes of this subsection, the term "nonprescription drug" means a drug not subject to section 503(b)(1) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 353(b)(1)).

(c) PREEMPTION OF STATE LAWS.—No State or political subdivision of a State may directly or indirectly establish under any authority or continue in effect restrictions with respect to the manufacture or introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of rinse-off cosmetics containing plastic microbeads (as defined in section 301(ddd) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, as added by subsection (a)) that are not identical to the restrictions under such section 301(ddd) that have begun to apply under subsection (b).

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act (or the amendments made by this Act) shall be construed to apply with respect to drugs that are not also cosmetics (as such terms are defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1321, the Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015.

I am pleased to have partnered with my friend, Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member FRANK PALLONE from New Jersey, on this very important bill to begin the phaseout of plastic microbeads, which you can see in this picture, literally the size of a pinhead sometimes on a penny, to begin the phaseout of plastic microbeads from personal care products on July 1, 2017.

Many folks might be wondering, what exactly is a microbead? Well, I

am sure many of you here and at home are using products that contain microbeads without even realizing it. Microbeads are those tiny little scrubbers in cleansers, body scrubs, and even toothpaste. On their own, they are nearly invisible, smaller than a pinhead, as I indicated.

But once they are flushed down the drain, that is when the problem really begins. They are so small they easily flow through the water filtration systems and end up in our bodies of water, obviously, including the Great Lakes, where I hail from. They are known to absorb pollutants and often mistaken as food by fish and wildlife. Simply put, microbeads are causing megaproblems.

As someone who grew up on Lake Michigan and represents a large chunk of the Michigan coastline, I understand firsthand how important it is to maintain the beauty and integrity of our Great Lakes and all of our water systems. The Great Lakes have survived many a foe—severe pollution, oil spills, discharge from refineries, zebra mussels, and attempts to steal our water, just to name a few. We are going to fight any activity that puts our beloved Great Lakes in jeopardy.

Many State and local governments have created a patchwork of differing laws, which creates problems for interstate commerce. This bipartisan legislation will also preempt all State and local laws related to microbeads in cosmetics, which will ensure certainty for manufacturers and other job creators across the country.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in ending this pesky problem of microbeads. They are tiny plastic, but big time pollution. As Michigan's Holland Sentinel editorialized this past spring, "There's no reason keeping our faces feeling clean should require us to trash our lakes."

I urge all Members to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1321, the Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015.

This legislation sets up a strong Federal program to ban the use of plastic microbeads in personal care products. I would like to personally thank Chairman FRED UPTON for working with me to introduce and move this important legislation.

Plastic microbeads have been in use in cosmetic products, such as face washes and toothpaste, for many years. These tiny plastic beads are often used as exfoliants, removing dead skin cells from the surface of the skin. While these plastic particles are not harmful to the user of the product, in recent years, studies have shown that these tiny particles that are often washed down the drain are making it through the wastewater treatment process and ending up in our Nation's waterways. We must put a stop to this unnecessary and avoidable pollution.