

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.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

PROMOTING WOMEN IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACT

Ms. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4742) to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4742

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 “Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) women make up almost 50 percent of the workforce, but less than 25 percent of the workforce in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professions;

(2) women are less likely to focus on the STEM disciplines in undergraduate and graduate study;

(3) only 26 percent of women who do attain degrees in STEM fields work in STEM jobs;

(4) there is an increasing demand for individuals with STEM degrees to extend their focus beyond the laboratory so they can be leaders in discovery commercialization;

(5) studies have shown that technology and commercialization ventures are successful when women are in top management positions; and

(6) the National Science Foundation’s mission includes supporting women in STEM disciplines.

SEC. 3. SUPPORTING WOMEN’S ENTREPRENEURIAL PROGRAMS.

Section 33 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 1885a) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (10);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (11) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(12) encourage its entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. COMSTOCK. 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. 4742, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today to offer a bipartisan bill Ms. ESTY and I introduced, H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act.

We were also joined by the chairman and ranking member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Congressman LAMAR SMITH and Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, who are original cosponsors of this measure.

I am pleased that the consideration of this bill occurs during Women’s History Month. Our bill amends the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act to authorize the National Science Foundation to use its entrepreneurial programs to recruit women and to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world.

The bill also includes a number of findings regarding women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields, also known as the STEM fields.

One finding in this bill notes that only 26 percent of women who attain degrees in STEM fields ultimately work in STEM jobs. We want to improve these statistics, and we believe this bill is a step in the right direction.

Again, I am happy to collaborate with my colleague, Congresswoman ESTY, on this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act. This bill would expand the mission of the National Science Foundation to support and strengthen women entrepreneurs. I drafted this legislation because we can and we must do more for women in science, technology, engineering, and math, the so-called STEM fields, to extend their efforts beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world.

Women have the potential to be remarkable entrepreneurs, job creators, and innovators. Unfortunately, women remain an underutilized force for starting small businesses that sustain the middle class.

Women make up roughly half of the labor force. But according to the Department of Commerce, women only own 30 percent of private businesses in the United States.

Why is it that women aren’t starting their own businesses more often? The sad truth is that women still face significant barriers to entrepreneurship, including limited access to capital, a lack of women mentors in STEM fields, often difficult or unmanageable expectations for work-life balance, and a subconscious bias against women in STEM.

Now, an increasing number of women are earning STEM degrees. However,

women are still largely underrepresented in all STEM fields, including significantly the ones that have the highest entrepreneurship rates.

For example, in 2012, women earned only one in five Ph.D.’s granted by U.S. institutions in computer science. We must do better at increasing representation of women in all STEM fields.

Now, I may be biased, but my own State of Connecticut is a great example of how far women can go with a STEM background.

We have women engineers who are designing life-support packs for our astronauts at the International Space Station. We have women scientists conducting cutting-edge research in STEM cell work at Yukon and at Yale.

We have women inventors and entrepreneurs making life-changing discoveries and literally altering the course of history. We have wonderful local companies with women entrepreneurs, such as Bedoukian Research and Jonal Labs, who are not only creating quality products, but are fostering the next generation of women leaders in STEM. I think we might have had one in the gallery who was excited about our introduction of this bill.

It is not enough to promote women in STEM careers. We must also work to increase the number of women who become entrepreneurs. The benefits of encouraging and supporting women entrepreneurs could be tremendous.

According to the Department of Commerce, between 1997 and 2007, privately held women-owned businesses added 500,000 jobs. During that same period, other privately held firms lost over 2 million jobs.

Women have unique experiences and perspectives to bring to the table. We simply cannot afford in this increasingly global economy to overlook the valuable and talented resource of over half our citizens.

We must do more to promote women entrepreneurs and to better support women who are commercializing great ideas, starting small businesses, and creating jobs.

I know, when I hear from the women and the men who are part of my STEM advisory committee in Connecticut about the challenges and, yet, the great opportunities that women in the STEM fields have to create the next new exciting business, develop the next new cure to help Americans.

H.R. 4742 would help do that by supporting programs focused on helping more women, commercialize great ideas, start businesses, stimulate 21st century careers, and strengthen the middle class.

I want to thank my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ranking Member JOHNSON, and Chairman SMITH, for working with us together on this bill.

I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded not to make reference to occupants of the gallery.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her work on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, innovation rises up from all parts of this country. One of the main purposes of the Innovation Initiative is to empower people to make new discoveries and guide our country into the future. When we do that, we ensure America remains a global leader and everyone in America and abroad benefits.

We have two bills today to build innovation from the ground up, focusing on future women leaders in America. Because when you look back on history, you see women at the forefront.

You look at Grace Hopper, who was one of the first programmers of our earliest computers. Stephanie Kwolek invented Kevlar. Shirley Ann Jackson laid the foundation for amazing advancements in communication, like fiber optic cables and portable fax machines.

These are all women who fueled positive disruption with their ideas. This is the positive disruption America needs to prosper.

So we should encourage a learning environment where young women continue to have the opportunities to explore the interests in STEM subjects.

Today we will pass a bill by Congresswoman BARBARA COMSTOCK to enable retired NASA astronauts, engineers, and scientists to work with female STEM students who will lead the next generation.

We are also voting to authorize the National Science Foundation to work with its entrepreneur programs to recruit more women who can be the top innovators in the lab and beyond.

With these two items, the Innovation Initiative continues to empower the American people for the sake of the American people, removing obstacles to success while bringing innovation into government.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO).

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act.

Mr. Speaker, for over the past year, STEM education has been a critical part of many debates we have had here on the House floor.

We have discussed it in the context of reauthorization of critical education programs and with respect to how it can drive American innovation in research and technology.

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The discussion we are having here today—a dialogue as to how we can encourage more women who wish to pur-

sue a course of study in STEM fields to follow through beyond the classroom and build successful careers in science, math, and technology fields—is very important for economic growth in this country and to ensure young women help pioneer new innovation in this country for generations to come.

We have heard the statistics, Mr. Speaker. Women make up half of the U.S. workforce and half of the college-educated workforce, yet only 26 percent of women who attain degrees in STEM fields end up working in STEM jobs.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I rise today in strong support of this simple, commonsense legislation. By encouraging entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world, we can take a significant step in the right direction.

Further, by having this debate and discussion here today and by encouraging all of our best and brightest to pursue the education and career path of their dreams, we are taking a necessary step to include this as part of our ongoing dialogue with respect to the delivery of STEM education in our classrooms and what it will take to develop American innovation for future generations.

I would like to commend Representative ESTY and Representative COMSTOCK for their efforts on this legislation. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, as the mom of a daughter with a biology degree major and with a master's degree in forensic science who is now working in the STEM fields, I ask that my colleagues support this bipartisan legislation to promote women in the workforce and in STEM fields.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4742 the "Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act."

As a Senior Member on the House Committee on Homeland Security who sits on the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies, I know well of the need to encourage and train women to thrive in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

Promoting diversity in the STEM professions is more than just an idea; it requires an understanding that there is a need to have a process that will ensure the inclusion of all minorities and women in all areas of American life.

Studies have found that women make up almost 50 percent of the workforce.

Studies note that 23 percent of STEM workers are women; however, women make up 48 percent of workers in all occupations.

Only 26 percent of women who do attain degrees in STEM fields work in STEM jobs.

According to the most recent available data women are less likely to focus on the STEM disciplines in undergraduate and graduate studies.

In 1991, women received 29.6 percent of computer science B.A.'s, compared to just 18.2 percent in 2010.

Jobs in computer systems design and related services, a field dependent upon high-level math and problem-solving skills, are projected to grow 45 percent between 2008 and 2018.

There are approximately 6 million women and minority owned businesses in the United States, representing a significant aspect of our economy.

My home city of Houston, Texas, the energy capital of the world, knows the importance of professionals in the STEM industries.

It has been reported that the highest-paying STEM occupations are petroleum engineers with an annual salary of \$147,520, architectural and engineering managers with an annual salary of \$138,720, natural sciences managers with an annual salary of \$136,450, computer and information systems managers with an annual salary of \$136,280, and physicists with a reported annual salary of 117,300.

There is an increasing demand for individuals with STEM degrees to extend their focus beyond the laboratory so they can be leaders in discovery and commercialization.

Women deserve a fair shot in the STEM programs in this nation.

In addition, I believe that work needs to be done to modernize key contracting developmental programs designed to increase opportunities for women, minorities and low-income individuals who pursue STEM degrees and STEM job training.

I support programs at the National Science Foundation that have worked to reduce the current barriers and ensure women have the support they need in the STEM fields.

Mr. Speaker, we should encourage women to pursue degrees and careers in the STEM fields so we can continue to compete in the global economy.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act. Now more than ever STEM fields are dictating the way business in the United States is conducted. The successful commercialization of technology has expanded opportunities for those with STEM degrees. It is imperative that we promote women as part of this crucial expansion in order to promote equality in the advancing technological age.

A Harvard Business Review article released last March described the top biases pushing women out of STEM fields. To women in any workplace this comes as no surprise. The constant need to prove ourselves more times over than our male counterparts, the tightrope of navigating a masculine workspace while holding true to our feminine identity and, the general isolation of being a woman in a male-dominated field are all too common in today's workplaces. In my District, Wayne State University has a program called GO-GIRL, Gaining Options—Girls Investigate Real Life. The mission of this program is to increase the competence and confidence of adolescent girls by engaging them in experiences that promote an interest in STEM education while building their capacity to pursue STEM-related careers. While programs like this are currently helping girls nationwide, we must continue the progress that has been made and expand upon our success.

The Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act amends Section 33 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act by including a key phrase that "encourage[s] its entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support

women to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world.” The commercialization of STEM fields has created a vast new sector of jobs and careers, a sector that must include women professionals. This Act does just that, ensuring the inclusion of women in one of America’s most important and fast developing industries.

I would like to close by saying that I am proud of our chamber for coming together to ensure that women continue to achieve success in STEM fields. I also want to thank my colleagues for considering two bills today that highlight the importance of reaching out to young women who otherwise may not be inspired to pursue a career in a STEM-related field.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act. I thank my Science Committee colleagues Ms. ESTY, who authored the bill, and Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman COMSTOCK for their initiative on this issue.

H.R. 4742 authorizes the National Science Foundation (NSF) to use its existing entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women and help them develop their research and technology ideas for the marketplace.

STEM education is critical to our country’s economy and global competitiveness. A well-educated and trained STEM workforce promotes our future economic prosperity.

These STEM workers have the potential to develop technologies that could save thousands of lives, jump-start new industries, or even discover new worlds.

That’s why I authored with Ms. ESTY the STEM Education Act, a new law that strengthens science, technology, engineering and mathematics education efforts at federal science agencies. It also, for the first time, expands the definition of STEM to include computer science. The bill was signed by the President last October.

Unfortunately, studies show that only 26 percent of women who attain degrees in STEM fields work in STEM jobs.

H.R. 4742 encourages NSF to tackle this problem. It enhances women’s ability to translate their enthusiasm, scientific expertise and research ideas into tangible products and businesses.

Inspiring American students to seek science and math careers is a goal shared by Republicans and Democrats alike. Some of the most energizing and exciting moments of my Science Committee chairmanship have been interactions with young people who want to pursue STEM studies and careers.

At various Committee hearings and robotics competitions in my district, I have encountered motivated, talented young people who want nothing more than an opportunity to pursue their dreams. And, in some cases, change the world with their ideas.

Their passion for learning and science reminds me of why I enjoy serving in Congress and on the Science Committee.

I again thank Ms. ESTY and Chairwoman COMSTOCK for their work on this bill. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 4742.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4742.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. COMSTOCK. 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.

INSPIRING THE NEXT SPACE PIONEERS, INNOVATORS, RESEARCHERS, AND EXPLORERS (INSPIRE) WOMEN ACT

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4755) to inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4755

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 “Inspiring the Next Space Pioneers, Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers (INSPIRE) Women Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS are virtual mentoring programs using commercially available video chat programs to pair National Aeronautics and Space Administration mentors with young students anywhere in the country. NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS give young students the opportunity to interact and learn from real engineers, scientists, and technologists.

(2) The Aspire to Inspire (A2I) program engages young girls to present science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) career opportunities through the real lives and jobs of early career women at NASA.

(3) The Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research (SISTER) program at the Goddard Space Flight Center is designed to increase awareness of, and provide an opportunity for, female middle school students to be exposed to and explore nontraditional career fields with Goddard Space Flight Center women engineers, mathematicians, scientists, technicians, and researchers.

SEC. 3. SUPPORTING WOMEN’S INVOLVEMENT IN THE FIELDS OF AEROSPACE AND SPACE EXPLORATION.

The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall encourage women and girls to study science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, pursue careers in aerospace, and further advance the Nation’s space science and exploration efforts through support of the following initiatives:

(1) NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS.

(2) Aspire to Inspire.

(3) Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research.

SEC. 4. PLAN.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a

plan for how NASA can best facilitate and support both current and retired astronauts, scientists, engineers, and innovators, including early career female astronauts, scientists, engineers, and innovators, to engage with K-12 female STEM students and inspire the next generation of women to consider participating in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and to pursue careers in aerospace. This plan shall—

(1) report on existing activities with current and retired NASA astronauts, scientists, engineers, and innovators;

(2) identify how NASA could best leverage existing authorities to facilitate and support current and retired astronaut, scientist, engineer, and innovator participation in NASA outreach efforts;

(3) propose and describe a program specific to retired astronauts, scientists, engineers, and innovators; and

(4) identify any additional authorities necessary to institute such a program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. COMSTOCK. 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. 4755, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise again to offer another bill, H.R. 4755, the INSPIRE Act. I am pleased to lead this effort along with the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, LAMAR SMITH and EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, as well as Congresswoman ESTY.

This bill authorizes the NASA Administrator to encourage young women to study science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, known as the STEM fields, and to pursue careers that will further advance America’s space science and exploration efforts through support of NASA initiatives, such as NASA GIRLS, Aspire 2 Inspire, and the Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research, SISTER.

The goal of NASA GIRLS is to create a virtual mentoring project that offers a one-of-a-kind experience to middle school students using online capabilities. I should mention there also is a NASA BOYS.

NASA’s vision for Aspire 2 Inspire was to reach out to young girls and present some of the science, technology, engineering, and math career opportunities through the real lives and jobs of early career women at NASA.

The SISTER program is designed to increase awareness of and provide an