

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.

#### KELSEY SMITH ACT

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4889) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require providers of a covered service to provide call location information concerning the telecommunications device of a user of such service to an investigative or law enforcement officer in an emergency situation involving risk of death or serious physical injury or in order to respond to the user's call for emergency services, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H. R. 4889

*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 "Kelsey Smith Act".*

#### SEC. 2. REQUIRED EMERGENCY DISCLOSURE OF CALL LOCATION INFORMATION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT.

*Section 222 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 222) is amended—*

*(1) in subsection (d)—*

*(A) in paragraph (4), by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (C) as clauses (i) through (iii), respectively;*

*(B) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (4) as subparagraphs (A) through (D), respectively;*

*(C) by striking "Nothing in this section" and inserting the following:*

*"(1) PERMITTED DISCLOSURES.—Nothing in this section"; and*

*(D) by adding at the end the following:*

*"(2) REQUIRED EMERGENCY DISCLOSURE OF CALL LOCATION INFORMATION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT.—Notwithstanding subsections (a), (b), and (c), at the request of an investigative or law enforcement officer, a provider of a covered service shall provide to such officer the call location information, or the best available location information, of a telecommunications device that is—*

*"(A) used to place a 9-1-1 call requesting emergency assistance; or*

*"(B) reasonably believed to be in the possession of an individual that the law enforcement officer reasonably believes is in an emergency situation that involves the risk of death or serious physical harm to the individual.*

*"(3) HOLD HARMLESS.—No cause of action shall lie in any court nor shall any civil or administrative proceeding be commenced by a governmental entity against any provider of a covered service, or its directors, officers, employees, agents, or vendors, for providing in good faith call location information or other information, facilities, or assistance in accordance with paragraph (2) and any regulations promulgated under such paragraph.";*

*(2) in subsection (f)(1), by striking "subsection (d)(4)" and inserting "subsection (d)(1)(D)"; and*

*(3) in subsection (h), by adding at the end the following:*

*"(6) COVERED SERVICE.—The term 'covered service' means—*

*"(A) a commercial mobile service (as defined in section 332); or*

*"(B) an IP-enabled voice service (as defined in section 7 of the Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act of 1999 (47 U.S.C. 615b)).*

*"(9) INVESTIGATIVE OR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—The term 'investigative or law enforcement officer' has the meaning given such term in section 2510 of title 18, United States Code.";*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Imagine that your child is missing. You know that she was abducted from a parking lot, but you don't know where she is now or how to find her. Grasping for any possible lead, you ask her cell phone carrier to provide the location—and just the location—of her cell phone, hoping that it will lead you to her, but you are told they don't release that information. So you wait. You rely on others to search for your child by foot and by air, never knowing if your child is alive or if your child is dead, safe, or in pain.

This nightmare came true for Missey and Greg Smith 9 years ago last week when their beloved daughter went missing outside Kansas City, Kansas. By all accounts, Kelsey Smith—pictured here—was a vibrant and joyful 18-year-old girl.

She was preparing to attend college in the fall where she planned to join in the marching band. Kelsey loved to sing. She was the third of five siblings. Tragically, her life was cut short when she was kidnapped from a Target parking lot in June of 2007 just 9 days after her high school graduation, a crime caught on the store's security cameras.

Her family and her friends spent 4 anguished days searching for her, knowing she was in danger but unable to find her. They used every method they could think of to help locate her, but the one tool that would eventually lead to finding her body was not accessible.

Kelsey's parents contacted her cell phone provider on the day she went missing and asked them to ping her cell phone in the hopes that it would assist them in their search. Despite repeated requests from the family and from law enforcement, it took 4 days before the Smiths were able to obtain the location data of Kelsey's cell phone—4 days, Mr. Speaker, nearly 100 hours of not knowing where their little girl had gone, where she had been taken, or if they would ever see her again. Yet, within 45 minutes of receiving that location data, when they finally got it, Kelsey's body was found. She was dead.

When her mother testified in front of the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, she spoke so bravely of the agony Kelsey's family endured during that time. She described their ordeal in painful detail. What does a parent go through when a child is missing? You do not eat because you do not know if your child is eating. You do not sleep because you wonder if your child is sleeping. It is, to quote Missey, "pure hell."

Missey and Greg Smith have made it their mission to prevent this type of tragedy from ever happening again. They began facilitating safety awareness seminars for parents and for students. They also began to push for legislation to address the very problem of obtaining timely cell phone location data—only location data, that is all we are talking about here—and only during life-threatening emergencies—just life-and-death situations and only locational data.

The legislation we are considering today, which is named in honor of their daughter, is a major step toward that goal. The Kelsey Smith Act requires cell phone providers to provide law enforcement with access to device location data in an emergency situation, when a victim is in danger of death or serious harm or when the device has been used to place a 911 emergency call requesting emergency assistance.

This changes current law. You see, current law already permits carriers to provide the data, but it does not require them to. This places an unreasonable burden on wireless providers to determine what constitutes an emergency and then live with the consequences of their decisions, which they now must do in the case of Kelsey Smith.

When time is of the essence, do you want a lawyer in corporate headquarters to agonize over the legal definition of an "emergency" or do you want the law enforcement officers, who dedicate their lives to keeping us safe, to make that call? I opt for those who can save lives.

To date, versions of the Kelsey Smith Act have been adopted in 23 States, but a patchwork of laws that protect some and leave others vulnerable is not good for the companies that must comply with this law or, more importantly, for the American lives that this law can and will save.

You see, Mr. Speaker, the committee believes we need a consistent Federal law that law enforcement across the country can use. Parents shouldn't have to forum-shop for the most favorable law when their children go missing. What if it were your child?

I have heard the privacy concerns that some say have been raised by this bill. We have worked diligently to make the bill as targeted as possible to balance legitimate privacy concerns with the importance of saving lives. By limiting the circumstances in which it can be used and, most importantly, by limiting the information that is available, we can ensure that it is only used

in cases in which it is absolutely necessary.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard from law enforcement officers across the country that, when people are in emergency situations, every second counts, and that delay can mean the difference between life and death. The Kelsey Smith Act takes the burden of decision-making away from cell phone providers and places it with law enforcement, who are trained specifically to make this kind of determination.

The Kelsey Smith Act has been successfully used in multiple States where it is already law. In fact, in Kansas, we have an infant here named Aubrey. Aubrey was innocently in her car seat in a car, in the backseat of the vehicle, when somebody carjacked the car while her parents were standing near it, just feet away.

Can you imagine? Her parents are right there, and somebody jumps in the car and drives off with it as you stand hopelessly, unable to do anything as their little daughter, Aubrey, was inside.

The local police department used the Kelsey Smith Act in Kansas to track the cell phone that was still in the car, and they were able to successfully recover the baby, Aubrey, who was unharmed, in about 30 minutes.

□ 1415

Officer Dan Friesen credited the safe recovery to the Kelsey Smith Act, saying that the "technology is very helpful to us and is made possible by the Kelsey Smith Law."

Thanks to Kelsey and Greg and Missey Smith, little Aubrey is safe in the arms of her family once again. In the words of her mother: "We are so happy to have Aubrey home with us and can't picture life without our baby girl." Because of the Kelsey Smith Act, they do not have to.

Mr. Speaker, this law goes beyond just kidnapping cases, however. The Kansas Sheriffs' Association told us it has also been used in cases of adults with dementia and missing people who are in danger due to lack of life-sustaining medication, severe weather, or other life-threatening circumstances.

I thank my friend from Kansas, Congressman KEVIN YODER. He has been tireless in his advocacy for this legislation. He first brought this bill to my attention last Congress and continued to push for its passage again this year. He has been an advocate for Kelsey and her family throughout the process, and this bill would not have advanced this far without Congressman YODER's work.

I also want to thank Greg and Missey Smith, who are in the gallery today, for their courage in the face of their tragedy. Because of their willingness to speak about their daughter and what happened to her, we are here today with the opportunity to prevent tragedies like this one that befell Kelsey Smith.

Now, I think it is important to note this legislation passed out of the sub-

committee after full hearings and through the full committee. In fact, it was voted unanimously out of the full committee. There were no voices of objection.

This Wednesday, May 25, is National Missing Children's Day. According to the FBI, in 2015, there were more than 460,000 reports of missing children made to law enforcement in the U.S. How many of these missing children carry a cell phone? Even if the Kelsey Smith Act leads to the recovery of only one of those missing children, isn't it worth it? As a parent, I can tell you that, for the families of missing children, it certainly is.

We have the opportunity to equip law enforcement with another tool to aid them in emergency situations, a tool that costs nothing and uses information that already exists. Let's seize this opportunity.

Now, I know there will be those who will argue that somehow we didn't go far enough in privacy. Well, guess what. My State of Oregon passed an almost identical bill, unanimously, and it is a very blue State, Mr. Speaker—full Democratic house, Democratic senate, Democratic Governor. Not a single member objected. That is what this version of the bill is based on.

Multiple other States have different reporting requirements for members of their law enforcement community. We honor what the States have done and can do. We don't take that away. We don't override that. They can go farther if they want in terms of what they want their State law enforcement officers to do or not do. We simply address the issue related to the telephone carriers and what they must do when called upon in life-and-death situations to save the lives of little girls like Aubrey and like Kelsey.

Let's honor Kelsey's memory by ensuring that her lasting legacy isn't the story of her death but, rather, the story of how she continued to make a difference to save lives.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in opposition to H.R. 4889.

I do want to say the Democrats continue to support the intention behind this bill. What happened to Kelsey Smith is clearly a tragedy that should not be allowed to happen again. Her family, who have advocated for these changes in the law, deserve our respect and are true heroes. But we cannot support this effort to force the bill through without including the commonsense consumer protections that resulted from strong bipartisan work in the last Congress.

In the 113th Congress, the Committee on Energy and Commerce passed a version of the Kelsey Smith Act, a version that included specific protections for consumers' privacy closer in line with what is required under the Fourth Amendment. The legislation was a negotiated outcome that carefully balanced the needs of law enforce-

ment on one hand with the rights of consumers and privacy concerns on the other hand. These protections would not have in any way slowed law enforcement's ability to find people in an emergency. They would simply have made sure that consumers are protected after a search takes place. This was a good deal. Unfortunately, the path taken in the current Congress was different.

This year's bill, the one that we are debating now, disregards the hard work that went into finding a bipartisan agreement on the Kelsey Smith Act in the last Congress. During markups in the Energy and Commerce Committee, Democrats offered amendments that would modify H.R. 4889 back to what was agreed to in the last Congress. It would have kept the requirement that carriers provide the requested information to law enforcement, but the amendment would have provided a simple consumer safeguard. It would have required that law enforcement seek a court order within 48 hours after it makes an emergency request. So it would in no way have stood in the way of an emergency request; it would have just required law enforcement to seek that court order after the emergency request.

Such modifications would address some of the concerns that have been raised regarding the potential abuse of H.R. 4889. It would not hamper law enforcement's ability to have quick access to lifesaving location data when they are presented with an emergency situation.

We recognize that Chairman WALDEN was concerned that he could not support last year's deal, the version from last Congress, because it was not completely consistent with the law in his home State. That is why our proposal added a provision to protect existing State laws. Unfortunately, our efforts were rebuffed.

We continue to stand ready to work together again, but I cannot support this bill in its current form without ensuring that additional protections are in place.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. YODER), the proponent of this legislation who brought it before us.

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Kelsey Ann Smith of Overland Park, Kansas. I rise today on behalf of Kelsey's Army, people all across the country who have put themselves in the shoes of Greg and Missey, who have also had children who have been abducted and understand that we need commonsense public safety laws like this on the books to ensure that we can save lives and ensure that these types of abductions and murders never happen again in our country without the ability to stop them as quickly as possible.

June 6, 2016, will mark 9 years since Kelsey Smith, an 18-year-old Shawnee

Mission West student, was kidnapped in broad daylight from a Target parking lot by a predator who would sexually assault and murder her soon after. I remember it like it was yesterday. We all, in Kansas and in my community, felt immediately associated with the grief and pain that Kelsey's parents were feeling. Parents worried about their own children. They understood what was happening, and they wanted to help.

So Kansans and people in my community helped search for Kelsey for days. As Chairman WALDEN so eloquently spoke in favor of this bill, it is an anguish to have your child be missing and you cannot do anything about it.

Kelsey's mother, Missey, says that when your child is missing, as a parent you don't eat and as a parent you don't sleep because you don't know if your child is eating or sleeping. I am a father of two little girls. I cannot imagine the pain and suffering Missey and her husband, Greg, who are with us here today, have endured from Kelsey's loss. No parent should have to.

So today we are going to hear different debates and arguments about how the bill could be changed or improved or differences could be made, but the reality is this law is not on the books in 28 States, and those children are not protected. We cannot, as a House, allow this to stand.

So I ask my colleagues to dig deep in their heart to think about putting themselves in their shoes and to not block this legislation, to let this legislation come forward. I promise you it is popular in your district. I promise you a majority of Americans will support this. Opposing this bill is simply wrong and shameful.

In the 9 years since Greg and Missey's daughter was taken from them, they have dealt with this unspeakable, horrific experience with grace and determination. Rather than falling into the depths of despair, like anyone could imagine them to do, they channeled their grief into the passion to help others who find themselves in Kelsey's situation. They traveled the United States fighting to pass State-level versions of the bill we are considering today, and they have done so with great success, with 23 States having passed a version of the Kelsey Smith Act.

Today, this body will have the chance to honor Kelsey's memory and Greg and Missey's tireless advocacy by bringing the law to all 50 States. In the words of Missey Smith, we have the rare opportunity to "save lives without it costing one cent."

The Kelsey Smith Act creates a narrow exception for law enforcement officers to gain access to limited call location information of an individual's cell phone in the event of an emergency, like a kidnapping. In those cases, every second counts.

Unfortunately, in Kelsey's case, it took 4 excruciating days for law enforcement to finally obtain the loca-

tion data from her cell provider. It took 4 days while an entire community searched for Kelsey with no success. It took 4 days because, under current law, providers are not required to provide location data. They are permitted to in an emergency situation, but it is up to their discretion.

So the question for this body is: Do you want to leave this up to a cell phone provider, for the lawyers and the executives there to decide, or do you want trained law enforcement making this decision based upon a reasonable belief of an exigent emergency circumstance?

It is analogous; I think we all would agree. I think the folks on the opposite side of the aisle would agree that there is certainly a Fourth Amendment right to protect your home and your dwelling, probably the greatest Fourth Amendment protection right of all. And yet, if an officer was driving by and saw an exigent circumstance, saw someone who was in jeopardy of physical harm or emergency, they have the ability to break into that home to save that life.

This information is even less secure. It is much more in the public domain. A cell phone provider already has the right to release it. We are saying that decision should be made by law enforcement.

What breaks my heart every time I recount Kelsey's story is, when finally her cell phone location information was handed over, police found Kelsey's body within 45 minutes. A search that floundered for 4 days could have ended in 45 minutes. We know for a fact, as Chairman WALDEN articulated, that other lives have already been saved in States that have adopted this law.

Mr. Speaker, a Federal framework is needed to save lives across the entire country, not just in a patchwork of States that have adopted this bill. It is up to this body to set that framework, which would be a ceiling for State legislatures to follow. If certain States feel that additional privacy protections, such as suggested by my colleagues across the aisle, must be put into place, they are well within their jurisdiction to do so.

I believe any concerns articulated by others are overblown in this situation. As someone who has spent my career in this body fighting for the privacy rights of Americans—we just passed the Email Privacy Act 419-0, and all of us supported that—and fought to modernize our Fourth Amendment rights with regard to email privacy, I feel comfortable in saying this bill strikes the right balance. It does not give you the information on the phone. It does not give you content. It does not give you anything other than the pings on the phone in the case of an emergency. It doesn't even give you GPS tracking. It does not infringe upon our constitutional rights. Any of us, as parents, would be thankful that we voted for this bill today, should something horrific happen in our lives.

Mr. Speaker, this body often debates the merits of protecting Americans from the threat of harm versus giving up certain civil liberties. In this case, we are blessed with modern technology that affords law enforcement with a tool to save lives without Americans giving up any of their privacy.

Now, I thank my predecessor, Representative Dennis Moore, and my former colleague, Todd Tiahrt of Kansas, who began this effort shortly after Kelsey's death. I also thank Representatives LYNN JENKINS, MIKE POMPEO of Kansas, and my colleague from across the aisle, EMANUEL CLEAVER of Missouri, who have worked with me in this fight. I also thank Chairman UPTON and Chairman WALDEN for working swiftly over the last month to move this important legislation forward.

Most of all, I would like to thank the two most important people in this room, who advocated for this bill day after day, Greg and Missey Smith. But for their support and guidance, for their ability to share their tragedy with the world and channel it into goodness, for being here today and throughout the entire legislative process as we moved this bill forward, this movement would not be possible. So God bless you, Greg and Missey, and God bless Kelsey.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill's passage today. I strongly urge the Senate to waste no time in following suit. Let's send Kelsey's law to the President's desk this year for his signature so we can do something truly meaningful in a bipartisan way and so we can save lives.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, let me say again that Democrats strongly support the intention behind this bill, but we cannot support it as it is currently drafted. We believe that we can do better.

I urge Members to vote "no" on H.R. 4889.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I am, of course, disappointed that the Democrats cannot support this in its present form.

The bill that we worked on last year, by the way, never made it to the House floor, and this one did.

□ 1430

The time is now to act. The time is now to help families find abducted children, parents suffering from dementia who are carrying the device and need help saving their lives.

This is very narrowly written. As my colleague from Kansas (Mr. YODER) said: Read the bill.

We have. It is very narrowly written. Location, emergency only, life and death. You dialed 911 seeking help. States still have the ability to talk about all these other provisions they may want. We do not preclude that. We honor the right of States, local legislatures to come and add restrictions if they want to do that for post-action reporting, subpoenas, whatever they want to do.

But in the meantime, can't we just save lives? Can't we just pass something that gives certainty to the telecommunications providers that when they get that law enforcement call, they have to provide that data of simply the location when everybody agrees that somebody's life is in the balance?

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4889, as amended.

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. SARBANES. 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.

#### KARI'S LAW ACT OF 2016

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4167) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require multi-line telephone systems to have a default configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call to 9-1-1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4167

*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 "Kari's Law Act of 2016".

#### SEC. 2. CONFIGURATION OF MULTI-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEMS FOR DIRECT DIALING OF 9-1-1.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

#### "SEC. 721. CONFIGURATION OF MULTI-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEMS FOR DIRECT DIALING OF 9-1-1.

"(a) SYSTEM MANUFACTURE, IMPORTATION, SALE, AND LEASE.—A person engaged in the business of manufacturing, importing, selling, or leasing multi-line telephone systems may not manufacture or import for use in the United States, or sell or lease or offer to sell or lease in the United States, a multi-line telephone system, unless such system is pre-configured such that, when properly installed in accordance with subsection (b), a user may directly initiate a call to 9-1-1 from any station equipped with dialing facilities, without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, including any trunk-access code such as the digit '9', regardless of whether the user is required to dial such a digit, code, prefix, or post-fix for other calls.

"(b) SYSTEM INSTALLATION, MANAGEMENT, AND OPERATION.—A person engaged in the business of installing, managing, or operating multi-line telephone systems may not

install, manage, or operate for use in the United States such a system, unless such system is configured such that a user may directly initiate a call to 9-1-1 from any station equipped with dialing facilities, without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, including any trunk-access code such as the digit '9', regardless of whether the user is required to dial such a digit, code, prefix, or post-fix for other calls.

"(c) ON-SITE NOTIFICATION.—A person engaged in the business of installing, managing, or operating multi-line telephone systems shall, in installing, managing, or operating such a system for use in the United States, configure the system to provide a notification to a central location at the facility where the system is installed or to another person or organization regardless of location, if the system is able to be configured to provide the notification without an improvement to the hardware or software of the system.

"(d) EFFECT ON STATE LAW.—Nothing in this section is intended to alter the authority of State commissions or other State or local agencies with jurisdiction over emergency communications, if the exercise of such authority is not inconsistent with this Act.

"(e) ENFORCEMENT.—This section shall be enforced under title V, except that section 501 applies only to the extent that such section provides for the punishment of a fine.

"(f) MULTI-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'multi-line telephone system' has the meaning given such term in section 6502 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1471)."

#### (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), section 721 of the Communications Act of 1934, as added by subsection (a) of this section, shall apply beginning on the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (b) or (c) of such section 721 shall not apply to a multi-line telephone system that was installed before the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act if such system is not able to be configured to meet the requirement of such subsection (b) or (c), respectively, without an improvement to the hardware or software of the system.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALDEN. 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 Oregon?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4167, the Kari's Law Act of 2016.

Mr. Speaker, when I first heard of the tragic story of Kari Hunt, I was in disbelief. In his testimony before the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, Kari's father, Hank, shared with us the way that his daughter

was killed—stabbed by her estranged husband in a Texas hotel room while their children were in the room.

While that story is obviously horrifying enough, especially as a parent, my true shock came from the next part of the story. Kari's 9-year-old daughter, doing as she had been taught from an early age, had repeatedly tried to dial 911 from the hotel phone to get emergency help. Repeatedly her little fingers pushed the buttons 9-1-1, but because the phone required another 9 to get an outside line, she was never able to reach the emergency assistance her mother so desperately needed and she so desperately tried to access.

What her grandfather, Hank Hunt, told me next will stay with me forever. He said that as he sat with his granddaughter in the lobby of the police department just hours after the death of his daughter, his granddaughter looked at him and said: "I tried 4 times, Papa, but it didn't work." "I tried 4 times, Papa, but it didn't work."

Through this tragedy we learned the difficult truth that many multiline telephone systems, like the kinds often found in hotels and offices and universities, require that users dial an additional digit to use an outside line, even when they are trying to call 911.

Mr. Speaker, this is simply unacceptable. In the heat of an emergency, every person in America deserves the peace of mind to know that on any phone 911 actually means 911, period.

We teach our children from a very young age what to do in an emergency: dial 911. We all hope that they will never need to use that knowledge, but we want them to know what to do. I don't know too many parents who also teach their kids to think about dialing 9 or 8 or some other number to get an outside line.

H.R. 4167, known as Kari's Law, seeks to remedy this problem. The legislation requires multiline telephone systems to be configured so that dialing 911 directly connects to public safety. In addition, the law requires that a central point of contact for each system be notified when someone calls for emergency assistance, a provision intended to help emergency responders access buildings and actually locate the emergency caller.

Now, these fixes are simple changes to the system in most cases, costing little, if any, money, and taking very little time, but apparently without a legal requirement, there is no way to guarantee that every MLTS will be configured for dialing 911 directly. Some businesses, including many hotels, have taken steps to fix this problem already, and I applaud them for doing so voluntarily, but there needs to be consistency across our great land, Mr. Speaker. If you are a traveler staying in a hotel, you shouldn't have to wonder during an emergency whether you are in one of the States or counties that have adopted Kari's Law when the time comes for emergency help. We need a Federal law to provide certainty