

each year, but consistent teaching by quality instructors will ensure our skies remain safe.

I appreciate the leadership of Chairman CHAFFETZ and Ranking Member CUMMINGS, in giving this legislation timely and supportive consideration, as well as my Democratic cosponsors, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia and Mr. LYNCH of Massachusetts, and the bipartisan supporters who recognize the importance of this matter.

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

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

I rise in support of H.R. 5785, and I thank Congressman RUSSELL for his leadership on this measure.

H.R. 5785 would help ease the difficulty that the Federal Aviation Administration currently has in hiring air traffic controller instructors. The bill would eliminate the Social Security earnings cap for the FAA air traffic controller instructors who are receiving pension supplements. The cap is, currently, \$15,720 per year. This cap has made it hard for the FAA Academy to hire full-time instructors because retired air traffic controllers do not want to lose their annuity supplements.

The FAA has a critical shortage of air traffic controllers, and it is vital that we help ensure that the FAA is able to recruit enough qualified instructors to train controllers. This legislation is narrowly tailored to address a matter that would have significant effects on public safety, so I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

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

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia for her kind support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5785.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. HUELSKAMP. 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.

GAO ACCESS AND OVERSIGHT ACT OF 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5690) to ensure the Government Accountability Office has adequate access to information.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5690

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 “GAO Access and Oversight Act of 2016”.

SEC. 2. ACCESS TO CERTAIN INFORMATION.

(a) ACCESS TO CERTAIN INFORMATION.—Subchapter II of chapter 7 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 721. Access to certain information

“(a) No provision of the Social Security Act, including section 453(1) of that Act (42 U.S.C. 653(1)), shall be construed to limit, amend, or supersede the authority of the Comptroller General to obtain any information or to inspect any record under section 716 of this title.

“(b) The specific reference to a statute in subsection (a) shall not be construed to affect access by the Government Accountability Office to information under statutes that are not so referenced.”.

(b) AGENCY REPORTS.—Section 720(b) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “or planned” after “action taken”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, the congressional committees with jurisdiction over the agency program or activity that is the subject of the recommendation, and the Government Accountability Office before the 61st day after the date of the report; and”.

(c) AUTHORITY TO OBTAIN RECORDS.—Section 716 of title 31, United States Code, is amended in subsection (a)—

(1) by striking “(a)” and inserting “(2)”; and

(2) by inserting after the section heading the following:

“(a)(1) The Comptroller General is authorized to obtain such agency records as the Comptroller General requires to discharge the duties of the Comptroller General (including audit, evaluation, and investigative duties), including through the bringing of civil actions under this section. In reviewing a civil action under this section, the court shall recognize the continuing force and effect of the authorization in the preceding sentence until such time as the authorization is repealed pursuant to law.”.

(d) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 7 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 720 the following:

“721. Access to certain information.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 5690, the GAO Access and Oversight Act.

As stewards of the Federal Government, we have a duty to make sure that taxpayer money is spent appropriately. We also have a duty to make sure our watchdogs have the tools that are necessary to combat waste, fraud, and abuse, especially the Government Accountability Office.

The GAO has a proven track record of excellence. In the past 6 years alone, it has identified over 200 areas of duplication, overlap, or fragmentation and has recommended more than 600 corrective actions; however, Congress needs to ensure the GAO has the access necessary to carry out the work we ask of it.

Today, we have the opportunity to better arm the GAO by clarifying that it does, indeed, have inherent access to data contained in the National Directory of New Hires. In doing so, we will help the GAO to better investigate potential fraud and improper payments, including those in the disability insurance program. The GAO's objectives are hindered without access to this data, and taxpayer dollars are not as well protected against waste, fraud, and abuse.

The language in this bill has been included in bipartisan legislation that was approved unanimously by the full House last Congress. To ensure the GAO has all of the information it needs to perform its critical role for Congress, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5690.

I also thank Senator SASSE for his work on this bill in the Senate.

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

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

I thank the gentleman from Georgia for bringing this bill forward.

Mr. Speaker, the GAO provides invaluable aid to Congress in conducting our constitutional duty to oversee and evaluate the executive branch. To do its job effectively, the GAO needs timely access to agencies' documents, materials, and other information.

The bill before us would ensure the GAO's access to the National Directory of New Hires, a valuable database of wage and employment information. Access to this database would assist the GAO in its improper payment and fraud work as well as in evaluating programs in which eligibility is being means tested. The bill would also explicitly provide the GAO with standing to pursue litigation if an entity in the executive branch improperly denies the GAO access to information.

Mr. Speaker, similar bills have passed the House by wide margins in a number of previous Congresses. These are needed reforms, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5690.

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. HUELSKAMP. 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.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA JUDICIAL FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY ACT

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4419) to update the financial disclosure requirements for judges of the District of Columbia courts, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4419

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 “District of Columbia Judicial Financial Transparency Act”.

SEC. 2. FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR JUDGES OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS.

(a) REQUIREMENTS DESCRIBED.—Section 11-1530, D.C. Official Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 11-1530. Financial statements

“(a) Pursuant to such rules as the Commission shall promulgate, each judge of the District of Columbia courts shall, within one year following the date of enactment of the District of Columbia Court Reorganization Act of 1970 and at least annually thereafter, file with the Commission a report containing the following information:

“(1)(A) The source, type and amount of the judge’s income which exceeds \$200 (other than income from the United States government and income referred to in subparagraph (C)) for the period covered by the report.

“(B) The source and type of the judge’s spouse’s income which exceeds \$1,000 (other than income from the United States government and income referred to in subparagraph (C)) for the period covered by the report.

“(C) The source and type of income which consists of dividends, rents, interest, and capital gains received by the judge and the judge’s spouse during such period which exceeds \$200 in amount or value, and an indication of which of the following categories the amount or value of such item of income is within—

“(i) not more than \$1,000,

“(ii) greater than \$1,000 but not more than \$2,500,

“(iii) greater than \$2,500 but not more than \$5,000,

“(iv) greater than \$5,000 but not more than \$15,000,

“(v) greater than \$15,000 but not more than \$50,000,

“(vi) greater than \$50,000 but not more than \$100,000,

“(vii) greater than \$100,000 but not more than \$1,000,000,

“(viii) greater than \$1,000,000 but not more than \$5,000,000, or

“(ix) greater than \$5,000,000.

“(2) The name and address of each private foundation or eleemosynary institution, and of each business or professional corporation, firm, or enterprise in which the judge was an officer, director, proprietor, or partner during such period.

“(3) The identity and category of value (as set forth in subsection (b)) of each liability of \$10,000 or more owed by the judge or by the judge and the judge’s spouse jointly at any time during such period.

“(4) The source and value of all gifts in the aggregate amount or value of \$250 or more from any single source received by the judge during such period, except gifts from the judge’s spouse or any of the judge’s children or parents.

“(5) The identity of each trust in which the judge held a beneficial interest having a value of \$10,000 or more at any time during such period, and in the case of any trust in which the judge held any beneficial interest during such period, the identity, if known, of each interest in real or personal property in which the trust held a beneficial interest having a value of \$10,000 or more at any time during such period. If the judge cannot obtain the identity of the trust interest, the judge shall request the trustee to report that information to the Commission.

“(6) The identity and category of value (as set forth in subsection (b)) of each interest in real or personal property having a value of \$10,000 or more which the judge owned at any time during such period.

“(7) The amount or value and source of each honorarium of \$250 or more received by the judge and the judge’s spouse during such period.

“(8) The source and amount of all money, other than that received from the United States government, received in the form of an expense account or as reimbursement for expenditures from any source aggregating more than \$250 during such period.

“(9) The source and amount of all waivers or partial waivers of fees or charges accepted by the judge on behalf of the judge or the judge’s spouse, domestic partner, or guest during such period.

“(b) For purposes of paragraphs (3) and (6) of subsection (a), the categories of value set forth in this subsection are—

“(1) not more than \$15,000;

“(2) greater than \$15,000 but not more than \$50,000;

“(3) greater than \$50,000 but not more than \$100,000;

“(4) greater than \$100,000 but not more than \$250,000;

“(5) greater than \$250,000 but not more than \$500,000;

“(6) greater than \$500,000 but not more than \$1,000,000;

“(7) greater than \$1,000,000 but not more than \$5,000,000;

“(8) greater than \$5,000,000 but not more than \$25,000,000;

“(9) greater than \$25,000,000 but not more than \$50,000,000; and

“(10) greater than \$50,000,000.

“(c)(1) Reports filed pursuant to this section shall, upon written request, and notice to the reporting judge for purposes of making an application to the Commission for a redaction pursuant to paragraph (2), be made available for public inspection and copying within a reasonable time after filing and during the period they are kept by the Commission (in accordance with rules promulgated by the Commission), and shall be kept by the Commission for not less than three years.

“(2) This section does not require the public availability of reports filed by a judge if upon application by the reporting judge, a finding is made by the Commission that revealing personal and sensitive information

could endanger that judge or a family member of that judge, except that a report may be redacted pursuant to this paragraph only—

“(A) to the extent necessary to protect the individual who filed the report or a family member of that individual; and

“(B) for as long as the danger to such individual exists.

“(d) The intentional failure by a judge of a District of Columbia court to file a report required by this section, or the filing of a fraudulent report, shall constitute willful misconduct in office and shall be grounds for removal from office under section 11-1526(a)(2).”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to reports filed under section 11-1530, D.C. Official Code, that cover periods beginning during or after 2016.

SEC. 3. AUTHORITY OF PROBATE DIVISION TO USE MAGISTRATE JUDGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 11-1732(j)(5), District of Columbia Official Code, is amended by striking “Family Divisions” and inserting “Probate Divisions, and the Family Court.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 11-1732(j)(4)(A), District of Columbia Official Code, is amended by striking “Family Division” and inserting “Family Court”.

SEC. 4. AUTHORITY OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS TO ACCEPT CERTAIN TYPES OF PAYMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 17 of title 11, District of Columbia Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 11-1748. Authority of courts to accept certain types of payments

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the term ‘electronic funds transfer’—

“(1) means a transfer of funds, other than a transaction by check, draft, or similar paper instrument, that is initiated through an electronic terminal, telephone, or computer or magnetic tape for the purpose of ordering, instructing, or authorizing a financial institution to debit or credit an account; and

“(2) includes point of sale transfers, automated teller machine transfers, direct deposit or withdrawal of funds, transfers initiated by telephone, and transfers resulting from debit card transactions.

“(b) AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS AND ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFERS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The District of Columbia courts may accept payment of fines, fees, escrow payments, restitution, bonds, and other payments to the courts by credit card or electronic funds transfer.

“(2) USE OF VENDORS AND THIRD PARTY PROVIDERS.—The Executive officer—

“(A) may contract with a bank or credit card vendor, or other third party provider, for purposes of accepting payments by credit card or electronic funds transfer; and

“(B) shall make every effort to find the lowest cost vendor for purposes of accepting such payments.

“(3) RESPONSIBILITY FOR PAYING FEES.—Under any contract entered into under paragraph (2), the person making the payment shall be responsible for covering any fee or charge associated or imposed with respect to the method of payment.

“(4) COMPLETION OF PAYMENT.—If a person elects to make a payment to the District of Columbia courts by a method authorized under paragraph (1), the payment shall not be deemed to be made until the courts receive the funds.

“(c) AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT CHECKS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The District of Columbia courts may accept payment of fines, fees, escrow payments, restitution, bonds, and other payments to the courts by check.

“(2) USE OF CHECK GUARANTEE VENDOR.—The Executive Officer—