

extensive public review since the 9/11 Commission of U.S. efforts to fight foreign terrorist travel. We made 32 key findings and more than 50 recommendations in that report for enhancing our security. I am proud to say that, as of today, we have acted on almost half of those already, including with several of the bills we are considering today.

H.R. 4408 would implement one of our top recommendations. It would require the President to send to Congress a National Strategy to Combat Terrorist Travel and an actionable plan to implement it.

It has been nearly 10 years since the White House produced such a strategy, and since then, the threat has changed dramatically. Terror has gone viral, and violent extremists are recruiting at the speed of a re-tweet.

The consequences for U.S. and international security have been enormous. We have seen terrorist groups balloon into terrorist microstates capable of fielding their own armies. In fact, today in Syria and Iraq, we are witnessing the largest convergence of Islamist terrorists in history.

Reports indicate nearly 40,000 individuals from more than 120 countries have traveled there to join jihadist groups, including thousands from Western countries, like the United States. Many of these individuals have easy access to our country and could potentially return undetected to launch attacks, just as we saw happen in Paris.

Yet, many of the counterterrorism programs we created after 9/11 are not suited for this new era and have not kept pace with the evolving threat. What is worse, there is no regular process in place in the executive branch for reviewing all of our defenses against terrorist travel to find security gaps and develop a plan to close them.

Agencies are operating without clear, strategic guidance, and programs to counter terrorist travel are often not fully coordinated across the government spectrum. The result is that not only are we at greater risk that terrorists will slip through the cracks, but we also are at greater risk of government waste, overlap, and duplication.

This bill would force the administration to assess all of the efforts in place to stop terrorists from crossing borders, streamline them, identify security gaps, and prioritize taxpayer dollars where they are needed most. It would also, for the first time ever, require the White House to produce a plan for intercepting foreign fighters.

After 9/11, we spent a lot of time focused on keeping terrorists from getting into our country, but we did not spend enough time focused on stopping terrorists from recruiting our citizens to leave it and become overseas operatives. Once they travel to terrorist safe havens, these individuals become a triple threat. They strengthen jihadist groups on the ground, incite followers back home to conduct attacks, and can return battle-hardened

and prepared to carry out their own acts of violence on their homeland.

Make no mistake: we are at war. ISIS has already been linked to nearly 75 plots against the West, including more than 20 against the U.S. homeland. Our adversaries are clearly dead set on attacking this country. We need to show the American people that we are dead set on defending it.

I am proud of the bipartisan work of the task force and grateful for the close collaboration of Mr. KEATING, Mr. PAYNE, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California on the Democratic side. I would like to especially thank Mr. VELA for his continued support and significant contributions. I am, of course, indebted to my Republican colleagues on the task force for their hard work as well. I also want to thank my personal office assistant Tim Wang and committee staff Tyler Lowe and Katy Flynn for their excellent work on this as well.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4408, the National Strategy to Combat Terrorist Travel Act of 2016.

H.R. 4408 requires the development of a national strategy to combat terrorist travel by bolstering efforts to intercept terrorists and foreign fighters, while also constraining their domestic and international travel.

I applaud the work of the Committee on Homeland Security's Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel.

One of the many findings of the task force's final report was that it has been a decade since the executive branch produced a government-wide plan to constrain terrorist travel. In the years since the issuance of the last government-wide plan in 2006, many programs aimed at restricting or preventing terrorist travel have changed or ended and new programs have been created.

The task force found that hundreds of programs, projects, and initiatives have sprouted up to combat terrorist travel since 9/11, but there is no overarching strategy to coordinate them. Importantly, H.R. 4408 requires that the strategy include an updated, full accounting and description of America's terror travel preventative and protective measures. This accounting should provide a valuable baseline for future efforts to prevent terrorist travel.

H.R. 4408 requires the President to submit to Congress a national strategy focused on disrupting and intercepting terrorists and foreign fighters. The strategy is to include an accounting of all U.S. Government programs to constrain terrorist travel, identify gaps and how they will be closed, and describe actions to eliminate waste, overlap, and duplication of efforts.

The evolving nature of the terrorist threat demands a whole-of-government approach. A national strategy with implementation plans for each Federal agency involved, as H.R. 4408 requires, has the potential to deliver real security advances. As such, I support H.R. 4408, and I urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, H.R. 4408.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4408, 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. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, on that, I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DHS ACQUISITION DOCUMENTATION INTEGRITY ACT OF 2016

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4398) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for requirements relating to documentation for major acquisition programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4398

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 "DHS Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY ACQUISITION DOCUMENTATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following: "**SEC. 708. ACQUISITION DOCUMENTATION.**

"(a) IN GENERAL.—For each major acquisition program, the Secretary, acting through the Under Secretary for Management, shall require the head of a relevant component or office to—

"(1) maintain acquisition documentation that is complete, accurate, timely, and valid and that includes, at a minimum—

"(A) operational requirements that are validated consistent with Departmental policy and changes to those requirements, as appropriate;

"(B) a complete lifecycle cost estimate with supporting documentation;

"(C) verification of the lifecycle cost estimate against independent cost estimates, and reconciliation of any differences;

"(D) a cost-benefit analysis with supporting documentation; and

"(E) a schedule, including, as appropriate, an integrated master schedule;

"(2) prepare cost estimates and schedules for major acquisition programs, as required

under subparagraphs (B) and (E), in a manner consistent with best practices as identified by the Comptroller General of the United States; and

“(3) submit certain acquisition documentation to the Secretary to produce an annual comprehensive report on the status of departmental acquisitions for submission to Congress.

“(b) WAIVER.—On a case-by-case basis, the Secretary may waive the requirement under paragraph (3) of subsection (a) for a fiscal year if either—

“(1) the program has not—

“(A) entered the full rate production phase in the acquisition lifecycle;

“(B) had a reasonable cost estimate established; and

“(C) had a system configuration defined fully; or

“(2) the program does not meet the definition of capital asset, as such term is defined by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(c) CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT.—At the same time the President’s budget is submitted for a fiscal year under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, the Secretary shall make information available, as applicable, to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate information on the requirement under subsection (a) in the prior fiscal year that includes the following specific information regarding each program for which the Secretary has issued a waiver under subsection (b):

“(1) The grounds for granting a waiver for that program.

“(2) The projected cost of that program.

“(3) The proportion of a component’s or office’s annual acquisition budget attributed to that program, as available.

“(4) Information on the significance of the program with respect to the component’s operations and execution of its mission.

“(d) MAJOR ACQUISITION PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘major acquisition program’ means a Department acquisition program that is estimated by the Secretary to require an eventual total expenditure of at least \$300,000,000 (based on fiscal year 2016 constant dollars) over its lifecycle cost.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.) is amended by adding after the item related to section 707 the following new item:

“Sec. 708. Acquisition documentation.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4398, the Department of Homeland Security Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act.

This legislation requires the Department of Homeland Security to improve

management of its major purchases of systems to secure the border, better screen travelers, protect our shores, and other vital missions.

Too often DHS has failed to document what these programs will cost, when they will be complete, and what they will deliver. It is unacceptable to spend billions of taxpayer dollars and not document this important information. H.R. 4398 will help our committee and congressional watchdogs hold the Department accountable, and ensure taxpayers dollars are being spent in an efficient and effective manner.

This bill uses language similar to H.R. 3572, the DHS Headquarters Reform and Improvement Act, which also includes language that would comprehensively reform DHS’ acquisition process. H.R. 3572 passed the House unanimously in October of last year, but has yet to be acted upon in the Senate.

This important, bipartisan legislation will improve the oversight and management of billions of taxpayer dollars. It would empower DHS leaders to hold programs accountable, increase transparency for Congress, and require DHS to articulate a roadmap for how it spends billion of dollars to secure America.

Safeguarding Americans’ hard-earned taxpayer dollars is why our constituents sent us to Washington. I urge the Senate to act swiftly on these bills to improve the management of the Department of Homeland Security.

I commend Ranking Member WATSON COLEMAN for her leadership on this issue, and I ask all Members to join me in support of this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4398, the DHS Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act of 2016. I introduced this legislation to ensure that, when it comes to managing acquisitions, the Department of Homeland Security gets the fundamentals right.

H.R. 4398 would require “complete, accurate, timely, and valid” documentation to be maintained for each of the Department’s major acquisition programs. A major acquisition program is defined as one with a life-cycle cost estimated at \$300 million or more.

Later this week, the subcommittee on which I serve as ranking member will be conducting an oversight hearing about an acquisition that is, to my mind, a textbook case of why my legislation is so critical.

After more than 12 years of effort at delivering a Department-wide human resource IT system and the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars, DHS has virtually nothing to show for it.

□ 1630

That acquisition, the Human Resource Information Technology program, or HRIT, lacked basic acquisition documentation, including a valid cost estimate and schedule.

Under H.R. 4398, DHS would have to maintain current cost estimates and schedules for major acquisition programs. These sources of critical information for acquisition decisionmakers would have to conform to best practices, as identified by the Government Accountability Office.

Additionally, each component head within DHS would be obligated to submit acquisition documentation to the Secretary for the production of an annual comprehensive report to Congress on the status of the acquisition. Under H.R. 4398, the Secretary could only waive these requirements in very limited circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, for the reasons I have outlined here, I urge support for H.R. 4398.

Mr. Speaker, anything less than an up-to-date acquisition documentation increases the odds of cost and schedule overruns. It also risks delayed delivery of critical capabilities and wastefully depletes resources that could be put to better use to protect the homeland.

The Homeland Security Committee favorably reported H.R. 4398 on February 2 by a unanimous vote, and I thank my colleague for being a part of that.

The fact that this legislation is cosponsored by Representatives MCCAUL and THOMPSON, the chairman and ranking member of our committee, reflects a strong commitment to bolstering the effectiveness of DHS acquisition programs.

I urge passage of H.R. 4398, a bill that will help ensure that DHS is a good steward of taxpayer dollars and can provide DHS operators in the field with the tools they need to protect the American people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4398.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4398, “DHS Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act of 2016.”

I support this bill because it requires the DHS to produce cost estimates and schedules for all major acquisition programs and to maintain complete and accurate documentation of these programs.

Specifically, for all programs expected to cost \$300 million or more over its lifecycle, the department must maintain complete, accurate, timely and valid acquisition documentation.

This bill will set a standard for all programs under DHS to follow and will save programs money and time.

Government Accountability Office (GAO) reviewed 22 major programs in DHS and out of 22 major programs:

1. GAO was unable to access six programs (including four in Customs and Border Protection).

2. The remaining 14 programs experienced schedule slips and cost growths.

On average, these program milestones slipped more than three and a half year, and their life-cycle cost estimates increased by \$9.7 billion, or 18 percent.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I believe this act will maintain a standard across the board for programs to follow the Government Accountability Office's (GAO's) best practices.

The Department of Homeland Security is constantly changing to fit the needs of our ever-changing world and there is a need of transparency between the DHS and GAO.

This bill further requires that cost estimates and schedules for major acquisition programs be consistent with best practices as identified by GAO.

Finally this bill limits the Secretary's authority to waive acquisition documentation requirements for a report to Congress on the status of major acquisition programs.

This sets forth narrow conditions where waivers could be granted for a fiscal year, and requiring the Secretary to report annually to the Congressional homeland-security committees on each use of waiver authority during the preceding fiscal year.

This bill creates an accountability model for the DHS which creates transparency between GAO and DHS and saves programs time and money, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4398.

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.

FOREIGN FIGHTER REVIEW ACT OF 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4402) to require a review of information regarding persons who have traveled or attempted to travel from the United States to support terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4402

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 "Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF CERTAIN FOREIGN FIGHTERS.

(a) REVIEW.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President, acting through the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall initiate a review of known instances since 2011 in which a person has traveled or attempted to travel to a conflict zone in Iraq or Syria from the United States to join or provide material support or resources to a terrorist organization. Such review shall—

(1) include relevant unclassified and classified information held by the United States Government related to each instance;

(2) ascertain which factors, including operational issues, security vulnerabilities, systemic challenges, or other issues that may have undermined efforts to prevent the travel of such persons to a conflict zone in Iraq

or Syria from the United States, including the timely identification of suspects, information sharing, intervention, and interdiction; and

(3) identify lessons learned and areas for improvement to prevent additional travel by such persons to a conflict zone in Iraq or Syria, or other terrorist safe havens abroad, to join or provide material support or resources to a terrorist organization.

(b) INFORMATION SHARING.—If necessary, the President shall direct the heads of relevant Federal agencies to provide the appropriate information necessary for the Secretary of Homeland Security to complete the review required under subsection (a).

(c) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall, consistent with the protection of classified information, submit to the appropriate congressional committees the results of the review required under subsection (a), which may include information on travel routes of greatest concern.

(d) PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) in the House of Representatives—

(i) the Committee on Homeland Security; (ii) the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence;

(iii) the Committee on the Judiciary; (iv) the Committee on Armed Services; (v) the Committee on Foreign Affairs; (vi) the Committee on Financial Services; and

(vii) the Committee on Appropriations; and (B) in the Senate—

(i) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; (ii) the Select Committee on Intelligence;

(iii) the Committee on the Judiciary; (iv) the Committee on Armed Services; (v) the Committee on Foreign Relations; (vi) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; and

(vii) the Committee on Appropriations.

(2) MATERIAL SUPPORT OR RESOURCES.—The term "material support or resources" has the meaning given such term in section 2339A of title 18, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD) and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, there have been over 250 cases of Americans attempting to travel to Syria and Iraq in order to support terrorist groups since 2011. Overall, 85 percent of Westerners attempting to join groups like ISIS are succeeding without being apprehended by law enforcement officials.

The ability to make it to a war zone has grave consequences. Those who have been radicalized gain firsthand knowledge and training, making them an even greater threat.

There is a clear breakdown in our ability to identify and then prevent these individuals from leaving the country in the first place. That is why I introduced the Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016.

The bill requires the Department of Homeland Security to study and identify all known foreign fighter travel in an effort to highlight the specific challenges and impediments that law enforcement faces in its attempts to stop individuals from joining terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria.

DHS should already be collecting this kind of data and conducting this type of analysis. The findings from this type of study are crucial to informing Congress on additional steps we can take to improve the security of our Nation. This was a key finding in the bipartisan Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel, of which I was a member.

It is imperative that we get the right information to the right people at the right time to catch those who have been radicalized before they leave the country, not after they have gained combat experience and returned to the homeland. The Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016 is the first step towards getting our law enforcement agencies the tools that they need to do just that.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4402, the Foreign Fighter Review Act of 2016.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4402 requires the President, through the Department of Homeland Security, to review information regarding persons who have traveled or attempted to travel from the United States to Syria and Iraq since 2011 to support terrorist organizations. This legislation reflects a recommendation issued by the Committee on Homeland Security's Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel in its final report.

The report found that a large number of U.S. persons have been able to travel to dangerous terrorist safe havens in Iraq and Syria and return to the United States without interdiction. I believe there is a lot to be learned from the instances where we failed to interdict persons who traveled to terrorist safe havens. These "lessons learned" could reveal systematic weaknesses in our security programs and highlight areas for enhancements.

While many Federal agencies have completed individual reviews of cases within their purview, a coordinated and comprehensive interagency after-action review has never been undertaken. H.R. 4402 would require just such a review.