

Images of the South Park Street properties are inextricably associated with the 1957 events. As images of the Little Rock Nine, crowds of protesters, the public, and the National Guardsmen appeared in newspapers across the Nation and were broadcast live through the emerging media of television, the neighborhood became as recognizable as the high school itself.

Because South Park Street in front of Central High School retains a high degree of historical integrity, this legislation would provide a unique opportunity to preserve a setting that will allow visitors to more accurately visualize the events that occurred there in 1957 when the Little Rock Nine attempted to attend Central High School.

In 1996, the surrounding neighborhood, including these seven privately owned homes, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Central High School Neighborhood Historic District. The designation recognized the neighborhood's association with the significant events of 1957 as well as the architectural characteristics and qualities that remain relatively unchanged from that period.

All the property owners and several community members have expressed their support for this proposal, including Central High Neighborhood, Inc., and Preserve Arkansas.

As we move forward in these turbulent times, it is important that we do not forget the struggles of the Little Rock Nine and the neighborhood that moved America forward towards an integrated education system.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, to me, is an extremely important bill. Sixty years ago, during this month, nine extraordinary students attended Little Rock, Arkansas' Central High School. They were kids picked for their academic ability and their maturity level because they were going to go through a year that no one had seen before and, hopefully, will ever see again.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps because I taught high school for almost 30 years, I understand the environment that took place here, and I have a great deal of empathy for these nine kids who went there. They could have easily been my students.

This becomes a significant concept that on September 4, 60 years ago, the Governor of Arkansas ordered the National Guard to bar these nine kids from entrance into Central High School in Little Rock; then, after some pressure, he withdrew the protection so the kids were subject to the mobs and the violence that took place there at that time.

On September 25, 60 years ago, Dwight Eisenhower had the courage and leadership—one of the reasons I respect him so much as a President—to

order the Army 101st Airborne Division to go down to Little Rock to Central High School and to escort these nine kids through that first year and lead them to a school year like no other has ever been.

This situation was, in my estimation, a pivotal moment in our Nation's civil rights history as well as our education history. We have often talked about how buildings and monuments are used to interpret history. That is exactly what Mr. HILL is attempting to do here with a significant site in America's history, to make sure that it is preserved—and not just the high school itself, but the seven residences that are across the street on South Park Street. Those residences there are part of the historical landmark which was made and designated in the Reagan administration. They are part of the designation on the National Register of Historic Places.

Finally, in 1998, the high school and some surrounding areas were established as a National Historic Site. Those buildings still have significant historical integrity. They add to the definition and the story of history which must—which must—be remembered at all times.

This bill expands the boundaries of this National Historic Site to include those residences so the National Park Service can, in cooperative agreements with the residents who still live there, make sure that that area will always be preserved as a place to interpret, improve, and provide the technical assistance to make sure this story of American history is not forgotten. It is part of the milieu.

As the gentlewoman from Hawaii said, when you see pictures of these kids giving press conferences, you see these homes in the background. It is part and parcel to this story. The residents who live across the street are connected to the landmark events in September of 1957 and provide the backdrop for this particular element.

I am appreciative of Mr. HILL of Arkansas for leading forth with this particular bill, realizing the significance, and I am happy that today, on the very month this was happening 60 years ago, we actually are talking about this particular event and desiring to secure these areas so that the history of this country will be remembered to its fullest extent.

One of our staffers in the committee who helped in the drafting of this bill had the opportunity of having lunch with one of those Little Rock Nine. His essay won, and his reward was to have a chance to actually meet one of these heroic young women who went to Little Rock's Central High School 60-plus years ago.

This is significant, and I cannot think of this story without in some way feeling choked up inside because I know what it must have been like for those kids to go there, and I know what it must have been like to be part of that milieu. This was historic. They

were true heroes. They were truly brave kids who took this event on and did it with such aplomb. They need to be remembered.

That is why I am happy that this bill is coming forward, so that we can expand the horizon and we can expand the area of this historic site so that we can make sure that this will be a protected area, so that the history will not be forgotten and so what these kids did in that very historic year of 1957 and 1958 in Little Rock will not be forgotten, and so the significance and the conviction those kids had and the experience they had to go through can be remembered and that we can never again go back there. We could never again replicate that area, and we will move forward in the area of civil rights as well as education.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here to support this bill. I am going to ask my colleagues to support this bill because it says so much about us, about our commitments, about our priorities, and about what we want to do, and it says so much about what is good in this country. This is the primary example of what we are attempting to do.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, we appreciate all those who have spoken on behalf of this particular bill, those who have worked on this bill, and those who have sponsored this bill. This bill is something I think is really significant. It says something that is very positive about this country and helps us to remember that which is positive about this country.

Mr. Speaker, I am urging all my colleagues to support this, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2611.

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. BISHOP of Utah. 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.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CULBERSON. 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 further consideration of H.R. 3354.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 504 and rule

XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3354.

Will the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) kindly take the chair.

□ 1412

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3354) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes, with Mr. MCCLINTOCK (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Friday, September 8, 2017, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 77 printed in House Report 115-297 offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) had been postponed.

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. CULBERSON OF TEXAS

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 504, as the designee of Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN, I offer amendments en bloc No. 3 as part of consideration of division C of H.R. 3354.

The list of amendments included in the en bloc, Mr. Chairman, is at the desk and has been agreed to by both sides.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc No. 3 consisting of amendment Nos. 81, 82, 84, 86, 88, 89, 90, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 102, 103, 107, 110, and 111 printed in House Report 115-297, offered by Mr. CULBERSON of Texas:

AMENDMENT NO. 81 OFFERED BY MR. CASTRO OF TEXAS

Page 251, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$13,000,000) (increased by \$13,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 82 OFFERED BY MR. REICHERT OF WASHINGTON

Page 249, line 4, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$1)”.

Page 250, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$1)”.

Page 269, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 291, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 291, line 17, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 292, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 84 OFFERED BY MRS. DEMINGS OF FLORIDA

Page 252, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$5,000,000)”.

Page 264, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$5,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 86 OFFERED BY MR. COURTNEY OF CONNECTICUT

Page 258, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$1,000,000) (increased by \$1,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 88 OFFERED BY MR. LIPINSKI OF ILLINOIS

Page 260, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$10,100,000) (increased by \$10,100,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 89 OFFERED BY MR. LIPINSKI OF ILLINOIS

Page 260, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$1,200,000) (increased by \$1,200,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 90 OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI OF OREGON

Page 260, line 1, after the dollar amount insert “(increased by \$21,775,000) (reduced by \$21,775,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 92 OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI OF OREGON

Page 260, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduce by \$5,000,000) (increase by \$5,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 93 OFFERED BY MR. BUCHANAN OF FLORIDA

Page 260, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$8,000,000)”.

Page 264, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$8,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 95 OFFERED BY MRS. DEMINGS OF FLORIDA

Page 269, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$5,000,000)”.

Page 296, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$5,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 96 OFFERED BY MS. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM OF NEW MEXICO

Page 269, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$5,000,000)”.

Page 291, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$5,000,000)”.

Page 291, line 17, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$5,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 97 OFFERED BY MR. CASTRO OF TEXAS

Page 269, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$2,500,000)”.

Page 298, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$2,500,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 98 OFFERED BY MR. NORMAN OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Page 269, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$7,000,000)”.

Page 291, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$7,000,000)”.

Page 294, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$7,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 99 OFFERED BY MS. MCSALLY OF ARIZONA

Page 269, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 291, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 292, line 23, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 100 OFFERED BY MR. ISSA OF CALIFORNIA

Page 276, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 291, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 293, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 293, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 102 OFFERED BY MR. COHEN OF TENNESSEE

Page 280, line 21, after the first dollar amount, insert “(decreased by \$4,000,000)”.

Page 298, line 21, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$4,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 103 OFFERED BY MS. BROWNLEY OF CALIFORNIA

Page 280, line 21, after the first dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$3,000,000)”.

Page 291, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$3,000,000)”.

Page 294, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$3,000,000)”.

Page 295, line 9, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$3,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 107 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

Page 282, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$500,000)”.

Page 286, line 3, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$500,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 110 OFFERED BY MR. CICILLINE OF RHODE ISLAND

Page 294, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$100,000,000) (increased by \$100,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 111 OFFERED BY MR. MURPHY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Page 295, line 1, strike “\$12,000,000” and insert “\$14,000,000”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO) each will control 10 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

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Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I am in support of the en bloc amendments. We have worked on it jointly, and I support all of the amendments that are included in the en bloc.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN).

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my colleague Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY's amendment to increase funding for veterans treatment courts.

Veterans courts keep our heroes struggling with addiction or a mental health condition from going to jail, instead providing them with the care they need and a second chance.

Our Nation's military is returning home from a decade and a half of war with invisible wounds: PTSD, depression, TBI, trauma, and more. Researchers are continuing to find links between substance abuse and combat-related mental health struggles.

Specialized drug court participants are significantly less likely than non-participants to relapse or later commit crimes. By keeping veterans out of prisons, focusing on rehabilitation and sobriety, these programs offer long-term solutions rather than short-sighted punishments.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting “yes” for this amendment.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN).

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to seek support for my en bloc amendment to H.R. 3354.

As we all know, drug overdose deaths in our country have dramatically increased since the turn of the century. Over the past decade alone, overdose deaths have increased by more than 400

percent. In 2015, more Americans died from opioids than in the Vietnam war. Mr. Chairman, that is astonishing.

This is a national emergency. I have seen the effects firsthand in my district. In 2016, nearly one-fifth of all opioid-related deaths in South Carolina took place in my district.

My amendment would provide more funds to opioid prevention by transferring \$7 million from the DOJ General Administration account to the opioid abuse reduction activities. More than ever, we must provide as much funding as possible to defeat this national epidemic.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in combating this crisis.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the en bloc amendment, which includes my amendments to increase funding for the ocean acidification program and increase coastal monitoring and assessment of algal blooms.

Oregon's economic vitality is dependent on the ocean economy. Ocean acidification and harmful algal blooms threaten ocean health, the tourism industry, and our valuable fisheries.

Communities along the coasts are vulnerable to the effects of our changing climate. I applaud NOAA's acidification program and coastal monitoring and assessment programs that give our coastal community the tools they need to understand and address these threats.

I thank the chairman and ranking member for including these amendments and for their hard work on this bill.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I wish to address the gentlewoman's comments, very briefly.

I want to thank the gentlewoman for bringing this matter to the House's attention. Harmful algal blooms are an important issue, especially to the State of Florida. We know how dangerous they are and the terrible effect they have had on our friends in Florida, who are already suffering the effects of this hurricane. Our prayers and thoughts are with them. All of us in Houston understand the severity of the problem they face, and we are praying for them and look forward to helping them in any way we can.

I will certainly continue to work with the gentlewoman on this issue that she brings to the House's attention.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT).

Mr. REICHERT. I thank the chair for yielding and for all his hard work in working together with us to address the issue of gun crime in this country.

As everyone knows, over the last several years especially, high-profile shootings and violent crime have caught the attention of Americans all

across this country and sparked a debate about what should be done to reduce gang violence and gun crime in the United States.

Well, the truth is, there is an answer and a proven solution that actually worked for many years when I was the sheriff in King County in Seattle, Washington. It is a program called Project Safe Neighborhoods. It was first the Safe Cities Initiative by the Clinton-Gore administration and then changed to Project Safe Neighborhoods under George Bush.

Through strong partnerships, Federal, State, and local governments created local gun crime reduction task forces and form coalitions with other agencies, community groups, and citizens committed to reducing gun crime.

Between 2001 and 2009, when data was collected on the program, cities that were first to implement the program achieved a significant decline in violent crime.

We need to fund this program. The data and the statistics that were collected that show this is a proven solution was ignored by the previous administration. Despite the high rates of success for cities that have implemented the program, funding for the program has steadily decreased.

My amendment to increase funding for Project Safe Neighborhoods is fully offset by a reduction to the General Administration account at the Department of Justice.

Mr. Chairman, I urge all Members to support this amendment.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to take a moment to say to my friend that my prayers and my thoughts are with him, his family, his constituents, Texas, Florida, the Caribbean, South Carolina, my birthplace of Puerto Rico, and all the other folks who have been through this very difficult time.

I intend to use my vote on appropriations in whatever way it can to serve to help those communities as they get back on the road to recovery.

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

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the en bloc amendment. It is made up of noncontroversial items that we have worked out with the minority, and I urge its adoption.

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

Mr. Lipinski. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of my two amendments included in the en bloc package being considered for Division C of H.R. 3354. I want to thank Chairman CULBERSON and Ranking Member SERRANO for their leadership on this division, and for including these amendments in the en bloc package. These bipartisan amendments, cosponsored by me and my friend Mr. LOBIONDO of New Jersey, protect critical functions at the National Weather Service. The Weather Service is essential to so much of what we do. From its critical functions like helping us predict, prepare for, and ride out extreme weather events to its everyday functions like telling us whether or not to carry an umbrella, life without up-to-date weather information is hard to imagine.

My first amendment (No. 89) directs the National Weather Service not to cut \$1.2 million from the Climate Prediction Center, one of its National Centers for Environmental Protection. The Service is further directed not to consolidate the functions of the Climate Prediction Center into the Weather Prediction Center. Keeping these two centers separate recognizes the essential and very different services each one provides. The medium- and long-term predictions offered by the Climate Prediction Center are used for planning by diverse industries including transportation, agriculture, energy, and public health. Its global datasets are used by the Department of Defense and the U.S. Agency for International Development to understand international phenomena like flood and drought that could impact food supplies and regional stability.

My second amendment (No. 88) directs the National Weather Service not to cut \$10.1 million from its budget for Information Technology Officers, and to maintain an on-site IT Officer at each Weather Forecast Office. These officers do software maintenance, technical systems upgrades, and develop software and data products to meet local office needs. According to the Weather Service's assessment of its performance during Hurricane Matthew (2016), "[Weather Forecast Offices] were unanimous in their support of having a local [IT Officer] present to address issues before, during, and after hurricane season." In addition, a significant number of IT Officers are also trained, experienced meteorologists who can augment the forecasting staff during extreme weather.

I think all of my colleagues can agree that supporting the National Weather Service is more important now than ever and I urge support for these amendments and for the en bloc package.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of the Minority Business Development Agency, the MBDA. My amendment, number 84, which is included in the en bloc amendment, would increase funding for the MBDA by \$5 million in Fiscal Year 2018.

With three MBDA Business Centers in Florida, including one in my home district, we in Florida understand the value the MBDA provides. In 2012, Florida had the third highest number of minority-owned businesses, in the country, with a high concentration of: African American-owned firms; Native American-owned firms; Asian American-owned firms; Hispanic American-owned firms; and Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander-owned firms. All that rely on the assistance of the MBDA.

For 48 years, the MBDA has been the only government agency focused solely on fostering the growth and development of minority-owned businesses; identifying and assisting to overcome the barriers to economic growth.

According to the 2007 U.S. Census Bureau's Survey on Business Owners, minority-owned businesses contributed \$1 trillion in economic growth to the \$16 trillion U.S. economy, and employed 6 million Americans. Additionally, minority-owned businesses are twice as likely to generate sales through exports, compared to non-minority owned firms, due to their language and cultural ties.

While their economic contributions are significant, minority-owned businesses struggle in acquiring private capital and securing government contracts at disproportionate rates, compared to non-minority owned businesses.

Studies have also shown that minority loan-seekers are given less information on loan terms and offered less help with their loan applications. They are also denied loans at three times higher than non-minority firms.

The MBDA assists minority-owned businesses in: financing, joint ventures, and more. Firms assisted by MBDA secure an average of \$5.4 billion dollars in contracts and investments. Given this significant contribution to the U.S. economy, it is vital to support the work done by the MBDA to grow our nation's 8.5 million minority-owned business.

I want to thank Chairman CULBERSON and Ranking Member SERRANO for including this amendment in the en bloc amendment. I would also like to thank my colleagues, Representatives BUTTERFIELD, JACKSON LEE, and VELÁZQUEZ for their co-sponsorship of my amendment, and for their previous work on these important issues.

Mr. Chair, the en bloc amendment also includes my amendment, number 95, which increases funding for the Office of Juvenile Justice Programs' Youth Mentoring Grants by \$5 million—restoring those grants to the Fiscal Year 2017 enacted level.

These grants allow local jurisdictions to develop, expand or sustain youth mentoring efforts using evidence-based best practices.

Mr. Chair, improving outcomes for disadvantaged youth requires more than simply expanding opportunities at school, because the challenges they face often extend beyond the schoolhouse door.

In my 27 years in law enforcement, I saw this first-hand. As Chief of Police for the City of Orlando, Florida, I had the honor of founding Operation Positive Direction—a program through which OPD Officers mentor Orlando youths.

Across the nation, youth participating in these programs show improvements in their perception of social support and acceptance, their family relationships and a decrease in antisocial behaviors. Youth that meet regularly with their mentors are 46 percent less likely to start using illegal drugs, and youth that face opportunity gaps, but have a mentor are 55 percent more likely to go to college.

Again, I want to thank Chairman CULBERSON and Ranking Member SERRANO for including amendment number 95 in the en bloc amendment as well. I would also like to thank my colleagues, Representatives LANGEVIN and BUTTERFIELD, not only for their co-sponsorship of my amendment, but for their continued leadership on these issues.

I urge all my colleagues to support the en bloc amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON).

The en bloc amendments were agreed to.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield to gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT), my good friend.

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise for the purpose of engaging in a colloquy with the chairman about the COPS Hiring Program.

Managed by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, or COPS, the COPS Hiring Program is vital to State and local law enforcement agencies. The program provides our communities with the much-needed funding to hire law enforcement officers and meet public safety demands.

Since its beginning, the COPS Hiring Program has placed more than 129,000 officers in communities across the United States to advance policing and crime prevention efforts.

Make no mistake, these officers are necessary for the safety of our neighborhoods, constituents, and loved ones. Staffing challenges not only jeopardize the safety of our men and women in uniform, but also directly lead to the breakdown and trust between law enforcement and our communities.

From my over 33 years of experience in law enforcement, I know that police departments and sheriffs' offices must have the staff necessary to engage with their communities and proactively respond to their needs, instead of running from one call to the next.

COPS Hiring is a proven program that studies have shown reduces crime without a corresponding increase in arrests. Effective policing lowers crime rates and builds strong community relationships. Throughout my time in Congress, I have been fighting to keep this program funded. It is the same this year.

While I appreciate that the bill before us includes a \$100 million increase for Byrne-JAG law enforcement grant program, and I thank the chairman for his efforts, I am disappointed that it doesn't provide funding for the COPS Hiring Program.

As this process moves forward, I urge the chairman to include funding for the COPS Hiring Program. We must continue this program that has been so important to State and local law enforcement. This program is not just good for those who put their lives on the line every day, but it benefits all citizens as our country works to bridge the gap between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from Washington for his service to the people of Seattle, the people in his State, his service here, and for his devotion to this program.

I absolutely recognize the importance of the COPS Hiring Program and what an important impact it has had on the safety of local communities. We are especially grateful to our first responders in southeast Texas, southwest Louisiana, and the people of Florida. I don't know what we would do without our first responders. Our police officers and firemen have done a magnificent job in the wake of these terrible storms that we have had.

Given the staffing shortages and the current issues facing our law enforcement, the COPS program is especially important. As you know, the Senate has funded the COPS program in its

bill, and I look forward to working with the gentleman to make sure the COPS program is funded in conference.

Mr. REICHERT. I thank the chairman, and I just mention that I know in my heart his compassion and dedication to the men and women who wear the uniform across our country. I look forward to working with him in making sure the COPS program is funded once again.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 83 printed in House Report 115-297.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 85 printed in House Report 115-297.

AMENDMENT NO. 87 OFFERED BY MRS. TORRES

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 87 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 258, line 17, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$5,000,000)".

Page 258, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$5,000,000)".

Page 269, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$5,000,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer my amendment to this appropriations bill.

Mr. Chairman, since I have been in Congress, I have been working with manufacturers in my congressional district to ensure that we are doing all we can in Congress to support them in creating good-paying, high-skilled jobs right here at home.

Last month, I took a "Made in the 35th" tour and traveled across my district, meeting with manufacturers who are creating jobs here in the U.S. They told me about how they are competing with importers from Asia and an unfair playing field created by how our trading partners support their manufacturers.

I continued my tour to the Port of Los Angeles, where it became clearer where this unfair playing field has left us. Ships from Asia come in full and leave empty.

Mr. Chairman, the ships that leave Los Angeles should be full of American-made goods. This is the goal of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, or MEP: supporting American businesses through expanding markets and supporting innovation.

Two of the nine MEP success stories in California have happened in my congressional district. Insulfoam in Chino used the MEP to increase production by 20 percent, while reducing their energy costs by more than 5 percent.

Diamond Wipes, a very impressive company that I visited on my Made in the 35th tour, used the MEP to expand their wet wipes business to markets around the world.

A small investment in MEP meant real wins and expansions for these real American businesses.

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Mr. Chairman, this amendment is common sense. For every dollar of MEP investment, we can generate nearly \$20 million in new sales growth and \$20 in new client investment. That is a \$100 million return on my amendment.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment because that investment could end up in one of our communities.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the congresswoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY).

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment to increase funding for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, the MEP program. This amendment would restore \$5 million to MEP, which has helped U.S. manufacturers create and retain good jobs in Connecticut and in every State in the country over nearly 30 years.

Connecticut's MEP, the Connecticut State Technical Extension Program, or CONNSTEP, works with facilities in Connecticut advising them on ways to grow their businesses. And thanks to partnerships with CONNSTEP, in my district alone, Metallon in Thomaston has increased new sales by nearly a half a million dollars, Metallurgical Processing in New Britain increased production by 20 percent, and RTR Technologies in Canaan increased sales by \$6 million.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to restore funding to MEP by \$5 million, because passing a budget that grows the economy and retains and brings good jobs to our communities is exactly what we were sent to Washington, D.C., to do.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support Representative TORRES' amendment.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I have no particular objection to the amendment other than I am concerned about the offset. We need to make sure the Department of Justice has all the resources they need in order to protect this country. I am concerned about taking it out of General Administration. However, I am prepared to let the amendment go.

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

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO), the ranking member of the subcommittee.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment, and I commend the authors for offering it.

This effective program funds a series of centers that help small- and medium-sized manufacturers to develop new products, attract new customers, and reduce protection costs.

Because this bill received an inadequate allocation, the chairman was forced to partially agree with the President's efforts to undermine our manufacturing sector, and the bill currently contains a cut of \$30 million from the MEP program. This amendment provides an important downpayment in restoring funding for this important program. We will have to do better down the line, but this is a good start.

Mr. Chairman, I urge Members to support the amendment.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Chairman, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Chairman, this is a \$5 million investment for manufacturers in the U.S., and I strongly ask for the support of my colleagues in passing this amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 91 OFFERED BY MR. MCKINLEY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 91 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 260, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$10,000,000) (reduced by \$10,000,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, the Environmental Security Computing Center within NOAA—the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—utilizes high-performance computing technology to quickly process information from weather satellites and to predict the path of a hurricane or the extent of damage a wildfire can create. As recent events have shown,

weather events can have a devastating impact on the lives of our fellow Americans.

In late July, northern West Virginia experienced unexpected flooding that placed eight counties under a state of emergency. Nearly 1,000 homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed, and, tragically, two individuals lost their lives. This was an unexpected flow of water.

Recently, Hurricanes Harvey and Irma have destroyed thousands of homes and communities, which will require a massive influx of Federal resources to rebuild. This Congress has the responsibility to ensure the accuracy and viability of the weather and climate monitoring work performed by the security center.

One of the most important systems NOAA uses to process this data is its high-performance computing assets, such as NOAA's Environmental Security Computer Center. My amendment provides funding to complete the build-out for that facility that NOAA has initiated. Completing the build-out will support the supercomputer systems that NOAA uses to process and report this important and critical weather model data.

What we are witnessing during this hurricane season, Mr. Chairman, demonstrates just how important passage of this amendment is to our Nation, and we are going to have reliable information provided to us. So I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 94 OFFERED BY MS. ROSEN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 94 printed in House Report 115-297.

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 264, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$18,000,000)".

Page 314, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$18,000,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada.

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment to increase funding to the National Science Foundation's Computer and Information Science and Engineering research directorate, commonly known as CISE.

CISE supports research in computing, communications, information science, and engineering. Through their NSF-supported work, our Nation's scientists have been able to develop innovative solutions to energy,

advanced manufacturing, national security, healthcare, and personal communications.

CISE also provides advanced cyber infrastructure for all areas of science and engineering, and it contributes to the education and training of computer engineers, ensuring our future generations are well equipped with the skills they need in an increasingly competitive global market.

In Nevada and across the country, we are continuing to see a huge demand for workers in the tech industry, including software developers, analysts, engineers, and computer programmers like myself. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the computing industry's rate of job creation in the U.S. is now three times the national average. In order for our workforce to continue to push the boundaries, we must invest in research and training programs at NSF.

CISE is particularly important because it provides funding for cutting-edge computing and information science research, which is critical to innovation in nearly all lines of work from business to government.

Simply put, the 21st century runs on computers and constantly evolving technologies. As one of the few women in Congress to build her career in STEM, I know all too well the demand for talent in STEM is real, and we must make smart investments now.

Current CISE projects across the country include developing unmanned aerial systems technology to help reduce wildfires, creating new clinical modeling techniques to use electronic health records for personalized patient care, and strengthening our cyber infrastructure.

In my district, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas is using CISE funding for several groundbreaking initiatives. One of their projects focuses on increasing the participation of students with disabilities in computer science courses by creating accessible tools and curricula, preparing professors for diverse students.

UNLV is also partnering with the local Clark County School District to mentor high school teachers on computer science, cybersecurity, and big data.

Mr. Chairman, this current bill maintains fiscal year 2017 level funding for NSF research and related activities, which CISE is funded through. That is admirable, given the fact that President Trump's proposed budget slashed NSF research. Maintaining level funding shows shared, bipartisan support for scientific research right here in Congress.

I thank the majority and the subcommittee chairman for recognizing the importance of supporting computer and information science. However, even with this funding level, according to agency leadership, the NSF has had to deny over \$2 billion worth of excellent proposals every year, indicating the fact that it is underfunded.

If we are going to be serious about competing in the economy of tomorrow and the economy of today, then we must continue funding programs that help our country to remain the global leader in innovation, productivity, economic growth, and provide good-paying jobs for the future.

My amendment would increase funding to CISE by 2 percent, allowing it to keep up with year-over-year inflation and fund the same number of grants as previous years. This level funding in real dollars is the least we can do to remain globally competitive in computer science and engineering.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting "yes" for this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, we have, as you know, an extremely difficult budget year. Our constituent's hard-earned tax dollars are being stretched farther and thinner than ever, particularly in light of the disasters that struck Texas and southwest Louisiana and now Florida.

We have, in our Commerce, Justice, Science bill, protected America's investment and basic research through the National Science Foundation and its main grant account, the Research and Related Activities account.

We have funded the Research and Related Activities account at \$672 million this year. We recognize that America's leadership in the world is grounded, in large part, on the innovations and discoveries that are made by unrestrained scientific research.

I am a very strong supporter of the National Science Foundation's scientific research. And while we would like to see higher levels of funding for the National Science Foundation for NASA and for other science-related research in this bill, until the Congress comes to an overall budget agreement, Mr. Chairman, we simply do not have additional funds, and we must live within our means.

The proposed offset that is offered by this amendment would seriously hinder program and financial oversight over the Department of Commerce and could result in professionals being let go.

Further, with respect to the gentleman's statement, I believe it is important that we defer to the National Science Foundation to distribute any additional funds according to the highest priority needs identified by the scientific community and not designate them for a specific directorate.

□ 1445

Should the gentleman's amendment pass, the funds will be added to the research and related activities account, in general. It will then be up to NSF to determine how those additional funds are spent according to the needs

of the scientific community, that the offset is very damaging to the Department of Commerce and the important work they do, in fact, the constitutionally mandated work that they do, to provide for the decennial census of the United States.

Mr. Chairman, I urge Members to oppose the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 101 OFFERED BY MR. COHEN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 101 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 277, line 4, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$10,000,000)".

Page 320, line 7, after the first dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$10,000,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to speak in support of our bipartisan amendment, which would increase Legal Services funding by \$10 million. I am willing to withdraw this amendment after my colleagues and I take a brief moment to speak about Legal Services. I know that the chair and the ranking member support Legal Services and may be able to help, but at some time in the future.

Our justice system is the envy of the world. Whenever we travel, people say what they really respect about America is the rule of law and our justice system, but it takes professional help by an attorney to navigate it. When they are poor—which most people don't have legal training—they are not going to be able to successfully compete against a private attorney on the other side. They need help. If they don't have that help, the justice system is not fair.

Legal Services helps ensure equal justice under the law. It helps all kind of folks: military families, homeowners and renters, families with children, the disabled, and the elderly.

It is vital all over the country, but in places like Houston, residents struggle from Hurricane Harvey. Lone Star Legal Aid, which is partially funded by Legal Services, is helping people navigate the legal hurdles when people need them most so that they can get their lives back.

Mr. KENNEDY has been a strong supporter of this. He was supposed to be here today, but I think he has been detained.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Chairman, every year for 42 years, Congress has funded the Legal Services Corporation so that low-income Americans might realize our country's solemn pledge of justice for all. For military families, homeowners and renters, families with children, the disabled, the elderly, and nearly 112,000 veterans, investment in civil legal aid is one of the most effective ways to help Americans navigate the justice system.

The Legal Services Corporation allows millions of Americans to safeguard their basic legal rights at a minimal cost to the Federal Government. As the late Justice Antonin Scalia emphasized in 2014: "... this organization pursues the most fundamental of American ideals, and it pursues equal justice in those areas of life most important to the lives of our citizens."

This organization provides direct grants to legal aid providers across our Nation, including eight organizations in my home State of Pennsylvania. I am proud to support the Legal Services Corporation, which allows people access to justice even when they cannot afford representation. We must continue this program.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his help.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO), the ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee. Mr. SERRANO has helped me on other amendments as well as this one.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I feel comfortable with Mr. COHEN withdrawing his amendment because I know the chairman, Mr. CULBERSON, is very supportive of this program.

It is interesting to note that this program was born in a bipartisan fashion, with President Nixon, at that time, being the main supporter of it.

The bill only provides \$300 million for Legal Services, which is a cut of \$85 million from fiscal year 2017. This amendment provides a downpayment towards restoring these cuts, and I commend the authors for offering it.

We should not be cutting LSC funding at a time when more people than ever qualify for these services. Legal aid providers always must turn away more than half of eligible applicants. They already do that, and these cuts would only create a bigger problem.

Very briefly, in closing, there are a lot of issues that we can discuss that make America great. One of them is the right to legal representation. If you can't afford it, then this is where programs like Legal Services come in and support.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman

from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS), my good friend and colleague.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the gentleman from Tennessee's amendment.

As a democracy founded on the belief in the rule of law, I am a proud co-chair of the House Access to Civil Legal Services Caucus with my colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY).

I believe we have an obligation to ensure that all Americans have access to legal representation in order to uphold the values upon which our Nation was founded: equality and justice under our laws. This amendment will ensure that Legal Services Corporation can continue supporting those values by providing legal support to the millions of Americans who would otherwise go without it whenever they might face serious legal challenges.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman withdrawing the amendment. I want to express my support for the work the Legal Services Corporation does.

When we reach a budget agreement throughout the Congress for Legal Services, we will work with you in conference to help make sure they have the funds that they need to do their vital work to defend abused women, veterans, and members of the military who need assistance. They do important work. As soon as we find some extra room, I will work with you in conference to find them some extra support.

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. CULBERSON for his help, and Mrs. BROOKS for her leadership.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time, and I withdraw the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The amendment is withdrawn.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 104 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 105 OFFERED BY MR. GROTHMAN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 105 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 281, line 11, insert "(reduced by \$64,688,800)" after the dollar amount.

Page 347, line 16, insert "(increased by \$64,688,800)" after the dollar amount.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment to H.R. 3354.

Since we last met, we began spending, I guess, a new \$15 billion on the

tragedies in Florida and Texas. I haven't had a chance to see how all of my colleagues are doing, but I sure hope that we are getting nothing but amendments designed to reduce spending to make up for the difference. I hope that is so.

I am looking at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. I am on the Government Oversight Committee. We recently had another hearing on Fast and Furious. I don't think there has been enough contrition there at all. This was, I think, probably the biggest scandal in my lifetime, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives has to consider themselves to be a big part of that scandal.

Being from Wisconsin, I am also familiar with a local scandal we had there. If you google "ATF" and "Milwaukee," you will find a situation in which they were selling guns which they shouldn't have been selling and buying guns which they shouldn't have been buying. So there is another reason why we should look at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Despite these scandals, their funding has gone nothing but up over the last few years. We are, in this budget, looking to borrow between 13 to 14 percent of this budget, and that is before we begin to have to spend money on the Florida and Texas hurricanes.

I am introducing a bill with a mild 5 percent across-the-board cut to ATF. President Trump had wanted a smaller increase. The Appropriations Committee went \$20 million over what President Trump wanted. I don't think that is right. I think they need a little bit of a slap-down here.

I am looking to reduce the amount of spending on this organization by \$64 million. I think that is very appropriate given the scandals that they have been involved in. It is very appropriate given that we are borrowing 14 percent of our money. In the sane world, we would almost take every agency down 14 percent. We don't have time for that, but this agency, based on their behavior, seems in favor of that.

I know some people are going to probably not want to cut anything here. We just heard in the last amendment that it appears like some people want to go up. I think this is a modest decrease, and I think they should have no problem finding this small amount of money.

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

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment, remembering that, first and foremost, the appropriations annual operating budget of the United States represents only 30 cents out of every dollar spent by the Federal Government.

I am keenly aware of how precious and hard-earned and scarce every dollar earned by our constituents is. We need to focus on the 70 percent: the automatic pilot programs, the looming insolvency of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. That is how we can really get our budget balanced.

We have done our part on the Appropriations Committee to bring down annual spending every year, and the ATF, in particular, plays an important role in protecting America's Second Amendment rights. You must remember that the ATF is now under the direction of Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who shares with us a passion for protecting Americans' Second Amendment rights.

This amendment would cause serious damage to ATF's ability to end the backlogs. The ATF would not be able to speed up the processing of the National Firearms Act applications. The ATF would not be able to beef up the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network, which is so vital to help police officers identify the source of the bullet used in a crime.

This amendment would injure an agency that is doing good work today under the leadership of Attorney General Jeff Sessions to protect our Second Amendment rights. Mr. Chairman, I urge Members to oppose it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO), my colleague, the ranking member on the Commerce-Justice-Science Subcommittee.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This reduction would have a significant impact on public safety. The ATF would be investigating fewer firearm traffickers and violent gangs. They would be unable to respond effectively to theft burglaries from Federal firearms licensees. These cuts would weaken the ATF's ability to do its primary responsibilities: combat violent crime and regulate the firearms and explosive industries.

Not surprisingly, a reduction of this magnitude would result in approximately 400 employees being laid off. According to the ATF, that means they would have to eliminate approximately 200 special agents, 65 industry operations investigators, and 135 professional technical positions. The elimination of these positions at ATF directly degrades the Department's capacity to combat violent firearm crimes and regulate the firearms and explosives industries.

I just think that this is not a proper amendment at this time or, for that matter, at any time, and I join the chairman in agreeing on this.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chairman, I am going to disagree a little bit with one of those past statements.

We have heard the statement made, sometimes behind closed doors by a lot of people, and that is we have an increase of discretionary spending over

the last 3 years. This is a mild cut this year, but over the last 3 years, collectively, it is an increase, 3 or 4 years.

There are some people who feel that we shouldn't scrutinize that spending because so much of our budget is mandatory spending. I do feel that we need a larger cut in mandatory spending than the rather modest cut that came out of the Budget Committee, and I hope everybody in our Conference will demand a more significant cut in mandatory spending.

But, nevertheless, discretionary spending is 30 percent of the budget. Common sense will tell you that, as things become more technology oriented, it should be easier for an agency that processes data, like the ATF, to do their business with a little bit less money.

And one more time I will emphasize that there haven't been cuts to reflect these scandals in the ATF, and I think that, if we are not going to kind of slap them on the wrist now, when will we?

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

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I urge Members to oppose this amendment.

ATF is doing a good job of protecting our Second Amendment rights, and this amendment would injure them severely.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin will be postponed.

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AMENDMENT NO. 106 OFFERED BY MR. GROTHMAN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 106 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chair, as the designee of the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK), I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 281, line 17, strike "none of the" and insert "such".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chair, as mentioned, this amendment was actually drafted by Representative BUCK from Colorado. I understand this amendment passed on a voice vote last time.

I do have a nice speech that Representative BUCK's office has prepared for me, but I am not going to read a speech that is not my speech. I am sure it is a wonderful speech.

I hope the chairman allows this amendment in.

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

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to this very misguided amendment. This amendment would allow felons and other dangerous individuals to try to regain the ability to own guns by sending an application to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

I am not sure why the Member would offer an amendment that makes it easier for felons to get guns. Most Americans would be shocked by such a proposal. Each year since 1993, Congress has prohibited ATF from processing applications from felons seeking to have their gun rights restored, and with good reason.

Prior to 1993, there were numerous examples of felons who had their gun rights restored by ATF only to go on to commit further crimes later. For example, in 1977, Michael Paul Dahmert of Wisconsin was convicted of burglary. In 1986, he was granted relief and allowed to, once again, own firearms. Two months later, he was rearrested and charged with first degree sexual assault and four counts of second degree sexual assault, for which he received 5 years in prison.

In 1977, James Morgan was convicted of perjury to a grand jury. In 1988, he was granted relief and allowed to gain and own firearms. He was arrested that same year for first degree wanton endangerment and later sentenced to 6 months confinement and 2 years probation.

These are only a few examples. It is important to point out that the gentleman's amendment makes no distinction as far as the seriousness of the offense for which the individual was initially denied a firearm, and ATF would need to investigate all applications for gun rights restoration. Furthermore, simply processing these applications would require significant ATF agent resources and would divert ATF away from its core law enforcement mission of fighting firearm offenses.

Since 1998, when the National Instant Criminal Background Check System was put in use, well over 1 million firearm transfers have been denied after background checks established that the individuals attempting to purchase the firearms were prohibited from processing firearms.

Even if only 20 percent of the denied individuals file an application with ATF to have their gun rights restored, this would require the efforts of hundreds of full-time ATF agents to perform background checks of these individuals. The agents would be diverted

from their primary law enforcement investigation.

Even though ATF is legally required to ensure that the applicant “will not be likely to act in a manner dangerous to public safety,” we know that this process is not perfect, as evidenced by the examples I just gave.

The bottom line is that this amendment would give guns back to felons and, at the same time, sharply reduce ATF’s resources for pursuing violent crime investigations. Both of these outcomes would seriously harm public safety, and for these reasons, I strongly urge my colleagues to reject this amendment.

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

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chair, I thank the Chairman for the opportunity to speak about my amendment to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Division of H.R. 3354.

Mr. Chair, the right to bear arms is ingrained in our nation’s founding. These rights are given to us by God and guaranteed by the Constitution.

But for many Americans, this right has been forfeited. And their only option for recourse has been taken away.

When I was District Attorney in Northern Colorado I met a man who told me that when he was in college he bounced a check to his landlord. He pleaded guilty to a felony.

Since that day, he has been a model citizen. He finished college. He worked hard and raised a family.

This man made a mistake that is still haunting him nearly 40 years later. He wants to take his grandchildren hunting. But he can’t possess a firearm because he made a mistake in his youth.

The worst part of this situation is that the law allows the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives to consider petitions to restore this man’s right to possess a firearm.

However, for 25 years, the underlying bill has included a provision authored by then-Rep. SCHUMER prohibiting ATF from processing these applications.

America is a land of second chances. We restore civil rights for those who have made mistakes in their past, including the right to vote in many states. We help our neighbors find employment after incarceration.

Why should non-violent individuals who made a mistake in their past be prohibited from having their case heard?

This amendment simply seeks to remove a 25-year-old ban on the ATF’s legal function to hear petitions from non-violent individuals like the man I mentioned earlier.

To be clear, my amendment would not act as a rubber stamp on every application. The ATF must weigh the merits of each individual case.

The burden is on the applicant to prove that he or she is nonviolent and does not pose a threat to the community.

Any American who can prove to ATF they do not pose a danger to society should be allowed to state their case. They should be allowed to advocate for their rights.

It is about time that we give these individuals that opportunity again.

Mr. Chair, my amendment is simple. It would give nonviolent individuals who made a

mistake in their past the opportunity for a second chance.

It would allow a grandfather the opportunity to take his grandchildren hunting and provide a way for a mother to protect her home.

To be clear, this amendment does not guarantee that an applicant will have their rights restored. But it does give them hope, a chance to once again possess their Second Amendment rights.

After all, America is the land of second chances.

I thank the Chairman and urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 108 OFFERED BY MR. COHEN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 108 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chair, as the designee of the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 282, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 283, line 3, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$20,000,000)”.

Page 296, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chair, this amendment would reprogram \$10 million from the prison account and put it in the juvenile justice programs designed to reduce recidivism, gang violence, and gun crimes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE, a fellow member on the Judiciary Committee, has been a leader on this issue, and she is right in her approach, understanding that working with juveniles early will save money in the long run and see that they don’t get into the prison pipeline that so often takes young people and ruins their lives and costs our communities and our taxpayers a great deal of money.

Our Federal prisons are presently funded \$7 billion for administration, operation, and maintenance. Twenty million dollars of that is made up for contract confinement.

This amendment would reduce the account by \$10 million and put it into juvenile justice programs that would reduce recidivism, gang violence, and gun crime.

These juvenile justice programs that would get the benefit of this money would protect our most vulnerable children through treatment and mentoring programs. According to the Justice Policy Institute, locking up juveniles costs an average of \$407 a day and \$148,000 per person per year.

There are a lot of conservative coalitions, like FreedomWorks, American Conservative Union Foundation, and Taxpayers Protection Alliance that agree that mass incarceration is extremely costly to taxpayers.

This amendment invests in our youth population at the front end with rewards on the back end, as these folks don’t end up in the prison system; supports programs that have shown consistent success in curtailing gang violence and gun crimes.

Violence among our youth is a health epidemic that must be addressed; therefore, we must support professionals that possess practical experience in epidemic control for violence prevention, and that show success working with the most vulnerable and at-risk youth population when addressing this health epidemic.

Within the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the following programs focus on violence prevention: Forum, Community Based Violence Prevention, and Defending Childhood. The CBVP explicitly calls for and supports the health approach; hence, this amendment provides funding for organizations such as community-based violence prevention programs that have shown great success.

Cure Violence, a health-based organization operating in several cities and States, including Chicago and New York and Philadelphia and others, has shown great success and also shown success in Puerto Rico. They have had 100 percent reduction in homicide retaliation in Chicago, a 41 to 73 percent drop in shootings in five of eight communities in Baltimore; they have had a 56 percent drop in killings, and 44 percent other places.

In essence, this is putting money in a place where we can save money, save youths, save lives.

Mr. Chair, I ask that we support this amendment that Ms. JACKSON LEE has brought forth. It makes a lot of common sense.

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

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chair, this amendment would cut the Bureau of Prisons’ operations by \$10 million. This is a serious cut. The Bureau of Prisons performs an essential function in keeping our streets safe and protecting the people of America.

We have already funded the youth mentoring programs in our bill today at \$75 million. It is 25 percent above the request, because of the value of these programs.

I certainly agree with the gentleman that these programs are successful, they are effective, but the Department of Justice is not even finished awarding the grants from fiscal year 2017, and this program is very healthy.

This program would also, Mr. Chairman, eliminate a longstanding authority the Bureau of Prisons has had for

contract flexibility that enables the Bureau of Prisons to manage its contracts in a way that benefits both the agency and the taxpayer. This includes contracts for halfway houses, reentry facilities, and juvenile detention.

This burden would strap the Bureau of Prisons, putting pressure on them and putting inmates in more danger, putting officers and staff in greater danger. If we want prisoners to get healthcare and rehabilitation, Mr. Chairman, and prisoners and staff to be safe, we have to adequately fund the Bureau of Prisons.

Mr. Chair, I urge Members to vote “no” on this amendment.

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chair, I understand Mr. CULBERSON’s position and look forward to his help with legal services that will help juveniles, too.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, thank you for this opportunity to discuss Amendment 108 to the “CJS Appropriation Act of 2017”.

This amendment will save thousands of lives within our youth population by decreasing our federal prison funding of \$7,070,248,000, available for the administration, operation and maintenance of Federal penal and correctional institutions. Of this amount, up to \$20,000,000 is made available for the use of contract confinement.

My amendment seeks to reduce this account by a mere \$10,000,000 for juvenile justice programs designed to reduce recidivism, gang violence and gun crime.

These juvenile justice programs help protect our most vulnerable children through treatment, education, training, and mentoring, not incarceration.

According to the Justice Policy Institute, locking up juveniles costs an average of \$407.58 per person per day and \$148,767 per person per year.

Even conservative coalitions like Freedom Works, American Conservative Union Foundation, Generation Opportunity, and Taxpayers Protection Alliance agreed that mass incarceration is extremely costly to taxpayers.

This amendment invests in our youth population at the front end with a greater return before the damage becomes irreversible at the back end.

This amendment supports programs that have shown consistent success in curtailing gang violence and gun crimes.

Research shows that violence among our youths is a health epidemic that must be addressed with appropriate measures beyond incarceration.

Therefore, we must support professionals that possess practical experience in epidemic control for violence prevention, and that show success working with the most vulnerable and at-risk youth population when addressing this health epidemic.

Within the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the following programs focus on violence prevention: Forum, Community Based Violence Prevention (CBVP), and Defending Childhood. The CBVP explicitly calls for and supports the health approach.

Hence, this amendment provides funding for organizations such as community-based violence prevention programs that statistically have shown much success.

For example, Cure Violence, a health-based organization that operates in, several cities and states, have shown great success in the intervention and prevention of violence in places like, Chicago, Baltimore, New York, Philadelphia and others. They have also shown great success in Puerto Rico.

Statistics show 100% reduction in homicide retaliation in Chicago, and a 41–73% drop in shootings in 5 of 8 communities; in Baltimore, up to 56% drop in killings; and 44% drop in shootings; in New York, 20% lower level of shootings; and in Philadelphia, reduction shooting rate was significantly larger than any reduction compared to non-program police districts.

Unlike incarceration cost of \$407.58 per person per day and \$148,767 per person per year, these alternative measures cost significantly less to serve a much larger population than what it cost to incarcerate one person, while reducing shootings and killings by 50%–70% in 15 of the most highly impacted large cities in the U.S. Hence, programs such as Cure Violence, Safe Streets and others show that alternative methods to incarceration are effective.

Both sides of the aisle agree that our juvenile justice system is in desperate need of repair. Incarceration at alarming numbers does not solve this problem.

Statistics show that incarceration does not serve as deterrence, nor does it keep our communities safe. Rather, it increases the likelihood for recidivism and thus, increases crime rates and mass incarceration.

For those who say juvenile justice is a state problem and not a federal problem because we don’t have many youths in federal custody, I say even if there is but one juvenile in our prison system, we have one too many.

I saw many young faces during the horrific tragedy in Houston’s vicious storm that claimed so many lives.

I do not ever want to see that look of despair and hopelessness again if we can do something to prevent that.

While some may say that juvenile justice is already funded, it is not enough. We need to address the epidemic taking place in our juvenile justice system and the crisis that follows thereafter—economic hardships, lack of education and inadequate job training.

For all the reasons stated above, I ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time, and I withdraw the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The amendment is withdrawn.

AMENDMENT NO. 109 OFFERED BY MR. PASCRELL

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 109 printed in House Report 115–297.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 291, line 17, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$100,000,000) (increased by \$100,000,000)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I rise today, once again, to highlight the hypocrisy reflected here of the party that claims to be the law-and-order party, because, once again, the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bill before us has zeroed out funding for the COPS Hiring Program.

This critical program provides Federal grants to local police departments for the hiring and retention of police officers. Despite the fact that this vital program helps ensure that we have enough cops on the beat in our communities, the House Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bills have cut or eliminated funding for the COPS Hiring Program since the Republicans took control of this House in 2011.

So every year, Representative DAVE REICHERT and I, co-chairs of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus, come to the floor to offer an amendment to shift funding back to the COPS Hiring Program to show support for local police hiring programs. We do this dance every year, but no one seems to learn their lesson, because here we are again with a bill that zeros out funding for this program.

Our amendments pass with overwhelming support, often by voice vote. The Senate sees this strong support and ends up funding the program in the final appropriations package. In fact, both the Senate and President have proposed funding the COPS program at \$207 million.

Typically, we have regular order in the House when considering appropriations bills. That means we would have an open rule to allow us to offer any amendment to shift funds in this bill. However, this is not the case this year, Mr. Chairman.

Our dance with the Appropriations Committee would have continued this year, but the Rules Committee prevented any substantive amendment to boost funding for the COPS Hiring Program from moving forward.

This amendment enjoyed the support of law enforcement organizations across America, including the Major County Sheriffs Association. They were dismayed at the decision to eliminate the COPS Hiring Program.

The amendment before us enjoys the support of law enforcement organizations, such as the National Association of Police Organizations, Fraternal Order of Police. In their letter of support, NAPO wrote that they are “very concerned that H.R. 3354 does not provide funding for the COPS Hiring Program.”

The FOP writes: “. . . we must continue to fund the COPS Hiring Program.”

Mr. Chairman, I include these letters in the RECORD.

MAJOR COUNTY SHERIFFS’ ASSOCIATION,
Pontiac, MI, September 6, 2017.

Hon. BILL PASCRELL,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN PASCRELL: On behalf of the Major County Sheriffs of America

(MCSA), I write in support of your amendment to the FY18 House Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations bill which will provide critical funding to the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) program. The MCSA is an association of elected Sheriffs representing the Nation's largest counties with populations of 500,000 people or more. Collectively, we represent more than 100 million Americans.

The MCSA was again dismayed at the CJS Appropriations Committee's decision to eliminate the COPS Hiring program—a program helping to ensuring state and local law enforcement have the personnel and resources necessary to protect and serve their communities. At a time when agencies are being asked to do more yet are still struggling to recruit and retain law enforcement professionals, we are seeing a pullback of federal support.

The MCSA applauds your understanding of the many challenges facing local law enforcement today and we appreciate your commitment to our profession.

Very Respectfully,

MICHAEL J. BOUCHARD,
Sheriff, Oakland County (MI).

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.,
Alexandria, VA, September 7, 2017.

Re Support for Amendment #109 to H.R. 3354
to Provide \$100 Million for COPS Hiring.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), I am writing to advise you of our strong support for Amendment #109 to H.R. 3354, offered by Congressmen Pascrell and Reichert, that would provide \$100 million in funding for the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program.

NAPO is a coalition of police units and associations from across the United States that serves to advance the interests of America's law enforcement through legislative and legal advocacy, political action, and education. Founded in 1978, NAPO now represents more than 1,000 police units and associations, 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers, and more than 100,000 citizens who share a common dedication to fair and effective crime control and law enforcement.

NAPO is very concerned that H.R. 3354 does not provide funding for the COPS Hiring Program. This vital program has assisted more than 13,000 jurisdictions with over \$14 billion in funding to hire more than 127,000 community police officers across the United States. A big part of the success of the original program was its reliance on local police agencies in defining what their communities needed. In addition to the hiring and retention of much needed officers, this funding program has contributed to continued success in combating crime, drug use, and gangs; reducing and preventing the manufacture, distribution, and use of illegal drugs; promoting officer safety and wellness; and addressing emerging law enforcement needs. It is vital that this program continue to be funded.

The Pascrell/Reichert Amendment #109 rights this wrong by providing necessary funding to the COPS Hiring Program. As major cities across the country are facing an increase in violent crime for the first time in years and community-police relations are strained, now is not the time to put additional stresses on state and local police forces by leaving them short-handed. Further, this funding will be essential to police and sheriff departments affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma as they look to rebuild.

NAPO urges you to support this amendment and ensure that the COPS Hiring Program remains strong and robust.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. JOHNSON, Esq.,
Executive Director.

NATIONAL FRATERNAL
ORDER OF POLICE,
Washington, DC, September 7, 2017.

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

Hon. KEVIN O. MCCARTHY,
Majority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY P. PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. STENY H. HOYER,
Minority Whip, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER AND REPRESENTATIVES MCCARTHY, PELOSI AND HOYER: I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our strong support for an amendment, introduced by Representatives William J. Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ) and David G. Reichert (R-WA), which would increase by \$100 million the appropriations for the hiring program administered by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) at the U.S. Department of Justice.

In 1994, Congress established the COPS Office and, in the decade which followed, our nation experienced a significant drop in crime rates. A large part of this success was the nation's commitment to community oriented policing, particularly its hiring component which helped get more officers on the beat. Community oriented policing has been the cornerstone of our nation's policing strategy for nearly 25 years and the hiring program is the reason this strategy works.

However, today, we have less police on our streets and neighborhoods than we did even a decade ago, making the community policing strategy very difficult to pursue. It is no surprise to our profession that crime, particularly violent crime, is on the rise. There are less men and women policing our streets, keeping the peace and interacting positively with the communities they protect. If we are serious about stemming the rise in crime and if we remain committed to the community policing strategy, then we must continue to fund the COPS hiring program.

It is for these reasons we urge you and all Members of Congress to vote in support of the Reichert-Pascrell amendment providing resources to the COPS hiring program.

On behalf of the more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I appreciate you considering our views on this important issue. If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Senior Advisor Jim Pasco in my Washington office.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CANTERBURY,
National President.

Mr. PASCRELL. Hiding behind procedural shenanigans to dodge support for our Nation's law enforcement officers and then pontificating when you come to the floor, that doesn't settle right with me or a lot of other people.

□ 1515

You have done it year after year. You are not going to do it this year? I am sorry. You can't have your cake and eat it.

I want to say this in closing. I want all of my colleagues to reflect on how,

on the one hand, you can claim support for law enforcement while, at the same time, cutting the resources you need to hire brave men and women who keep the neighborhood safe. I do not know the answer to that question, but I do know that, during this year's National Police Week, a week where we honor the brave men and women who lost their lives while serving in the line of duty, my friend and the chairman of the subcommittee—and I consider him a friend—stood on the House floor and said:

As the chairman of the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee, it is and continues to be my top priority to ensure that our law enforcement officers have the resources that they need.

Mr. Chairman, I yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE).

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of Mr. PASCRELL's amendment to increase COPS grant funding. The COPS program works. These resources have saved the lives of police officers and the citizenry they are tasked with protecting.

These funds often bridge the gap between the policing services a community requires and the capabilities of its existing force. These funds are merit based, prioritizing hiring and equipment where they are most needed and for the best use of the taxpaying public. In these challenging times for law enforcement, it is critical that we keep this program operational for our Nation's crime challenges.

Earlier today, we discussed legislation critical to the health and safety of our Nation's firefighters, and now we consider this important priority for our Nation's police officers.

I commend Mr. PASCRELL and Mr. REICHERT for their leadership in the Law Enforcement Caucus. I am proud to be a member of the caucus, and I join in their efforts to provide continued support for COPS funding and for expanding the capabilities of law enforcement to do their jobs and protect the public and themselves, which is critical to every officer in the Nation.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, but I have no objection to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chair, I share my colleagues' support for law enforcement and have no objection to this amendment; and I will work with the gentlemen to ensure that the COPS program is funded when we get to conference, we have a budget agreement across the Congress, and additional funds are made available. The COPS program is an essential one that will be at the top of the list.

My support for law enforcement is reflected in the \$100 million increase seen in the Byrne JAG Program, which is a

very flexible grant program for local law enforcement to use for a variety of reasons, including hiring police officers, including forensic work, lab work, and eliminating the backlog of rape kits, which is so important to getting dangerous criminals off the streets.

The Byrne JAG Grant Program is one that is increasingly popular and successful among the men and women of law enforcement, and that is why we have increased it by \$100 million in this year's Commerce, Justice, Science bill to keep the men and women of America safe, to support our law enforcement officers of whom we could not be prouder.

We are immensely grateful for the work of our first responders and law enforcement. The people of Houston, the people of southwest Louisiana, the people of Florida have all relied on them in this time of crisis with these terrible floods in Houston, the hurricane in Florida. I don't know what we would do without our first responders and men and women in uniform in the law enforcement community protecting us every day.

Mr. Chair, I have no objection to the gentleman's amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 112 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 112 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 314, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$30,200,000) (increased by \$30,200,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I support this bill and endorse division C, the CJS appropriations bill developed by Chairman CULBERSON. The appropriations included in division C implement the Science Committee's authorizations that have been enacted into law or passed by the House.

I offer an amendment today to simply increase physical and biological science research by one-half of 1 percent, or \$30.2 million, over the current funding within the \$6 billion National Science Foundation research account. Total spending is not increased, as NSF will adjust other areas of spending accordingly.

I ask the chairman and members to support the amendment and endorse this increase for the basic research that produces the scientific break-

throughs that fuel technological innovation, new industries, economic growth, and good jobs.

I yield to the chairman, Chairman CULBERSON, for his support of this amendment.

Mr. CULBERSON. Chairman SMITH, I support your amendment to increase the physical and biological sciences and will fight for it in conference.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman CULBERSON for his support and very much appreciate his help along the way.

On a separate matter, can the chairman assure me that the funding in the bill is fully consistent with the Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act enacted into law earlier this year?

Mr. CULBERSON. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SMITH of Texas. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I can. It is fully consistent with the authorization.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Texas, the chairman of the subcommittee, for his support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 113 OFFERED BY MR. SCOTT OF VIRGINIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 113 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise as the designee of the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), and I have an amendment at the desk, No. 113.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 346, strike line 18 and all that follows through line 2 on page 347.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would strike language in the bill that would prohibit the EEOC from using its funds to implement pay data collection.

Mr. Chairman, we know that racial and gender pay gaps exist in America. The Obama administration, a few years ago, created the National Equal Pay Task Force, which recommended this new data collection, the EEO-1 form, which would, for the first time, require employers to provide not just data on who is hired by race, sex, and ethnicity, but also to include pay data.

The EEOC has collected employer data since 1966. There has been no problem with confidentiality. So for 50 years we have gotten information on

the race, sex, and ethnicity of those employed, but we do not have the pay data, and the pay data would expose the pay disparities where all the women are paid less than men. You don't find that on the present EEO-1 form.

Recently, the OMB, without warning or transparency, rescinded the EEOC's plan to collect the data, which was to begin in March. This amendment would make it clear that Congress should honor the purpose and spirit of title VII and permit the EEOC to carry out its statutory obligation to collect necessary data needed to enforce civil rights laws.

Mr. Chair, I would hope that we would adopt this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Chairman, everyone here appreciates concerns about the ways of discrimination. The question is how to collect the data in an efficient way, and the new EEOC-1 form is certainly not the way to collect that data.

What do I mean by that, Mr. Chairman?

You have to compare apples to apples and oranges to oranges. It is not like we don't collect data already. We have 140 different data points on the EEOC-1 form. This would increase the number of data points to 3,306 that an employer potentially would have to report.

Mr. Chairman, if we had better data, that is all right, but let's take a specific example: a large hospital. The new form groups all professionals together. A hospital would have to report what it pays its professionals in the same category, what it pays its female professionals and its male professionals. But, Mr. Chairman, it includes nurses and surgeons in the same category. They are all professionals. In fact, in the United States, for instance, among registered nurses, we have about 3 million—89 percent—are females.

Now, in the United States, we have an estimated number of physicians and surgeons of about 900,000; 65 percent are males, only 35 percent females. They are all grouped in the same category for the EEOC-1 form.

So what would the result be? If you were in a hospital and you had nurses and you had employee surgeons, it would look like you were discriminating against women because the nurses get paid less, and your average salary is going to be less for your women because you have grouped surgeons in with nurses. Only a Federal Government bureaucrat could come up with an idea like that in order to gauge whether wage discrimination occurs.

The fact of the matter is it is even worse, Mr. Chairman, because, based on the reporting of these results, EEOC can go on a fishing expedition against

whatever institution it wants to that files this. And if we don't think that happens, Mr. Chairman, I am just going to say two words: Lois Lerner.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON), the chairman of the subcommittee, and I want to thank the chairman for attaching this section to the bill. It is an important section for our employers.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I join the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS) in opposing this amendment because the EEOC, under the previous administration, has created this monstrosity of a burden on small businesses, and they did such a poor job of it that the Office of Management and Budget actually put the requirement under review and suspended it.

Mr. Chair, I strongly oppose this amendment. I join the gentleman in seeking to protect small businesses from this unnecessary and burdensome requirement. EEOC already has a huge backlog of cases involving actual complaints of discrimination that need to be resolved, people who need to be protected, and EEOC should focus on doing their job, clearing up the backlog, protecting people from discrimination where they actually already have a real complaint, not looking for needles in haystacks.

Mr. Chair, I urge Members to join us in opposing this amendment, and I recommend a "no" vote.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Chairman, my, my, my. Here we go again. Another bill to protect the derrieres of big business, allowing them to hide crucial data from public scrutiny, information that would disclose pay disparities in the workplace.

It is a law, Mr. Chairman, that businesses must pay equal pay for equal work. So why is it that women and minorities make much less money than their white male counterparts doing similar work?

Mr. Chairman, let's pass this amendment. Root out pay discrimination, because it is time that all Americans are paid for their hard work and not for their gender or the color of their skin.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Chairman, I just say that it is absolutely true if we were looking at similar work, but the bill does not look at similar work. It looks at huge categories like, for instance, professionals in a hospital that include neurosurgeons and nurses. It is not similar work.

This is the worst kind of data gathering you can have by the Federal Government because, again, they use this to go after employers that they want to go after.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO).

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, if you hear the opposition to this amendment,

you would think that discrimination does not exist in this country any longer. Oh, how I wish that were the case.

Mr. Chairman, I support the amendment. This amendment would strike the harmful EEOC rider which blocks the EEOC from collecting data on the expanded EEO-1 form. This data collection would allow EEOC to better examine pay patterns by industry and/or geographic region and/or employer or establishment, conduct comprehensive statistical analysis, and evaluate the context of the discrimination allegations.

□ 1530

The EEOC will use the data primarily for early assessment of allegations of discrimination based on sex, ethnicity, or race. In short, the newly expanded form will be critical to closing gender and racial wage gaps. Preventing the collection of this information will result in less oversight and more wage discrimination.

Mr. Chair, I strongly support the amendment.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman from New York for his remarks. No one is naive enough to think that discrimination doesn't exist.

The question is: What tools should the Federal Government use?

And this certainly is not the tool that is helpful.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, the form is not a complaint. We know that there are pay disparities. This would allow the EEOC to notice gruesome problems and disparities and address them where appropriate.

In that hospital situation, it is obvious the situation is not appropriate, but we do know that pay disparities exist, and this would be information that would allow the EEOC to address them.

I would hope that we would allow the EEOC to do its job.

Mr. Chair, I support the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Chair, I agree with the gentleman. Pay disparities exist, but we need a precise tool. If we are going to give the Federal Government a tool with which to investigate and punish employers, it should be a surgical tool. This is not a surgical tool. This is an imprecise tool.

The EEOC, again, Mr. Chairman, has 3,360 data points. It groups high-wage professionals with low-wage professionals, and has nothing to do with discrimination. It is an imprecise tool. We should retain the language in the bill.

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

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia will be postponed.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 114 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 115 OFFERED BY MR. ZELDIN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 115 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the National Marine Fisheries Service to enforce Executive Order 13449 or section 697.7(b) of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, in the Block Island Transit Zone (as that term is defined in section 697.7(b)(3) of such title).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment to H.R. 3354 on behalf of the hardworking fishermen of Long Island and our entire region who are suffering more than ever under confusing and unfair regulations that are threatening to put them out of business.

This amendment is nearly identical to one I offered to the DHS division of this bill that unanimously passed by voice vote last week that related to the Coast Guard.

Today's amendment would bar the National Marine Fisheries Service from enforcing the ban on striped bass fishing in the Block Island Sound Transit Zone, a 15-mile stretch of water between Montauk Point, New York, and Block Island, Rhode Island.

No other species of fish are subject to an arbitrary ban in this section of Block Island Sound, famous for fishing and recreational boating.

The fact that the transit zone is considered a part of the EEZ means the ban on striped bass fishing extends into this local waterway. This means hardworking commercial fishermen, charter boat captains, and recreational anglers enjoying a day on the water with their family can suddenly go from fishing for striped bass legally to committing a Federal crime because they are drifted over the 3-mile line.

This ban was meant for the high seas, not a local waterway, arbitrarily declared to be part of the EEZ due to a boundary drawn on a map by a bureaucrat in Washington, D.C.

Every other species of fish popular in this area—scup; eel; squid; bluefish; even striped bass' cousin, black sea bass—are not subject to an unfair ban in this area. Just like they can legally with proper permits and allocations in adjacent State waters, local fishermen should be able to legally fish for striped bass in this area after State waters end and the transit zone begins.

Mr. Chairman, on the East End of Long Island, the coastal economy is our economy. So when unfair regulations impact fishermen, it also hurts the other local businesses like tackle shops, restaurants, gas stations, and hotels.

No one is more invested in protecting this important fishery to ensure it is there for the next season and the next generation than the hardworking men and women from my district who rely on fishing as a way of life.

This amendment does not create open season on stripers or lift the need for quota allocations or permits. In addition to a nearly identical amendment passing on a voice vote last week, last Congress, my standalone bill to address this issue, H.R. 3070, the EEZ Clarification Act, passed the House with another unanimous voice vote.

This amendment is supported by the Recreational Fishing Alliance, the Long Island Commercial Fishing Association, and the Montauk Boatmen and Captains Association.

Mr. Chair, I urge adoption of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chair, if the gentleman had brought some cooked fish, I probably wouldn't read this.

Mr. Chair, this is not an appropriate amendment for inclusion in an annual spending bill. Congress should not be in the business of micromanaging fish conservation in this manner.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is an interstate compact that was established in 1942 as a mechanism to allow Atlantic coastal States to join forces in managing their shared fishery resources.

For over 75 years, this Commission has served as a body for the Atlantic coastal States, coordinating the conservation and management of 27 near-shore fish species. Each State is represented on the Commission by three commissioners who participate in deliberations and interstate fisheries management, fisheries science, habitat conservation, and law enforcement.

Through these activities, the States collectively ensure the sound conservation of management of their shared coastal fishery resources. We should allow the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to do its job in managing fish stocks. We must not allow the House to be in the business of sec-

ond-guessing them and micromanaging fish regulations in particular locations.

There is a process currently in place for addressing these issues at the regional level, and we should allow that process to work. A stock assessment for striped bass is planned for next year. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission can make a determination as to whether it intends to ask the Federal Government to open up the Block Island Transit Zone to striped bass fishing.

Currently, the consensus position of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is that the fishing restrictions should remain in place. I believe that this is a bad precedent for Congress to interfere with this State-driven process.

For that reason, I oppose the amendment.

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

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Chair, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON).

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the gentleman's amendment. I understand his concern. I appreciate him bringing it to our attention. I understand similar language has already passed the House. I have no objection to him, and I urge Members to support it.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Chair, I wish to speak in favor of the amendment. How much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Chairman, my colleague on the other side speaking in opposition actually made a great argument for exactly why the amendment needs to be passed.

I completely agree, we should not be micromanaging the local fishery. And the best way to ensure that we are not micromanaging the local fishery is to pass this amendment.

The amendment is empowering the local regional council to be able to manage the striped bass fishery. If we don't pass the amendment, then we are micromanaging and we are taking away power from the local council managing the fishery.

So by passing this amendment, we are encouraging that regional council to manage the striped bass fishery in that area. Without passing the amendment, then we are micromanaging and we are not allowing any striped bass fishing at all.

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

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Chairman, the hardworking fishermen of Long Island's East End, our entire region, and our entire country are struggling. The special interest groups, knowing nothing about the East End, may incorrectly disagree. Fish do not adhere to arbitrary man-made boundaries drawn by bureaucrats.

This amendment, by no means, removes the management of this species,

including the quotas or allocations meant to protect against overfishing. Now, more than ever, we should be taking commonsense steps to help our fishermen get back to work. This simply allows for local fishermen to not be treated like criminals when they drift across an arbitrary 3-mile line.

Mr. Chair, I encourage support from my colleagues for this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair understands amendment No. 116 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 117 OFFERED BY MS. NORTON

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 117 printed in House Report 115-297.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to carry out section 3622(c)(2) of title 18, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

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

My amendment prohibits the Federal Bureau of Prisons from using Federal funds to carry out a law that requires individuals in halfway houses or on home confinement to pay a subsistence fee.

Currently, the subsistence fee for residents of halfway houses is 25 percent of income. This criminal justice reform amendment would improve reentry and reduce recidivism among the Nation's returning citizens.

Out of prison and almost always without a job or ability to support themselves, returning citizens have no ability to pay counterproductive subsistence fees while in halfway houses or on home confinement any more than they could have paid for their subsistence while in prison.

For the limited time individuals spend in halfway houses—up to 12 months—or on home confinement—up to 6 months—the subsistence fee requirement is a substantial burden on them and de minimis on the BOP, witness that the Congressional Budget Office concluded that this amendment would have no budgetary effect.

If returning citizens are lucky enough to find work at all, it would almost certainly be in minimum wage jobs. So the loss of 25 percent of their paychecks to subsistence fees would be a significant hurdle to successful reentry—which is what we are after—

making it extremely difficult to pay rent, child support, or fines and fees associated with their conviction, such as restitution.

Far from promoting financial responsibility, subsistence fees, while in custody, actually prevent returning citizens from meeting their financial obligations. Congress surely did not mean to impose additional burdens on returning citizens, setting them up to fail. Jobs and affordable housing are crucial to reentry but rare for returning citizens. Charging subsistence fees is antithetical to these goals.

The Department of Justice itself has recommended eliminating this fee. A November 2016 DOJ memorandum recommended developing a plan to limit the use of “counterproductive ‘subsistence’ fees imposed on indigent residents.”

It further stated:

The Bureau of Prisons’ process for collecting these subsistence fees is costly and administratively burdensome on both halfway houses and the Bureau. And these fees make it difficult for residents who typically earn minimum wage, if anything, to meet their other financial obligations, including restitution fines and child support.

□ 1545

The BOP already eliminated subsistence fees for individuals on home confinement, but that is only by regulation. However it was a step in the right direction.

My amendment would continue this trend and eliminate the fees for those in halfway houses as well. My amendment provides a critical reform that would help improve reentry and reduce recidivism.

Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I think it is entirely appropriate to make inmates help pay for some of the cost of their time in a halfway house. This program helps make inmate reentry into the community as seamless as possible. It has been a successful one. We want to reduce obstacles to make that transition without unnecessary burdens. However, this proposal would cut the Bureau of Prisons’ operations by about \$20 million. It would be forced to be absorbed by the Bureau of Prisons, that money that they are now receiving in reimbursement from transitioning inmates.

The Bureau of Prisons’ resources are already stretched very thin, Mr. Chairman, and this money would come out of other programs such as reentry services, antirecidivism, counseling, and inmate health and safety that are needed for inmate welfare and a successful transition into society.

While I appreciate the intent of the gentlewoman’s amendment, if the Bureau of Prisons were to have a cut of \$30 million, then prison safety and pris-

on services would be severely compromised, and that won’t help inmates or officers.

Mr. Chairman, I urge Members to join me in opposing this amendment. I urge a “no” vote, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from the District of Columbia has 1½ minutes remaining.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, my friend suggests that the BOP actually collects this \$20 million. I would submit to him and challenge him to show me that the burden of trying to collect these fees does not outweigh any actual reimbursement. These people have no jobs. If they had jobs, they would almost surely be minimum wage jobs.

I want to ask my friend if he would rather the BOP be paid the de minimis cost to the government—which they hardly ever collect, I am almost sure—or would they rather this money go to child support, or go to pay subsistence fees?

This is a cruel burden for people getting out of prison at a time when the crime rate is low. It sends inmates back to the streets, which is the only recourse they have for gaining money.

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

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 118 OFFERED BY MR. LATTA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 118 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives may be used to reclassify M855 ammunition as armor-piercing ammunition. The limitation described in this section shall not apply in the case of the administration of a tax or tariff.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer a commonsense amend-

ment that prevents the Federal Government from infringing on the Second Amendment rights of sportsmen and sportswomen in Ohio and from around the country.

Under the Obama administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives—the ATFE—proposed a new framework for interpreting a Gun Control Act and for determining which projectiles should qualify for the sporting purpose exemption. This framework would have withdrawn the exemptions for certain 5.56-millimeter ammunition, including the M855, because the ATFE felt that they should be classified as armor-piercing ammunition. The M855 is one of the most commonly used ammunitions in the United States and is widely used by target shooters and hunters. Ultimately, due to overwhelming public opposition, the ATFE withdrew their proposal.

In order to guard against new attempts to ban this popular and commonly used ammunition, I am offering this amendment, which prohibits the ATFE from using funds to reclassify M855 ammunition. Again, this amendment is codifying the ATFE’s own stance.

As a lifetime hunter and competitor at the National Rifle and Pistol Championship matches at Camp Perry in Ohio, I fully support our Second Amendment right to bear arms, and I oppose any efforts to intrude on these rights. I believe that is what the ATFE attempted to do in 2015.

I also thank the chairman from Texas for his work on this issue in the previous Congress. I ask my colleagues to join me in support of this amendment to protect the rights of sportsmen and sportswomen.

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

Mr. SERRANO. I rise in opposition to the amendment, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to this amendment. This amendment is very inappropriate for this bill and sets a bad precedent. We should not be tying the hands of the ATF as it attempts to keep our law enforcement officers safe.

The Law Enforcement Officers Protection Act established a process to ensure that police officers do not face a threat of armor-piercing bullets capable of being fired from concealable semiautomatic handguns. This law passed the House of Representatives in 1985 by a vote of 400-21. Then it later passed the Senate by a vote of 97-1.

For far too long we have dealt with irresponsible riders on appropriations bills that put limits on our ability to keep our communities and our law enforcement officers safe. This is just one more example.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the defeat of this amendment.

I may say to my colleagues that this is one of the issues that baffles me the

most. I don't hunt, but I respect people who do. I don't target practice and target shoot, but I respect people who do. But it seems that more and more every day, as we have more and more violence, we want more and more stronger weapons because otherwise we are going to lose our rights if we don't do so.

Mr. Chairman, our rights are at the ballot box and many other places, not just in our holster. I think if we continue to do this, first of all, this is the wrong place to do it, and, secondly, it is the wrong thing to do.

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

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of this amendment. Within 2 months of my becoming chairman of the subcommittee, the ATF did, indeed, attempt to ban this commonly used ammunition. Mr. LATTA is exactly right.

I met, at the time, with the Director of the ATF. I am grateful that the ATF withdrew the proposed ban. The Director of the ATF, Tom Brandon, is doing a good job of protecting America's Second Amendment rights. I want to ensure Mr. LATTA that I will continue to work to make sure that this rule is not put back into place.

As long as I am chairman of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, I will always zealously protect the unambiguous Second Amendment rights of every American to keep and bear arms.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly support the gentleman's amendment and I urge its adoption.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, just very briefly, I usually don't get up a second time, but to my friend—and he is my friend—it is a confusion in this country. This is not about protecting the Second Amendment. We all do. Everybody does.

It is about common sense and asking: Where does it stop? How do we keep it from growing? How violent can we get? How many people can we shoot?

That is what this is about. It is not about the Second Amendment. The Second Amendment is well protected. Trust me.

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

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Chairman, again, the ATF received over 80,000 comments on their proposal. In their own words: "The vast majority of the comments received were critical of the framework and include issues that deserve further study."

Again, this amendment is only codifying the ATF's own stance. Again, I ask my colleagues to protect the rights of our sportsmen and sportswomen, and to support the amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair understands that amendment No. 119 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 120 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 121 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 122 OFFERED BY MR. GAETZ

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 122 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available under this Act may be used to relocate the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Southeast Fisheries Science Center located in Virginia Key, Florida.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Chairman, I offer this amendment on behalf of several of my colleagues from the Sunshine State who are still responding to the devastation from Hurricane Irma that made landfall earlier this week. The sponsor of this amendment, Congressman DEUTCH, and the cosponsors, Congressman CURBELO, Congresswoman ROSLEHTINEN, Congressman HASTINGS, and Congresswoman WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, all represent districts that received significant damage from Hurricane Irma. Due to the damage in their districts, these Members—with strong interest in this amendment—were unable to return to D.C. in time to debate this issue on the House floor, so I am here pinch-hitting for them.

Recently there have been reports that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Fisheries headquarters, located on Virginia Key in south Florida, may move to another location. This amendment would prohibit that move. Such a move would be devastating to the longstanding research relationships that the NOAA facility on Virginia Key has with local universities, the local business community, and the marine industries of south Florida.

The NOAA research facility on Virginia Key has maintained a partnership with the University of Miami and the south Florida community since 1943. Over the years, the NOAA facility and their research teams have worked closely and collaborated on critical re-

search projects and scientific breakthroughs with the University of Miami, Florida Atlantic University, NOVA Southeastern University, Florida International University, the Palm Beach County Business Development Board, the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, the Beacon Council, the Marine Industries Association of South Florida, and other south Florida universities and business coalitions.

In fact, the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science is located across the street from the NOAA facility on Virginia Key. These south Florida universities and business councils recently signed a formal memorandum of understanding that encourages collaboration among research, education, business, and economic development organizations.

Some research projects that the NOAA facility on Virginia Key has worked on with south Florida universities and business councils include the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, creating a storm surge database for Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and something near and dear to my heart, Everglades restoration projects.

Moving the NOAA facility from Virginia Key would sever the bonds between the facility and the research universities in the south Florida community that create so much progress and so many jobs.

Again, I am grateful, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to introduce this amendment on behalf of my colleagues, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 123 OFFERED BY MR. SERRANO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 123 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for the operation of a correctional facility by a private party or contractor.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

□ 1600

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, my amendment is very straightforward. It would prohibit funds allocated in the bill from being used on the construction and operation of private, for-profit prisons.

The use of private prisons in our country is a crisis. More and more Americans are being locked up in facilities that don't respect basic human rights. One in four people behind bars worldwide is in a United States jail. That is right. A country with less than 5 percent of the world's population accounts for a quarter of all the world's prisoners. In fact, our prison population has continued to increase over the past few decades, even as statistics have shown a decrease in crime.

According to the FBI, violent and major property crimes are at historic lows. Nevertheless, more and more Americans are getting locked up. There are several reasons for this: from overly punitive mandatory minimum sentences to the cycle of poverty in the school-to-prison pipeline.

But one thing is for sure: so long as there is an incentive to build prison cells for profit, there will be more Americans unnecessarily behind bars. So long as we perpetuate the prison industrial complex, we will find it harder and harder to reduce our bloated prison population and make meaningful reforms to our criminal justice system.

Last year, an investigative reporter for *The Nation* uncovered horrible conditions at private correction facilities. Inmates were not receiving basic medical care, even items required by the Bureau of Prisons. In one case, they were kept in rows of bunk beds in un-air-conditioned domes, baking in the heat and the sun. In another case, the poor conditions sparked riots by the inmates.

Now, don't get me wrong. I feel no sympathy for violent criminals who have no remorse for what they did and deserve to be locked away for their crimes. But our Founders knew that we have an obligation to maintain respect for human life, and they enshrined it in our Constitution by protecting against cruel and unusual punishment.

When this report came to light, President Obama's Attorney General, Loretta Lynch, chose to act. The President issued a memorandum saying that we would phase out the use of private prisons, partially by seeking to reduce our prison population.

But in February, in keeping with this administration's policy of simply reversing everything President Obama did, Attorney General Jeff Sessions rescinded the order. He has since indicated that we won't continue to use private prisons.

We will use more of them, and we will lock up more people to fill them. What a disgrace. It is a waste of taxpayer dollars and a waste of countless American lives that could be turned around and made into successful citizens.

I am proud that in my home city of New York we have decided to divest our pension system from the for-profit prison industry. But now it is time for the Federal Government to divest itself as well.

We must continue to work on comprehensive criminal justice reform that

seeks to reform mandatory minimum sentences and curb the failed war on drugs and focus on reentry and reintegration so that those who serve time can become productive members of society, rather than lifelong inmates.

Tonight, we can start with this amendment and send a message to the Trump administration. Tonight, we can tell him not to reverse the progress made under President Obama and Attorney General Loretta Lynch. Tonight, we can say that making money off of incarcerating individuals is simply inconsistent with American values.

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

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. GRIFFITH). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I understand my colleague is offering this on behalf of another Member who could not be here today, but I rise in strong opposition to this amendment.

Let me make sure that we read it so the people understand what we are talking about. None of the funds made available by this act may be used for the operation of a correctional facility by a private party or contractor, period.

This would shut down every privately operated prison and halfway house in the United States. Where are those 34,000 criminals going to go? Well, you would have to just turn them loose on the streets or pack them in like sardines in existing prison cells or spend billions of dollars over the next few years to house them.

This amendment is dangerous, irresponsible, and risks the safety of the public. By cutting off immediately all funding to private prisons, these 34,000 inmates would have to be released onto the streets of America. I can't imagine what kind of disaster that would result in.

Furthermore, I have always believed in the Yellow Pages test. If you can find a government service in the Yellow Pages, you ought to try to privatize it. As a general rule, the private sector is going to find a way to do it more efficiently, less expensively, and in a way that is going to save taxpayer money.

My experience with the private prisons that have operated in the State of Texas quite successfully throughout the Bureau of Prisons is that they are providing better security, better food, better healthcare, better transportation, better housing, better facilities for both the inmate and the staff. They have been very successful across the country. These 34,000 inmates will have nowhere else to go.

This amendment is extremely dangerous, destructive, and irresponsible. I urge Members to join me in opposing this amendment not only for the risk to public safety, but for the damages it will do to the hardworking people of America.

Mr. Chairman, I urge Members to join me in voting "no," and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN).

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer my strong support of this amendment to end the proliferation of private prisons in our Federal justice system.

Following this administration's reversing President Obama's ban on the use of private prisons for Federal prisoners, the for-profit prison industry has not only been rejuvenated, but it is expanding.

Our criminal justice system's only purpose should be to reeducate and rehabilitate individuals who have made mistakes and are serving their sentence. No one should profit from our prison system.

That is what I plan to reintroduce the End For-Profit Prisons Act—legislation that will require the Bureau of Prisons and U.S. Marshals Service to end its contracts with for-profit confinement facilities and make critical changes to the reentry process for individuals who have been released from Federal prisons.

Mr. Chairman, I call for the immediate passage of this amendment.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I urge Members to join me in opposing this amendment to protect the public safety of the people of the United States, to ensure that our tax dollars are efficiently used, but, above all, to make sure these 34,000 inmates are not released onto the streets of America.

Mr. Chairman, I urge a "no" vote on this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 124 OFFERED BY MR. FLORES

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 124 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Chair, as the designee of the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE), I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to implement, administer, or enforce Executive Order No. 13547 (75 Fed. Reg. 43023, relating to the stewardship of oceans, coasts, and the Great Lakes), including the National Ocean Policy developed under such Executive Order.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman

from Texas (Mr. FLORES) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Chair, I rise today to offer an amendment with my good friend from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE), to address an ongoing bureaucratic overreach of our country's ocean and inland economies.

Our amendment bans the use of Federal funds for the implementation of the previous administration's National Ocean Policy. Executive Order 13547, signed by then-President Obama in 2010, requires that 60-plus bureaucracies essentially zone the oceans and the sources thereof.

The National Ocean Policy's requirements are an encroachment into the powers of Congress as set forth in Article I of our Constitution. These activities have not been authorized by Congress, nor have any appropriations ever been made by Congress to fund those activities. Yet the bureaucracies continue to act as if those are irrelevant prohibitions against their activities.

Mr. Chair, since 2010, this body has voted eight times in support of this amendment in a bipartisan manner. This language also was included in the base text to the fiscal year 2018 Energy and Water, Interior, and Agriculture Appropriations bills. We are looking to get it in the CJS bill now.

We are offering this amendment again because concerns remain that the National Ocean Policy extends far beyond restricting ocean activities and that it significantly impacts inland activity as well.

This amendment simply stops the funding of unauthorized bureaucratic overreach. It does not have any impact on coordination, planning, or congressionally authorized activities to take care of our Nation's important oceans.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to support the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

This executive order was signed by President Obama in July 2010. The National Ocean Policy is designed to improve stewardship of our oceans, coasts, islands, and Great Lakes by directing government agencies with differing mandates to coordinate and work together. The National Ocean Policy creates no new authorities.

The result of increased coordination is better stewardship of our national heritage through improved government efficiency, better development and use of data and information, and a process of open and transparent stakeholder engagement that informs decision-making. This increased coordination between agencies needs to take place on a Federal level to reduce inefficiency, waste, and redundancy between agencies.

The National Ocean Council brings together State, local, and Tribal governments and all of the oceans uses, including recreational and commercial fishermen, boaters, industries, scientists, and the public, to better plan for, manage, harmonize, and sustain uses of ocean and coastal resources.

The bottom line is that the National Ocean Policy offers an avenue for thoughtful planning around issues affecting ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes areas. It is the best choice for stakeholders looking to be involved in the process.

For all of these reasons, I urge the defeat of this amendment.

Before I reserve the balance of my time, on a personal note, it is amazing how much work we have done in the south Bronx with what little bodies of water and green space we have, how much we cherish it, and how much we feel that it has been a gift that we continue to work on. We no longer have earmarks, but when we did, it did a great job in restoring a lot of areas.

I see how, in other parts of the country and at the Federal level, we want to undo years and years of progress. I keep thinking of Republican leaders who took a different view. Teddy Roosevelt would be so upset at so much of what we are doing today because he saw the world in a different way. Thank God that he was our President for that period of time when we needed him for that particular issue.

Just on a personal note, I understand that a lot of people see the world differently than I do. Where I come from, tonight people know they now have places where they can row a boat, where they can eventually swim, where they can fish, and where a beaver named Jose has returned.

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

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON).

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I have no objection to the gentleman's amendment, and I support it. We have had it in previous bills. I hope the House will adopt it in this bill as well.

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Chair, in closing, the issue is not whether or not we want to take care of oceans. We all agree that we should take care of our oceans. We all believe in being good stewards of the environmental and economic interest in our oceans. But, Mr. Chair, we also believe in trying to make sure that we have a government that adheres to the Constitution.

□ 1615

Under Article I of the Constitution, all legislative powers are returned to Congress—not some, all. That is the issue at stake here. The Obama administration's National Ocean Policy has overstepped constitutional statutory bounds.

Congress did pass a bill in the 106th Congress to create an Ocean Commission to review and make recommenda-

tions. Since then, the 108th, 109th, 110th, and 111th Congresses each looked at those recommendations and decided to take no legislative action. This must have been what caused then-President Obama to move forward with his executive order and to try to go around Congress. There have been no appropriations for these activities.

Additionally, 81 groups have signed a letter asking the Appropriations Committee to include this language to address this unconstitutional bureaucratic overreach in their annual appropriations bills.

Again, this is a simple amendment that stands up for the constitutional rights of this body to create the statutes under which this activity can be conducted and to transparently appropriate the funds which authorize activities, should it so choose.

We are not against Ocean planning, as I said at the outset of this. What we are for, though, is the Constitution. Again, this amendment has been adopted with bipartisan support in this body eight times since 2010.

I want to thank the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE), for his work on this amendment, as well as to thank Chairman CULBERSON for his consideration. I urge my colleagues to support this straightforward amendment.

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

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 125 OFFERED BY MR. BUCK

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 125 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act under the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program may be used in contravention of section 642 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak about my amendment to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies division of H.R. 3354.

Mr. Chairman, the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program, or SCAAP, is intended to further local law enforcement's ability to adhere to Federal immigration law. SCAAP provides States and localities with Federal funds to help offset correctional costs related to incarcerating undocumented criminal aliens with at least one felony or two misdemeanor convictions.

However, in recent years, the number of jurisdictions receiving SCAAP funding that have adopted sanctuary policies, allowing violent criminal aliens to go free, has skyrocketed. My amendment would cut off SCAAP money for cities that violate the intent of these funds. These sanctuary cities must not continue using taxpayer money to flagrantly violate Federal immigration law and put American citizens at risk.

Look no further than my home State of Colorado in the case of Mr. Ever Valles. Back in October, Mr. Valles was picked up on charges, including possession of a weapon, vehicle theft, and eluding. He also had a history of gang involvement.

ICE placed a detainer on Mr. Valles, but Denver officials failed to honor the Federal detainer, releasing him without providing the proper notice to ICE officials. Upon his release, Mr. Valles took part in robbing and shooting 32-year-old Tim Cruz at an RTD train station. He has been charged with first-degree murder.

Sanctuary policies just don't break the law. They place people's lives in danger. We cannot continue allowing these jurisdiction sanctuary cities to use taxpayer money to further these misguided policies. In fact, the Office of Justice Programs' own website states that applicants for SCAAP funds are required to certify compliance with all applicable Federal laws at the time of application. It goes on to say that, if the OJP receives information indicating that an applicant violated the statute related to sanctuary policies, that the applicant will be investigated by the inspector general and could be subject to criminal and civil penalties.

A recent U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency report identified the top 10 jurisdictions with the highest volume of detainers issued that restrict cooperation with ICE. Not surprisingly, every one of those sanctuary cities received SCAAP awards in fiscal year 2016.

Mr. Chairman, sanctuary cities stand against the rule of law. These jurisdictions support illegal immigration and allow individuals who violate the law to remain free. We cannot allow these jurisdictions to continue these harmful policies on the American people's dime. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

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

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I oppose this unnecessary amendment. All this amendment does is prohibit use of funding to violate current law.

As we all know, Federal grant recipients of the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program, or SCAAP, are not using Federal funds in contravention of Federal law.

The amendment is really about so-called sanctuary cities. This and other amendments like this seek to effectively overthrow community policing by diverting State and local police from their core mission of protecting public safety. Imposing this one-size-fits-all approach would degrade trust between immigrant communities and local police, thereby undermining public safety in all communities and for all residents.

We should not be attempting by word or deed to turn our local law enforcement into an arm of Federal immigration efforts. I live in a sanctuary city, and I can tell you with great certainty that amendments like this one will make my hometown less safe. People will be less likely to report crimes and cooperate with investigations simply because of the concern that they will be deported for interacting with local law enforcement.

What we need is broad and humane immigration reform which would place undocumented immigrants on a workable and earned path to citizenship, thereby allowing them to contribute even more to their families, communities, and our country.

Our immigration system is broken, but this amendment does nothing to fix it. I urge my colleagues to defeat this amendment.

And I must say, the sanctuary cities, as they are called, have a lot of support from law enforcement throughout the Nation because they know that they need to speak to people in the community and get information on who the bad guys are or who the bad gals are, number one.

Number two, this is going to be a boom for the legal profession because just about every city and every State is going to sue if this ever became law. And we actually started holding monies back because they know how much help is brought to their community and how much they want to keep it in place.

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

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, may I ask how much time I have left.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON).

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the gentleman from Colorado's amendment.

When Kate Steinle was murdered, I was the new chairman of this sub-

committee, and I swore that I would find a way to cut off Federal funding to these sanctuary cities. That young lady's murder could have been prevented had the city of San Francisco simply cooperated with Federal immigration authorities and handed that criminal over to be deported immediately. That is all we are talking about here.

With the previous administration, Attorney General Lynch, I met with her as the CFO, so to speak, of the DOJ. I used the power of the purse that the Congress was entrusted with by the Founders of our constituents to persuade the previous Attorney General to adopt precisely the policy that Mr. BUCK is attempting to make sure that we continue to follow.

I know, under Attorney General Sessions' leadership, sanctuary cities are not going to receive Federal money. That policy was first put in place last summer. At my insistence, current guidelines in the Department of Justice grant policies are that a local law enforcement agency has to certify that they are cooperating 100 percent of the time with Federal immigration authorities about individuals in local jails or State prisons. That is all this is.

If a State prison or local jail is housing someone who was in the country illegally when they committed the crime and were sentenced, before they are released, current Department of Justice policy adopted last summer, being enforced today by Attorney General Sessions, says you have to tell Federal authorities you are about to release this person so they can be immediately deported. That is common sense. It protects public safety, and it is a wise use of our tax dollars.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I yield an additional 20 seconds to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, the days of sanctuary cities accepting Federal money and ignoring Federal law are over. The policy under this administration, the policy I insisted be adopted last summer, is, if you want Federal money, follow Federal law, or don't ask.

I support the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I would just ask my colleagues to support my amendment, and I thank the chairman of the subcommittee for his support.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by

the gentleman from Colorado will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 126 OFFERED BY MR. AMASH

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 126 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. AMASH. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for activities prohibited by the order issued by the Attorney General entitled "Prohibition on Certain Federal Adoptions of Seizures by State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies" (Order No. 3488-2015, dated January 16, 2015) or the order entitled "Prohibition on Certain Federal Adoptions of Seizures by State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies" (Order No. 3485-2015, dated January 12, 2015).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. AMASH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. AMASH. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, each year the Federal Government uses civil asset forfeiture to take billions of dollars' worth of property from people who have not been charged with any crime. It is an unconstitutional practice that is used to violate the due process rights of innocent people.

Fortunately, some States have passed laws to limit asset forfeiture; but the Federal Government helps State law enforcement evade these requirements by doing adoptive forfeitures where the Federal Government accepts property seized by the State law enforcement, forfeits it under Federal law, and gives the State agency a cut of the proceeds.

Mr. Chairman, this practice is outrageous. It supplants the authority of States to regulate their own law enforcement, and it further mires the Federal Government in unconstitutional asset forfeitures.

In 2015, the Department of Justice placed limits on adoptive forfeiture, prohibiting the Federal Government from accepting property seized by local police when there is no involvement by Federal law enforcement and the property does not relate to public safety. These are commonsense restrictions that prevent the most egregious seizures.

Unfortunately, these restrictions were revoked in June of this year. My amendment would restore them by prohibiting the use of funds to do adoptive forfeitures that were banned under the 2015 rules.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON).

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Chairman, I stand in support of the amendment.

The amendment does a great deal to restore our constitutional right to due

process and protects the institution of federalism. The equitable sharing program incentivizes local law enforcement agencies to ignore State laws regarding civil asset forfeiture in favor of Federal law.

After Ohio reformed civil asset forfeiture laws, local agencies have been able to bypass, just as the gentleman from Michigan described. DOJ allows this even when Federal officials play no role in the investigation or the arrest. Congressman AMASH's amendment would end this policy.

This program violates the independence of State's police powers and promotes an asset forfeiture scheme that undermines due process. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

□ 1630

Mr. AMASH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD).

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues strongly to adopt this amendment.

Attorney General Sessions' recent announcement to expand civil action forfeiture really allows local law enforcement to bypass State laws and seize property from people with the lowest possible burden of evidence and without concern whether the person is eventually charged or convicted.

While some will tell you this is necessary to go after big drug cartels, the reality is the median value of the adoptive forfeiture seizures has been around \$9,000—not exactly the sign of any major drug trafficking operation.

These adoptive forfeiture efforts tend to target poor neighborhoods. Between 2012 and 2017, the median value of assets seized by Cook County police was just over \$1,000. In Philadelphia, in 2015, the median value was \$192.

This policy does not discriminate between the innocent and the guilty.

With the responsibility on private citizens to prove their innocence, rather than law enforcement to prove guilt, innocent people without legal representation often never see their money or property again, and even those who are proven innocent have no promise that their property will be returned.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. AMASH. Mr. Chairman, I yield an additional 15 seconds to the gentleman.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Chairman, the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution exists to protect the citizens of this country from being deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. In practice and principle, adoptive forfeiture is a violation of that Fourth Amendment. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. AMASH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 45 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER).

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment.

Asset forfeiture is a crime against the American people, committed by

their own government. This is absolutely opposite of what our people who wrote the Constitution of the United States had in mind.

For the government to take away someone's property and then say, "You have to prove you are innocent to get it back," that is totally in contrast to the limited government, individual responsibility, individual freedom, and property rights concepts that our Founding Fathers had in mind.

If we believe in freedom and if we believe in liberty, let's not open up the government to be able to steal our property and then we have to go to court. We have lost all of our due process. It is now our obligation to prove that we are innocent until proven guilty. That is ridiculous. Vote for this amendment and protect the freedom of our people.

Mr. Chair, I rise as a proud co-sponsor in strong support of the Amash-Sanford-Labrador-Rohrabacher Amendment.

Civil asset forfeiture is a widely abused law enforcement tactic in which federal, state and local law enforcement agencies seize property, often with little or no evidence that a crime has been committed. The person whose property has been seized then has to hire an attorney and prove their innocence in order to try to get their property back.

Police departments have a strong incentive to abuse civil asset forfeiture because they get to keep these ill-gotten gains for their own use. Even when state legislatures have enacted important safeguards against abuse, the Justice Department has helped local police departments to circumvent such restrictions by "adopting" seizures that would be illegal under state law, and then sharing the proceeds with local law enforcement.

In January 2015, under the Obama Administration, the Justice Department issued two crucial orders to stop this circumvention of state, raw. Unfortunately, the current Justice Department has reversed those orders, and Congress must now take action.

This amendment will prohibit the Justice Department from using any money in this bill to engage in activities not allowed by the 2015 orders. I ask my colleagues to stop the assaults against law-abiding citizens by the people who are supposed to protect them. Vote for the Amash-Sanford-Labrador-Rohrabacher Amendment.

Mr. AMASH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I stand here also to express my strong support for the Amash amendment.

Civil asset forfeiture without limits presents one of the strongest threats to our civil, property, and constitutional rights. It creates a reverse incentive for law enforcement to seek profit over justice.

Mr. Chairman, I encourage all of my colleagues to support this great amendment.

Mr. AMASH. Mr. Chairman, how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Michigan has 10 seconds remaining.

Mr. AMASH. Mr. Chairman, I encourage everyone to support this amendment. We must defend the Fifth

Amendment and we must protect property rights.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. AMASH).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 127 OFFERED BY MR. ROSKAM

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 127 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to pay a performance award to any officer or employee of the Money Laundering and Asset Recovery Section of the Department of Justice under section 5384 or 4505a of title 5, United States Code, prior to the date on which the Department of Justice rules on all petitions for remission or mitigation in judicial forfeiture cases pursuant to section 9.4 of title 28, Code of Federal Regulations, for which the Internal Revenue Service has submitted a report of its investigation and its recommendation to the Department of Justice on or before June 26, 2017.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, let me tell you a quick story. Andrew Clyde served three combat tours in Iraq, after which he returned home and opened a store in Georgia. Mr. Clyde had an insurance policy that only covered up to \$10,000 in off-premises losses. So like any reasonable person, he never brought more than \$10,000 in cash with him when he was making his nightly deposits.

Do you know what happened next?

The Internal Revenue Service noticed that he was depositing just under \$10,000 in cash regularly, so they took all of his cash. That is \$950,000.

If you are like most people, you are confused when you first hear about this. As it turns out, Mr. Clyde was in violation of a Federal law known as structuring, which is the intentional avoidance of Federal reporting requirements by staying below \$10,000 in cash deposits. This law was intended to catch large-scale criminal enterprises, mobsters, terrorists, and human traffickers, not veterans like Mr. Clyde.

When structuring is believed to have occurred, the IRS can use its civil asset forfeiture authority to seize funds in question and force the owner to prove that the money was earned legally.

Well, in this instance, Andrew Clyde earned the money legally and had a legitimate reason for depositing less than \$10,000. So you would assume that

Mr. Clyde would have ended this with the IRS talking to him and then saying: Oh, we made a mistake. Clearly you are not a mobster or a terrorist. Thank you for your service. Here is your life savings back.

But, no, that is not what happened, Mr. Chairman. That is not how the story ended.

Instead, the IRS threatened him with criminal structuring charges until he agreed to settle with the agency and give them \$50,000, after he had already spent \$100,000 in legal fees. He lost \$150,000 simply because he wanted to make sure that his cash deposits were low enough to be insured. If that sounds messed up to you, Mr. Chairman, that is because it is.

Now, here is the good news. The House recently passed, unanimously, H.R. 1843, the RESPECT Act. This bill prohibits the IRS from seizing funds from individuals, unless there is a probable cause that the money was earned illegally or connected to an illegal activity. But there is still the problem of those people who are already victims of this abuse by our government in civil asset forfeiture.

Now, since we began our bipartisan investigation of the IRS's civil asset forfeiture practices a couple of years ago, the IRS has apologized for past behavior, which is good; they worked quickly to reach out to possible victims, which is good; and they subsequently responded to the 454 petitions that they received. As of March 1, the IRS returned over \$6 million in seized funds. Good news. So far so good.

But the plot continues, and here is where we are right now. It turns out that a majority of the petitions were actually referred to the Department of Justice. The IRS referred the DOJ 255 cases, and has recommended that the DOJ return \$16 million to taxpayers whom they do not suspect of being conducted in any way to illegal activity. Unfortunately, the Department of Justice has not been nearly as interested in correcting these past wrongdoings.

As of July, the Department of Justice responded only to 73 of the outstanding 255 cases. This is completely unacceptable. The Federal Government took legally earned money from taxpayers, and the Department of Justice hasn't given the majority of these people a response, including Andrew Clyde.

The Roskam-Neal amendment, offered by myself and Mr. NEAL, the ranking member from Massachusetts on the Ways and Means Committee, is very simple. It simply says this: No one in the relevant section of the Department of Justice can get a performance bonus until they finish reviewing the backlog of cases that the IRS has sent them. We are not asking the Department of Justice to do anything extraordinary, Mr. Chairman. We are simply asking them to do their job. And until they do their job, the bare minimum that taxpayers can expect is that we at least don't reward these people with bonuses.

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

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, even though I am not opposed to it.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Chairman, I strongly support the amendment. I will work with Mr. ROSKAM as the CFO of the DOJ and do whatever is necessary to help make sure they review these cases rapidly and return people's money to their rightful owners.

Once again, Mr. ROSKAM has brought a great amendment to the House floor. I look forward to working with him to ensure that his intent is implemented as quickly as possible.

Mr. Chairman, I urge Members to support the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his support.

I thank the chairman for his assurance and his hard work on this. I am confident that this will be resolved.

Mr. Chairman, I have got to tell you that the discussions that this House has made on a bipartisan basis with the Department of Justice have been obtuse and they have been ridiculous. I have been embarrassed by the interactions that I have had with senior staff members at the Department of Justice on this issue.

The Ways and Means Subcommittee has been scandalized by this, and we are going to do something about it. So here, today, we are rising on both sides of the aisle to bring remedy, rescue, and restoration to our citizens.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 128 printed in House Report 115-297.

AMENDMENT NO. 129 OFFERED BY MR. WALBERG

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 129 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to carry out Order Number 3946-2017 of the Attorney General, issued July 19, 2017.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, in recent years, we have seen a growing

number of instances where the government has confiscated private property from citizens and small businesses without any criminal conviction, or even criminal charges.

Under current civil forfeiture law, the system is ripe for abuse, and has undermined the constitutional rights of far too many Americans.

In response, 24 States and the District of Columbia have adopted reforms to their forfeiture laws.

However, through a practice known as adoptive seizures, Federal agencies, like the Department of Justice, can circumvent State and local laws to continue this practice.

In July, the Department of Justice announced a continuation and expansion of civil forfeiture, reversing a previous ban on adoptive seizures.

My bipartisan amendment, introduced with Representatives COHEN, MCCLINTOCK, and ELLISON, would prohibit funds for the DOJ to implement this expansion.

Our amendment is also supported by a broad and diverse coalition of organizations, including the American Conservative Union, the Institute for Justice, the NAACP, and the ACLU.

Today's vote takes an important step in halting the practice of adoptive seizures, protecting the rights of States and localities, and limiting some future abuses.

Ultimately, this amendment is a starting point, and we can't stop here. Congress must submit more comprehensive changes into law, changes like those included in the Fifth Amendment Integrity Restoration Act, my bipartisan bill, that calls for sweeping reforms to curb civil asset forfeiture abuse.

America was founded on the principles of due process and property rights, and these principles must be vigorously defended.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, even though I am not opposed to it.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Tennessee is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. WALBERG for bringing this amendment and for the bills he has proposed; and I thank Senator PAUL as well.

I think criminal asset forfeiture is one of the worst, most heinous, most despicable, and most vile laws that we have ever put on the books. It is an assault on human beings and State governments on State sovereignty and on individuals having a right to their property and having a right to a hearing and being found guilty of something before their property is taken.

The way it is today, the government can come in, and they don't even have to charge you with a crime, and they can take your car or your money or

whatever else they find. It is an un-American a thing as has ever existed.

Mr. WALBERG laid out some of the supporters: the ACLU, NAACP, and then it goes around to some conservative worlds. There are many times I have found that you get 360 degrees where the liberals and the conservatives come together and agree on libertarian principles that something needs to happen.

□ 1645

When you have got RAND PAUL, KEITH ELLISON, Mr. WALBERG, and myself all on the same thing, this needs to happen. So we need to pass it now.

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chair, I thank Mr. COHEN for yielding. I think that what he said is absolutely true. When you do a complete circle, you have come to a point of understanding that something is amiss, in good will we work together in a bipartisan fashion to fix it.

There can be useful issues relative to civil assets, but it needs to follow due process. Our civil liberties must be protected. We want to support law enforcement; it is a tough job. But, nonetheless, in our great country, liberty is still the most important ideal that we have, and the freedom that makes us different from other nations.

Mr. Chair, I thank my good friend for his support, and I would ask my colleagues to support it.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 130 OFFERED BY MR. RASKIN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 130 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to implement Order Number 3946-2017 of the Attorney General allowing Department of Justice components and agencies to forfeit assets seized by State or local law enforcement agencies.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, I also want to thank my colleagues, Mr. SENBRENNER, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. MOONEY, for cosponsoring and supporting this amendment.

It is a bipartisan amendment and, I think, a natural complement to the excellent amendments just added from

Mr. WALBERG and also from Mr. AMASH. It would prohibit funding made available by this act from being used to implement the recent DOJ policy change, which dramatically expands the Federal Government's civil Asset Forfeiture Program.

The new policy revives a controversial and, I think, unconstitutional practice that has been decried by Americans and Members of Congress across the political spectrum who hold dear the idea of due process and the presumption of innocence as it applies not just to us as people but also to our private property as well.

The new policy allows State and local law enforcement to circumvent State laws limiting civil asset forfeiture by having Federal agencies adopt State and local cases. Under this dubious practice, law enforcement may seize a citizen's cash and property simply because someone suspects it of being connected to criminal activity without convicting, indicting, arresting, or even charging the property owner with having committed a crime and without proving or even alleging in court that the property is somehow connected to criminal activity.

Hundreds of millions of dollars worth of property have been seized in this way by law enforcement on an officer's mere suspicion. In order to get your property back, you have to go out and hire a lawyer, you have to go to court, and you have to prove that your property was obtained through innocent means, completely reversing the constitutional presumption of innocence that is at the heart of due process.

This practice is an outrageous violation of property rights, of civil liberties, and of the due process principle that we are all presumed to be innocent as American citizens, and it raises profound questions also under the Takings Clause, which forbids the taking of private property without just compensation by the government.

Although the resurrected policy contains a few new safeguards, they will not remotely prevent abusive seizures or eliminate the profit incentives that encourage rampant civil asset forfeiture. The policy will lead to the same abuses uncovered in 2014.

A Washington Post investigation found that, since 2001, State and local law enforcement had made more than 55,000 seizures of cash and property worth nearly \$2.5 billion under the civil Asset Forfeiture Program.

One striking case discussed by The New York Times was of Carole Hinders, owner of a restaurant in Arnolds Park, Iowa, who deposited her cash earnings in the bank on a weekly basis, and it was always under \$10,000. She was suspected of illegally structuring her deposits, although they were perfectly innocent, and the IRS simply seized \$33,000 from her, causing huge problems for her business.

Another case that caught my eye was of a Chinese-American restaurateur who was traveling with a large sum of

money because he was about to buy a building for his new restaurant. He had been saving for decades to buy his own restaurant. He was stopped by the police and became understandably very anxious during the encounter. The police said that they found the large sum of cash money he had with him suspicious, and his nervous demeanor also telling, and they simply seized his money. They detained him for 2 hours. They let him go. They didn't charge him with anything, but they seized his money, his life savings that he had planned to use to purchase the building for his restaurant. He was a lucky one in that he was able, eventually years later, to get his money back, but he lost the business deal and his deposit in the process.

In 2014, the value of money and property seized under civil asset forfeitures by Federal law enforcement exceeded the total of losses in money and property from burglaries in our country. That means our people lost more money at the hands of the government through civil asset forfeiture than from being burglarized.

Because of the abuses revealed in 2015, the DOJ imposed restrictions to limit when the Federal Government could adopt forfeiture cases, and banned State and local police from using Federal law to seize cash and property without criminal charges or warrants, but the new policy lifts these restrictions and places the Federal Government back on the side of the trampling of people's constitutional rights.

With civil asset forfeiture, people cannot only lose their property without being charged with a crime, they can also lose their property when someone else allegedly uses their property in commission of a crime.

A Michigan woman lost a car she co-owned with her husband because he was caught soliciting prostitution while driving her car.

This policy runs roughshod over the property rights of the innocent and burdens our citizens with onerous costs to get their property back that they never should have lost in the first place.

Mr. Chair, Democrats, Republicans, and Independents all agree that civil asset forfeiture is a serious threat to constitutional values.

Mr. Chair, I urge all of us to vote for this important amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. COLE OF OKLAHOMA

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chairman, pursuant to House Resolution 504, as the designee of Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, I offer amendments en bloc No. 4.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc No. 4 consisting of amendment Nos. 132, 140, 143, 144, 146,

147, 148, 151, 153, 157, 159, 162, 163, 166, 177, 181, and 185, printed in House Report 115-297, offered by Mr. COLE of Oklahoma:

AMENDMENT NO. 132 OFFERED BY MS. LEE OF CALIFORNIA

Page 697, line 23, after the dollar amount, insert the following: "(increased by \$16,000,000)".

Page 698, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert the following: "(increased by \$16,000,000)".

Page 718, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert the following: "(decreased by \$16,000,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 140 OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI OF OREGON

Page 718, line 15, after the first dollar amount insert "(increased by \$906,000) (decreased by \$906,000)".

Page 719, line 14, after the dollar amount insert "(increased by \$906,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 143 OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI OF OREGON

Page 734, line 10, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$18,270,000) (increased by \$18,270,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 144 OFFERED BY MR. KILDEE OF MICHIGAN

Page 735, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$1,000,000)".

Page 740, line 3, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$1,000,000)".

Page 740, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$1,000,000)".

Page 770, line 18, after the first dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$3,000,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 146 OFFERED BY MR. NOLAN OF MINNESOTA

Page 738, line 21, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$300,000)".

Page 770, line 18, after the first dollar amount, insert "(decreased by \$300,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 147 OFFERED BY MR. KEATING OF MASSACHUSETTS

Page 738, line 21, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$1,000,000)".

Page 770, line 18, after the first dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$1,000,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 148 OFFERED BY MR. MAST OF FLORIDA

Page 740, line 3, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$400,000)".

Page 741, line 16, after the first dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$400,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 151 OFFERED BY MR. DESAULNIER OF CALIFORNIA

Page 744, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$1,000,000)".

Page 770, line 18, after the first dollar amount, insert "(decreased by \$1,000,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 153 OFFERED BY MR. TONKO OF NEW YORK

Page 751, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$12,500,000) (increased by \$12,500,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 157 OFFERED BY MR. DENHAM OF CALIFORNIA

Page 763, line 3, after the first dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$1,000,000) (increased by \$1,000,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 154 OFFERED BY MS. MCSALLY OF ARIZONA

Page 767, line 24, insert "(increased by \$14,232,847)" after the dollar amount.

Page 805, line 25, insert "(reduced by \$14,232,847)" after the dollar amount.

AMENDMENT NO. 162 OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI OF OREGON

Page 794, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$8,900,000)".

Page 794, line 15, after the second dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$8,900,000)".

Page 794, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$8,900,000)".

Page 805, line 25, after the dollar amount, insert "(decreased by \$8,900,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 163 OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI OF OREGON

Page 795, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$1,150,000,000) (reduced by \$1,150,000,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 166 OFFERED BY MR. DESAULNIER OF CALIFORNIA

Page 796, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert the following: "(increased by \$10,000,000)".

Page 805, line 25, after the dollar amount, insert the following: "(decreased by \$10,000,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 177 OFFERED BY MR. MURPHY OF PENNSYLVANIA

At the end of division F (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____ For "Health Resources and Services Administration—Health Workforce" for establishing and carrying out the training demonstration grant program, as authorized by section 760 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 294k), there is hereby appropriated \$10,000,000, and the amount otherwise provided by this Act for "Health Resources and Services Administration—Program Management" is hereby reduced by \$11,750,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 181 OFFERED BY MS. SEWELL OF ALABAMA

At the end of division F (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____ None of the funds made available by this Act to carry out the Child Care Development Block Grant Act of 1990 may be distributed to any child care provider if a localized list of providers (as mentioned in part 98 of title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations, applicable to the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, and in the final rule published in the Federal Register, Vol. 81, No. 190, on Sept. 30, 2016) indicates that a serious injury or death occurred at the provider due to a substantiated health or safety violation.

AMENDMENT NO. 185 OFFERED BY MR. GRIFFITH OF VIRGINIA

At the end of division F (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____ For "Health Resources and Services Administration—Rural Health" to carry out section 427(a) of the Federal Coal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1969, there is hereby appropriated, and the amount otherwise provided by this Act for "Health Resources and Services Administration—Program Management" is hereby reduced by, \$2,734,000.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chairman, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAULO), who is the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education approved this list of amendments last week, along with myself, and was looking forward to discussing them and others with all of us here today.

Unfortunately, the gentlewoman is not able to be here this week due to the death of her beloved mother, Luisa DeLauro, who passed away over the weekend at the age of 103.

The gentlewoman from Connecticut and I have something in common on this point: neither of us would likely be a Member of this body today were it not for the inspiration and role model of our mothers, both of whom were actively involved in local politics.

Like my own late mother, Helen Cole, who served in the Oklahoma House and Senate and as mayor of our home town of Moore, Oklahoma, Luisa DeLauro served 35 years as a member of the New Haven, Connecticut, Board of Aldermen, the longest tenure in the city's history. She served with six different mayors and dedicated her time to improving the lives of seniors and the working poor.

Her daughter has most certainly followed in her footsteps, bringing her passion, dedication, and tirelessness for these same causes to the Halls of Congress.

We are sorry the gentlewoman cannot be with us today. We know she is honoring her mother and her mother's legacy, and making her mother proud of her work here.

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

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Chairman, first I would like to join my colleague in sending our thoughts and condolences to the DeLauro family.

Ranking Member DELAURO's mother, Luisa, passed away this weekend at the age of 103. The family is together this week in New Haven, Connecticut.

Luisa DeLauro was an inspiration to her daughter, ROSA, to the city of New Haven, and to us all. Luisa was the longest serving member of the New Haven Board of Aldermen in the city's history, serving 35 years.

She set an example for women everywhere as she fought to ensure that women's voices were heard in the male-dominated arena of politics.

As ROSA has said, her mother understood that politics was an avenue for change, a way to help people who were struggling, and she dedicated her service to issues involving seniors, the working poor, and her beloved neighborhood of Wooster Square, which she helped to designate as New Haven's first historic district.

Luisa was a beloved local leader with an open-door policy, who developed friendships that lasted a lifetime, but she was also well known as a strong-willed fighter for issues she believed in, and it is clear that her dedication and fierce passion will live on in her daughter, our friend, ROSA.

Even though Luisa DeLauro passed away at 103, for ROSA and her family, it still feels like she was taken too soon. My thoughts are with my good friend, ROSA DELAURO, and the entire DeLauro family.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of the en bloc amendment, which includes

my bipartisan amendment to highlight the need to fully fund Student Support and Academic Enrichment grants.

These grants are critical to the successful implementation of title IV of the Every Student Succeeds Act. Schools across the country can use the Student Support grants to give all students access to a well-rounded education.

The grant program is also important because it was created to allocate funding by formula, which levels the playing field so small school districts can get their fair share of funding.

I am disappointed that this bill funds Student Support grants significantly lower than the original \$1.65 billion authorized in the Every Student Succeeds Act, and I hope there will be an opportunity in the Senate to increase funding for these critical Student Support grants.

I thank the chairman and ranking member for including my amendments in an en bloc package and for their hard work on this bill.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM), my good friend.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this bloc, which includes my amendment to prevent homeless youth and young mothers from seeing a lapse in service from their runaway youth programs and maternity group homes.

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Specifically, this amendment allows HHS to offer transitional living programs and maternity group home grants for centers that would otherwise see a lapse in funding in fiscal year 2018.

This amendment does not increase funding for the program. This amendment simply prevents centers from facing a gap in grant eligibility due to a fiscal year which commenced off cycle. Failure to act will cause runaway and homeless youth and maternity group home centers across the country to downgrade, discontinue, or eventually close.

These important centers provide a temporary shelter to youth in crisis who are experiencing homelessness. These centers teach life skills and provide counseling and transitional services to homeless, pregnant, and parenting youth to promote long-term economic independence to ensure their well-being.

This issue was first brought to my attention by the Modesto Center for Human Services, which supports individuals and families in Stanislaus County, California. The Modesto center provides youth services, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, family resource centers, shelter services, and community projects. The center relies on an existing Transitional Living Program grant. The TLP grants are critical to helping homeless youth find employment and transition back into the community.

Unfortunately, the Modesto center and more than 100 other centers and shelters across the country are in jeopardy of losing eligibility for funding due to circumstances outside of their control. These grants account for a significant portion of their annual budgets, and a gap of this length will drastically reduce the services or force programs to shut down completely.

My amendment implores the administration to authorize bridge funding to close this gap in grant eligibility, allowing services to continue until the grant is realigned with the appropriations process. For the area I represent, losing these grants would have much wider ramifications for the overall homeless population and collaborative efforts to improve homeless care and services.

TLP and MGH grants help break the crippling cycle of homelessness. I call on my colleagues to support this amendment and allow homeless youth and parenting young people access to life-changing services.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, I thank my friend, the ranking member, for yielding time to me and for her leadership and work on this important issue.

Mr. Chairman, I support and appreciate my amendment being included in this en bloc amendment. My amendment increases funding for three very important and very successful programs that provide lead prevention resources in support for those already exposed to high levels of lead.

Lead is a dangerous neurotoxin. Its effects can be permanent, especially on very young people and those most vulnerable citizens among us. In fact, according to the medical community, there is no safe level for lead.

As you know, I come from Flint, Michigan, where we have experienced the most significant lead crisis. It is one that we are still working to overcome. Even though that crisis in Flint is no longer in the headlines, Flint and many other communities are still dealing with issues caused by exposure to lead.

There is no cure to lead exposure. We have to work on prevention and do everything we can to support those like the people in Flint and others across the country who have been exposed so they can grow into healthy and successful adults. This amendment will do just that.

I appreciate the ranking member, Ms. DELAURO, and I share in my colleagues' expression of grief for her loss. I thank Ranking Member LOWEY and I thank Chairman COLE for working to include this in the en bloc amendment, and I urge its passing.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO), my friend.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to rise in support of this en bloc amendment, specifically the amendment I offered with Congresswoman BONAMICI.

Our amendment would help ensure adequate funding for a grant program available to States, including my home State of Pennsylvania, to tailor assessment systems to work for teachers, parents, and students. The amendment would provide \$378 million in funding for State assessment grants, the amount authorized for these grants in the Every Student Succeeds Act but, notably, \$8.9 million more than that which was included in the legislation we are currently debating.

Including full funding for State assessment grants is a critical way for Congress to fulfill our promise under ESSA that we would streamline testing so the high-stakes testing culture that has burdened schools and students for too long is rolled back.

I thank the chairman and ranking member for the opportunity to offer this amendment, and I urge the adoption of the en bloc amendment.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this bi-partisan amendment that would increase funding for the Black Lung Clinics Programs in the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) by \$2.7 million. This increase, when added to the \$7.2 million provided in the appropriations bill being considered, will provide \$10 million in total funding for Fiscal Year 2018. I want to commend Representative GRIFFITH for his leadership on this issue.

The additional funding proposed by the amendment is fully offset by a reduction in program management, and the total amount of \$10 million is equal to the permanently authorized amount. That level, I would note, has remained the same since the Black Lung Clinics Program was first authorized in the 92nd Congress as part of the Black Lung Benefits Act of 1972.

Today, there are 28 black lung clinics located in 15 coal mining states which, with small grants provided by HRSA's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, serve as a lifeline for disabled miners.

In many cases, these coal miners spent a lifetime working in our nation's mines, but now face black lung disease—a debilitating and frequently fatal lung disease that continues to erode lung function even after a miner leaves work in the mines. Since 1968, 76,000 miners have lost their lives to black lung disease.

The black lung clinics program is expected to serve 13,800 miners this year. The need for these clinics is rising due to an increase in the number of black lung cases, coupled with an increased number of miners who are now seeking assistance following the closure of mines.

The rate of black lung disease in coal miners fell steadily in the 30 years following the enactment of binding coal dust exposure limits in the 1969 Coal Mine Safety and Health Act. However, that favorable downward trend started to reverse beginning in 2000, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). NIOSH is also finding that miners are becoming totally disabled from black lung at much younger ages.

The increase in black lung disease has been due in part to longer mining shifts, more

powerful mining machinery, and mine operators cutting into more rock because the easiest reach coal has been mined out. Much of that rock is quartz bearing sandstone which, when mined, releases large amounts of silica containing mine dust that is far more toxic than coal dust.

The most severe form of black lung disease, known as progressive massive fibrosis or PMF, has spiked dramatically. Earlier this year, NIOSH reported that the Stone Mountain Resources clinic in southwest Virginia had identified the largest cluster of PMF ever found—over 400 cases. National Public Radio has reported on large clusters in Kentucky and other states.

PMF produces large masses of scar tissue in the lung, and often the only means for survival is undergoing a high-risk lung transplant.

While funding for the black lung clinics has been frozen at virtually the same level for the past 5 years, a number of clinics, including many of those in Appalachia, have faced substantial increase in demand from coal miners for screening, diagnosis and pulmonary rehabilitation.

Clinics provide benefits counseling, including assisting miners with federal black lung benefits and state compensation claims.

Some clinics are so underfunded that they are operating with obsolete and inefficient diagnostic equipment, which needs to be upgraded.

Mr. Chair, we owe it to coal miners to get them the care and benefits they need and deserve. I urge a yes vote.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE).

The en bloc amendments were agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed bills and agreed to a joint resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 102. An act to direct the Federal Communications Commission to commence proceedings related to the resiliency of critical communications networks during times of emergency, and for other purposes.

S. 327. An act to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to provide a safe harbor related to certain investment fund research reports, and for other purposes.

S. 416. An act to amend the Small Business Investment Incentive Act of 1980 to require an annual review by the Securities and Exchange Commission of the annual government-business forum on capital formation.

S. 444. An act to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to expand the investor limitation for qualifying venture capital funds under an exemption from the definition of an investment company.

S. 462. An act to require the Securities and Exchange Commission to refund or credit certain excess payments made to the Commission.

S. 484. An act to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to terminate an exemp-

tion for companies located in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and any other possession of the United States.

S. 488. An act to increase the threshold for disclosures required by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to compensatory benefit plans, and for other purposes.

S. 1311. An act to provide assistance in abolishing human trafficking in the United States.

S. 1312. An act to prioritize the fight against human trafficking in the United States.

S.J. Res 49. Joint Resolution condemning the violence and domestic terrorist attack that took place during events between August 11 and August 12, 2017, in Charlottesville, Virginia, recognizing the first responders who lost their lives while monitoring the events, offering deepest condolences to the families and friends of those individuals who were killed and deepest sympathies and support to those individuals who were injured by the violence, expressing support for the Charlottesville community, rejecting White nationalists, White supremacists, the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, and other hate groups, and urging the President and the President's Cabinet to use all available resources to address the threats posed by those groups.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

The Committee resumed its sitting.

AMENDMENT NO. 131 OFFERED BY MR. KILDEE

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. GRIFFITH). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 131 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 693, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert the following: “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 693, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert the following: “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 694, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert the following: “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 718, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert the following: “(decreased by \$10,000,000)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment that would increase funding for youth employment initiatives by \$10 million.

Michigan's unemployment rate is 4.7 percent, but for youth aged 16 to 24, it is more than double that, over 11 percent. Young people face high unemployment, and the lack of opportunity to find meaning in the world of work has implications that go far beyond just those years that they might find meaningful employment.

Investing in those young Americans ensures that they all do better. Providing those important employment