

2016, DHS purportedly lost 2,141 sensitive assets, including firearms, badges, and secure immigration stamps. In many of these cases, DHS personnel acted recklessly and were not held accountable for improperly safeguarding their sensitive assets. Furthermore, DHS personnel often fail to track down their lost sensitive assets. H.R. 4433 will address this loose behavior by holding the Under Secretary of the DHS accountable for ensuring that sensitive assets are kept safe.

I am particularly concerned with safeguarding sensitive assets due to the increase in stolen guns within Georgia's 4th district and the state as a whole. The Atlanta police chief recently reported that 954 guns were stolen from cars in Atlanta last year. This represents a 40 percent increase in the number of firearms stolen from cars compared to 2015. However, this is not just a Georgian problem—a study by Harvard and Northeastern researchers this past year estimated that roughly 380,000 firearms are stolen in the U.S. every year. One of the best ways to address this issue is through prevention. By strengthening the expectations and rules for firearm ownership within the DHS, we can do a small part to reduce the number of stolen guns in Georgia and across the country.

As a member of the Judiciary committee, I have worked consistently to promote responsible gun ownership. I cosponsored legislation that required the review of U.S. policy regarding capture, custody, treatment, judicial proceedings, and repatriation of suspected 'unlawful enemy combatants.' With these past legislative actions in mind, I support H.R. 4433 and urge my fellow members to do the same.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2018

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, deadly mudslides have destroyed homes and claimed at least seventeen lives in my district. These mudslides have devastated the communities in my district—many of which are still recovering from the horrific Thomas Fire. In order to be with my constituents and assist the community in recovery efforts, I decided to return to Santa Barbara, California. As a result, I missed votes on January 10, 2018 and January 11, 2018.

Had I been present, I would have voted:

Aye on Roll Call No. 17—the Counter Terrorist Network Act;

Aye on Roll Call No. 12—the DHS Overseas Personnel Enhancement Act of 2017;

Nay on Roll Call No. 10—H. Res. 681, a rule providing for consideration of S. 140;

Nay on Roll Call No. 9—Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule, and

Nay on Roll Call No. 8—H. Res. 682, a rule providing for consideration of S. 139.

IN RECOGNITION OF FIRE CHIEF MIKE DUNCAN

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exemplary work of Fire Chief

Mike Duncan in his service to the City of Roanoke, Texas as we mark his retirement. During his sixteen years as Fire Chief in Roanoke, he has been a committed leader in his community.

Chief Duncan was a seasoned fire fighter when he joined the Roanoke Fire Department as chief in 2001. He first began his firefighting career in 1974 with the City of North Richland Hills Fire Department. Since that time, he has served his community tirelessly in a variety of leadership roles.

Throughout his years of service, Chief Duncan earned certifications as a Master Firefighter, Advanced Fire Inspector, a Fire Service Instructor II and as the Department Head for the Fire Department. He is a leading member of the Denton County Fire Chiefs Association where he served as Treasurer for 11 years, the Tarrant County Fire Chiefs Association where he served as President in 2004, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Fire Protection Association, the North East Fire Department Association and the International Code Conference.

Chief Duncan has devoted 43 years to protecting his neighbors. For more than four decades, he has put strangers' safety above his own, and we are indebted to him. I am deeply grateful for his service to the City of Roanoke and North Texas, and I wish Chief Duncan and his family the best in his retirement.

SCREENING AND VETTING PASSENGER EXCHANGE ACT OF 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4581.

H.R. 4581, the Screening and Vetting Passenger Exchange Act of 2017, requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to develop best practices for counter terrorism screening and vetting through the use of advanced passenger information (API) and passenger name record (PNR) data. This bill also encourages the Secretary of DHS to share best practices and assist with implementation for our foreign partners.

The DHS, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) have all utilized API and PNR as tools for screening and vetting potential criminals and terrorists. In April 2016, the European Union (EU) decided to follow in our footsteps by implementing PNR data into their counter terrorism screenings. The EU set a deadline for full integration of PNR data by May 2018. Unfortunately, many EU countries lack the knowledge, expertise, and experience with PNR data to allow them to meet their upcoming deadline. H.R. 4581 would allow the DHS to develop best practices for utilizing API and PNR data in counter terrorism screening and then share these best practices with our foreign allies.

This legislation will strengthen our national security and that of our foreign partners. Since 9/11, we have prevented hundreds of acts of terror and improved our national security. However, in the last two years, the United States has experienced a surge in terrorist acts and criminal activities.

As a former member of the House Armed Services Committee, I have always voted to support our law enforcement agencies in the work that they do. H.R. 4581 will fortify our Armed forces with best practices for preventing terrorism and allow them to continue doing their crucial work protecting our country. This legislation will also help our foreign allies so that they are able to effectively keep their people, and the people of the world, safe. Protecting our national security and the national securities of our allies ought to be a given. For this reason, I support H.R. 4581 and urge my fellow members to do the same.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EVAN H. JENKINS

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2018

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes due to a previously scheduled event in West Virginia. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 11 and YEA on Roll Call No. 12.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2018

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, deadly mudslides have destroyed homes and claimed at least seventeen lives to date in my district. These mudslides have devastated the communities in my district—many of which are still recovering from the horrific Thomas Fire. In order to be with my constituents and assist in recovery efforts, I decided to return to Santa Barbara, California. As a result, I was unable to vote during Roll Call No. 9, which was S. 140, a bill to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund on January 10, 2018.

While I support tribal sovereignty, this was a misguided bill that would strip hundreds of thousands of workers at tribal-owned and -operated enterprises of their protections for the right to bargain collectively.

If I had the opportunity to vote on S. 140, I would have voted NO on Roll Call No. 9.

DHS OVERSEAS PERSONNEL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4567, the DHS Overseas Personnel Enhancement Act of 2017.

This legislation would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to brief the Committee on Homeland Security in the House of Representatives and the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee in the Senate every six months on the operations of Department of Homeland Security personnel that work outside of the United States.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is the newest cabinet department in the United States federal government and was created in 2002 in the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks. The department's mission is to prevent, prepare for, and respond to domestic issues, and it is deeply involved in border security and immigration services. In many ways, the DHS is still a fledgling cabinet department and H.R. 4567 aims to ensure transparency and accountability in this law enforcement body, and to encourage interagency communication and collaboration in their shared mission to fight terrorism abroad.

As a federal law enforcement agency, it's important to establish oversight rules for the DHS. Government oversight is one of the pillars of the American democracy and is a vital part of promoting accountability among the powerful. This is even truer of personnel in countries outside of the United States, where agents can be operating far from a supervisor's watchful eye.

We, as one of the most powerful nations in the world, must police our international presence to prevent abuses of power. As a former member of the Armed Services committee, I have long been a supporter of ethical practices and even sponsored legislation to review the United States treatment of suspected "unlawful enemy combatants". In our fight against terror worldwide, it's important to make sure that we ourselves are upholding the inalienable rights our democracy is founded upon.

H.R. 4567 encourages communication and accountability within the DHS, and allows for transparency between this department and the legislative branch. I support H.R. 4567 and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

ORANGE PARK ACRES

HON. MIMI WALTERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2018

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, It is my honor to rise today in recognition of Orange Park Acres, a beautiful rural community located in my district in Orange County, California.

This community has stood the test of time, and stands today as a living reminder of our county's humble beginnings of horse drawn buggies, dirt roads, and miles of pristine natural landscape.

Orange Park Acres serves many Orange County residents as a retreat from the noise and congestion of city life, offering miles of quiet trails to enjoy with family and friends in our own backyard.

This year, Mr. Speaker, Orange Park Acres will celebrate 90 years since its establishment.

Through the dedication of the community members who call this hidden gem home, I am confident that Orange Park Acres will enjoy many more years of prosperity to come.

Once again, I would like to wish the community of Orange Park Acres a Happy New Year filled with celebrations and pride over the many accomplishments of the past 90 years.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2018

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, deadly mudslides have destroyed homes and claimed at least seventeen lives in my district. These mudslides have devastated the communities in my district—many of which are still recovering from the horrific Thomas Fire. In order to be with my constituents and assist the community in recovery efforts, I decided to return to Santa Barbara, California.

As a result, I was unable to vote during Roll Call No. 16, which was S. 139, the FISA Amendments Reauthorization Act of 2017 on January 11, 2018. If I had the opportunity to vote on S. 139, I would have voted No.

I was also a co-sponsor of the Amash amendment to S. 139 and would have voted Aye on Roll Call No. 14, in support of the amendment. Additionally, I would have voted Aye on Roll Call No. 15, on the Motion to Re-commit on S. 139.

DOMESTIC EXPLOSIVES DETECTION CANINE CAPACITY BUILDING ACT OF 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H.R. 4577, the Domestic Explosives Detection Canine Capacity Building Act of 2017.

This legislation directs the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to create a work group to explore best practices for developing a breeding and training program for explosive detection canines. This working group would also determine medical standards, behavioral standards, and training standards for the program.

Currently in the United States, we rely heavily on explosive detection canines. They are a vital part of security measures not only at airports, but locations across the United States and the world. The sensitivity, complexity, and astuteness of a Bomb-sniffing dog's nose simply cannot be replicated with modern technology, and they are some of our best assets in the fight to protect Americans from acts of terror.

Previously, the TSA oversaw a breeding program to train and produce top quality service canines; however, that program was cut from the budget in 2012. This has forced the agency to purchase lower quality canines abroad at exorbitant prices. In 2017, the TSA oversaw a work force of 1,000 dogs and would need to acquire 350 annually to maintain these numbers. A New York Times article detailing the problem noted that in one of the four trips TSA agents annually make less than half of the 110 dogs they might see pass preliminary screening requirements, and another 15 to 20 percent fail to complete the agency's training program. To put it blandly, we are buying the best dogs our money can buy, and they're not good enough. H.R. 4577 is the first step to rebuilding the TSA's breeding program and ensuring that the dogs protecting our nation's airports and travelers satisfy our standards of excellence. This legislation will allow experts to not only determine which breeds are best suited for the job, but also which training methods are most effective.

I am particularly concerned with this issue, because Georgia houses the busiest airport in the world. Atlanta's Hartsfield Jackson airport in January of 2017 alone was visited by over 7.5 million passengers and played host to over 70,000 different aircrafts. Canines are widely used in the daily operations of this airport and a critical part of safety operations.

Additionally, as a member of the Transportation & Infrastructure committee, and a former member of the Armed Services committee I have long been concerned with issues relating to airport security and the safety of passengers who travel through our country. The TSA is an agency filled with people who have dedicated their careers to protecting Americans and we must provide them with the best tools available to do so. Explosive detecting canines are a crucial piece of the front line protecting Americans from harm and a necessary part of ensuring that all passengers and aircrafts are protected from any threat. H.R. 4577 will ensure that the United States can develop a program that will produce explosive detection canines that meet our standards of excellence and will build a sustainable method for ensuring the program's permanence. I support this legislation and I urge my colleagues to do the same.