

and surface transportation hubs. Canines have become an invaluable asset to the DHS in fulfilling its many important missions and goals.

Even prior to the inception of the Department, canines were utilized by law enforcement and first responder agencies for decades, proving to be one of the most effective and versatile tools in detecting threats and protecting the homeland.

Terrorists are working hard to exploit vulnerabilities in our transportation system, and the U.S. must utilize all of our available resources to combat these threats. Canines are undoubtedly one such resource, providing a robust and reliable layer of security and giving Americans peace of mind.

If enacted, H.R. 4577 would better position the TSA to achieve and maintain a reliable supply of canines to deploy to not only airport terminals, but also to cargo operations and mass transit systems.

As such, Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 4577, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, this is an area that we have spent a lot of time on in the Committee on Homeland Security over several years, and I can state without equivocation that there is no technology that is more effective at detecting explosives in our transportation systems than these canines.

It is a shame that we have allowed ourselves to become so heavily dependent on European providers for this very essential asset. This bill will go a long way in helping our country establish its own production of these essential assets for our use in keeping our country safe and secure.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes," and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4577, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DHS OVERSEAS PERSONNEL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. KATKO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4567) to require a Department of Homeland Security overseas personnel enhancement plan, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4567

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "DHS Overseas Personnel Enhancement Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. OVERSEAS PERSONNEL BRIEFING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after submission of the comprehensive three-year strategy required under section 1910 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114-328) and every 180 days thereafter, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall brief the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate regarding Department of Homeland Security personnel with primary duties that take place outside of the United States.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The briefing required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A detailed summary of each type of personnel position with primary duties that take place outside of the United States and how each such position contributes to the Department of Homeland Security's counterterrorism mission.

(2) Information related to how the geographic and regional placement of such positions contributes to the Department's counterterrorism mission.

(3) Information related to the position-specific training received by such personnel before and during placement at a foreign location.

(4) Challenges that may impede the communication of counterterrorism information between Department personnel at foreign locations and Department entities in the United States, including technical, resource, and administrative challenges.

(5) The status of efforts to implement the strategy referred to in subsection (a).

(6) The status of efforts (beginning with the second briefing required under this section) to implement the enhancement plan under section 3.

SEC. 3. OVERSEAS PERSONNEL ENHANCEMENT PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the briefing required under section 2, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a plan to enhance the effectiveness of Department of Homeland Security personnel at foreign locations.

(b) PLAN REQUIREMENTS.—The plan referred to in subsection (a) shall include proposals to—

(1) improve efforts of Department of Homeland Security personnel at foreign locations, as necessary, for purposes of providing foreign partner capacity development and furthering the Department's counterterrorism mission;

(2) as appropriate, redeploy Department personnel to respond to changing threats to the United States;

(3) enhance collaboration among Department personnel at foreign locations, other Federal personnel at foreign locations, and foreign partners;

(4) improve the communication of counterterrorism information between Department personnel at foreign locations and Department entities in the United States, including to address technical, resource, and administrative challenges; and

(5) maintain practices to guard against counter-espionage threats associated with Department personnel.

SEC. 4. TERMINATION.

The briefing requirement under section 2 shall terminate on the date that is four years after the submission of the strategy referred to in such section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VELA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4567, the DHS Overseas Personnel Enhancement Act of 2017.

As chairman of the Homeland Security Committee's Subcommittee on Transportation and Protective Security, I recently led a bipartisan congressional delegation to Europe and the Middle East to examine international aviation security and counterterrorism operations. The efforts of DHS personnel stationed overseas to build relationships with foreign partners, to coordinate with other Federal agencies, and to secure our homeland from threats before they arrive on our shores are truly a testament to the vital counterterror mission of Homeland Security. Additionally, the trip underscored the need to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of our overseas programs in a manner that is risk-based.

Unfortunately, however, I also observed that even today, more than 15 years after 9/11, the United States Government still struggles to avoid stovepiping and effectively participate in information sharing and collaboration on homeland security matters. It is imperative that DHS personnel serve as a force multiplier with their Federal counterparts to act in genuine partnership when mitigating threats to the homeland both here and abroad.

My legislation takes observations from our delegation and codifies requirements to make overseas DHS personnel more effective and better equipped. This bill provides critical transparency to the training provided to overseas DHS employees, as well as how their positions and roles measurably contribute to the counterterrorism mission of the Department of Homeland Security.

Additionally, my bill will allow Congress to understand what organizational culture or bureaucratic hindrances exist to effective information sharing among DHS personnel and how we can break down barriers to better address evolving threats to the United States.

The first role of government is to protect its citizens, and it is incumbent upon those of us in Congress to ensure that the United States Government is doing all it can to respond to changing threats, share information effectively,

and build counterterrorism capacity among our foreign partners.

I appreciate the bipartisan support of Ranking Member WATSON COLEMAN, Congressman VELA, and Congresswoman MENG of this bill and I look forward to continuing our work together on these and other issues. I also wish to thank the chairman of the full committee, Mr. MCCAUL, for his unwavering support of our efforts.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Madam Speaker, the DHS Overseas Personnel Enhancement Act of 2017 would require the Department of Homeland Security to submit to Congress an overseas personnel assessment and enhancement plan.

Today, roughly 2,000 DHS personnel have been deployed to more than 70 countries around the world. These DHS employees are involved in a diverse range of overseas operations targeted at terrorism prevention, counter-narcotics, and preventing human smuggling.

I am particularly interested in the efforts of the National Targeting Center, which is housed within U.S. Customs and Border Protection, to embed intelligence analysts in overseas information sharing operations with international partners to prevent terrorist and other criminal networks from carrying out attacks and criminal operations with impunity.

In fact, in a short while, the House will be debating H.R. 4578, the Counter Terrorist Network Act, which, among other things, authorizes overseas deployments from the CBP.

About half of overseas DHS personnel are from the CBP and are involved, among other things, in screening U.S.-bound passengers at airports, inspecting cargo being loaded on ships bound for the U.S., and training other nations' customs and border force.

Additionally, the DHS also assigns Immigration and Customs Enforcement special agents, Secret Service special agents, and Transportation Security Administration officials to overseas posts to engage with international partners on counterterrorism, counter-narcotics, information sharing, and criminal investigations, as well as security screening and vetting programs.

Just last month, CBP personnel were credited with helping Ecuadoran authorities interdict and arrest seven people and 800 pounds of cocaine. Specifically, a CBP team participating in an aerial surveillance mission in drug transit zones near South America tracked a low-flying aircraft that intelligence reports indicated had not filed a flight plan and, with a long-lens camera, snapped images of the plane's tail number and other identifying details and radioed Ecuador who were waiting when the plane landed to arrest the smugglers.

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According to CBP, its P-3 plane program patrols more than 42 million square miles in the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea, and the Pacific Ocean and last year contributed to 145 drug seizures, helping American and foreign authorities capture a combined 34,108 pounds of marijuana and 193,197 pounds of cocaine, according to Customs and Border Protection records.

More broadly, DHS personnel stationed overseas make important contributions to the Department's efforts in securing the homeland and keeping the American people safe. As such, it is imperative that these individuals are utilized efficiently and effectively. This bill seeks to ensure just that.

In 2016, Congress enacted legislation that the Committee on Homeland Security, on a bipartisan basis, approved to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to issue a strategy for the Department's international programs.

Among other things, the law required DHS to provide the committee with an inventory of personnel and resources deployed abroad and a 3-year, risk-based strategy to ensure strategic overseas employment of personnel.

The statutory deadline for this strategy was June 2017, 7 months ago. This critical strategy has not been submitted to Congress, as mandated.

H.R. 4567 incorporates an amendment from Ranking Member THOMPSON that expands the bill's briefing requirement to include information on efforts to implement the strategy. Enactment of this bipartisan legislation should help enhance the effectiveness of DHS personnel at foreign locations.

Madam Speaker, I urge my House colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Madam Speaker, I have no more speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VELA. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I represent Newark, New Jersey, home of Port Newark and Newark Liberty International Airport.

Port Newark is the busiest container port on the East Coast, handling over 700,000 cargo containers annually. In 2015, over 37 million passengers traveled through Newark Liberty International Airport, including many traveling into the United States from abroad.

As a Member of Congress representing the largest port on the Eastern seaboard and one of the busiest international airports in the country, it is important to me that the Federal Government do everything in its power to push out our borders—to prevent dangerous cargo and dangerous people from coming into our country.

The DHS Overseas Personnel Enhancement Act of 2017 would do just that by directing the Department to develop and execute an overseas personnel assessment and enhancement plan.

As we speak, nearly 2,000 DHS employees are stationed around the globe, engaging in terrorism prevention, counter-narcotics, and antihuman smuggling activities in more than 70 countries.

About half of DHS personnel deployed overseas are from Customs and Border Protection, who are responsible for screening U.S.-bound passengers at airports, inspecting cargo being loaded onto ships bound for the U.S., and training other nations' customs and border forces.

The Department also sends Immigration and Customs Enforcement special agents, Secret Service special agents, and Transportation Security Administration officials abroad to help prevent international criminal and terrorist activity from spreading into the United States.

These activities have a direct impact on the security of my district. Over the course of the past year, multiple people have been caught attempting to smuggle drugs into the country through Newark Liberty International Airport, including a man who tried to bring over 1 kilogram of heroin into the country by disguising it as a six-layer cake.

While I applaud CBP for apprehending bad actors as they attempt to enter the United States, I would prefer to keep bad people and bad cargo outside of our borders, particularly in light of the drug epidemic affecting many of our communities.

Accordingly, I am committed to ensuring that the Department has optimized the deployment of its international personnel.

Madam Speaker, therefore, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4567.

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

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

Madam Speaker, in closing, H.R. 4567 seeks to enhance DHS' efforts to push out our borders.

The men and women of DHS face an immense challenge in responding to the ever-changing terrorist threat landscape. It is imperative that DHS personnel stationed overseas serve as an effective force in this mission, and enactment of this legislation would be a positive step towards this goal.

In fiscal year 2016, CBP officers inspected over 390 million travelers at 328 ports of entry, of which over 119 million flew into air ports of entry. Deployed overseas CBP officers, through programs such as Preclearance and the Immigration Advisory Program, utilize a risk-based, intelligence-driven strategy to extend our border security efforts outward to detect, assess, and mitigate, at the earliest possible point in the travel continuum, any risk imposed by travelers before they reach the United States.

Today, ICE agents are assigned to 66 offices in 49 countries and work with their overseas law enforcement counterparts to detect, disrupt, and dismantle transnational criminal groups

and individuals who seek to harm our country and people.

ICE special agents investigate transnational crime by conducting a wide range of criminal investigations, in coordination with our foreign and domestic partner agencies, targeting the illegal movement of people, merchandise, and monetary instruments into, within, and out of the United States.

Maintaining an overseas footprint is costly. In fact, the annual cost of deploying an ICE agent overseas can be four times the cost of deploying the agent domestically. As such, it is critical that DHS have a strategy for its overseas programs and execute it.

Congress has an important oversight role to play to ensure that DHS carries out these programs in a risk-based, strategic manner.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 4567, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, the starkness of the challenges facing the men and women of DHS to accomplish our mission was made clear to me and my committee colleagues on a recent trip to the Middle East and Western Europe. I hope they know just how much we appreciate all of their tireless efforts to protect the homeland.

Madam Speaker, I digress just for a moment before I close and note that, for the last 3 years on my committee, one of my colleagues, the main committee staff person, Krista Harvey, has worked on all these bills and worked on all these trips I have taken and has played a key role in the things we do to keep our country safe. In fact, I was just checking. Twenty-one bills that she helped author passed the House, and many were signed into law.

Ms. Harvey, regrettably, is leaving our service, but she is going to continue serving the government in working at the Department of Homeland Security in a senior capacity at the Transportation Security Administration. I thank her for her work and doing all she does as a public servant helping us keep our country safe.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4567, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. KATKO. Madam 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.

SECURITY ASSESSMENT FEASIBILITY FOR EQUIPMENT TESTING AND EVALUATION OF CAPABILITIES FOR OUR HOMELAND ACT

Mr. KATKO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4561) to provide for third party testing of transportation security screening technology, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4561

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Security Assessment Feasibility for Equipment Testing and Evaluation of Capabilities for our Homeland Act” or the “SAFE TECH Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term “Administration” means the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration.

SEC. 3. THIRD PARTY TESTING OF SECURITY SCREENING TECHNOLOGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the Under Secretary for Science and Technology of the Department of Homeland Security, shall develop a program to enable a vendor of transportation security screening technology to obtain testing, including as an alternative to the Administration’s testing process under paragraph (9) of section 114(f) of title 49, United States Code, by an appropriate third party, as determined by the Administrator, in consultation with the Under Secretary, of such technology before procurement or development of such technology.

(b) DETECTION TESTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The third party testing program authorized under subsection (a) shall include detection testing to evaluate the performance of a security screening technology relating to the probability of detection, the probability of false alarm, and other indicators that such technology is able to meet the Administration’s mission needs for detection of—

- (A) explosives; and
- (B) prohibited items.

(2) COORDINATION WITH FINAL PROCESSES.—To the extent practicable, and without compromising the integrity of the Administration’s testing process under paragraph (9) of section 114(f) of title 49, United States Code, or the Department of Homeland Security’s oversight of such testing process, or increasing costs to the Administration, the Administrator shall coordinate the third party detection testing under paragraph (1) with any associated subsequent final Department of Homeland Security testing.

(3) INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS.—To the extent practicable and permissible under law, and in accordance with national security interests of the United States, the Administrator shall—

(A) share with appropriate international partners detection testing information and standards; and

(B) coordinate with such appropriate international partners to align such testing information and standards to maximize the capability to detect explosives and other threats.

(c) ALTERNATIVE TESTING FACTORS.—Third party testing under subsection (a) may in-

clude as an alternative, at the discretion of the Administrator, the testing at the TSA Systems Integration Facility of the Administration, including testing for—

- (1) health and safety factors;
- (2) operator interface;
- (3) human factors;
- (4) environmental factors;
- (5) throughput;
- (6) reliability, maintainability, and availability factors; and
- (7) interoperability.

(d) TESTING FRAMEWORK.—The Administrator, in consultation with the Under Secretary for Science and Technology of the Department of Homeland Security, shall—

(1) establish a framework for the third party testing under this section to determine if the security screening technology that is the subject of such testing satisfies the Administration’s requirements before such technology may enter or re-enter, as applicable, operational testing at an airport or other transportation facility; and

(2) use phased implementation to allow the Administration and the third party concerned to establish best practices.

(e) PRIORITIZATION OF THIRD PARTY TESTING.—The Administrator may prioritize, when appropriate, the field testing of security screening technology and equipment by third parties.

(f) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

(1) UNITED STATES OWNERSHIP.—An entity providing third party testing under the program developed pursuant to subsection (a) shall be owned and controlled by a citizen of the United States.

(2) WAIVER.—The Administrator may waive the requirement specified in paragraph (1) with respect to an entity that is a United States subsidiary of a parent company that has implemented a foreign ownership, control, or influence mitigation plan that has been approved by the Defense Security Service of the Department of Defense prior to seeking to engage in third party testing. The Administrator has complete discretion to reject any proposal from a company to provide testing under subsection (a) that requires a waiver under this paragraph.

(3) CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—The Administrator shall ensure, to the extent possible, that an entity providing third party testing under this section does not have a contractual, business, or other pecuniary interest (exclusive of any such testing) in—

(A) the security screening technology subject to such testing; or the

(B) vendor of such technology.

SEC. 4. RECIPROCAL RECOGNITION OF SECURITY STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in coordination with the European Civil Aviation Conference, shall continue development of a validation process for the reciprocal recognition of security validation processes for recognition of security screening technologies or certification authorities for deployment.

(b) REQUIREMENT.—The validation process under subsection (a) shall ensure that the certification process of each participating international security partner or recognized certification authority complies with Administration standards.

SEC. 5. GAO REVIEW.

Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a study on the third party testing program developed under this Act. Such study shall include a review of the following:

(1) Any efficiencies or gains in effectiveness achieved in the Administration’s operations as a result of such program.