

Based on public reports, at least 100,000 rape kits have sat, untested, in evidence rooms, warehouses, and the like. These rape kits often contain DNA evidence collected through a sexual assault forensic exam, a medical process where evidence is collected from a victim's body or clothes. This evidence is a crucial factor in achieving justice and it is vital that prosecutors have this evidence.

In order to address the backlog, Congress passed the "Debbie Smith Act." The Debbie Smith Act provides crucial funding to support public crime laboratories' work to build capacity and process DNA evidence including evidence collected in rape kits.

Since its enactment in 2004, the Debbie Smith Act has been renewed twice with overwhelming bipartisan support. This funding has significantly decreased the backlog of untested DNA evidence.

The problem, however, continues to persist because of the overwhelming amount of evidence that needs to be analyzed. For example, in 2016, the Harris County Institute of Forensic Science, in Houston, received over 3,000 cases to be reviewed. Despite receiving federal grants, this lab continues to face difficulties in analyzing all the evidence in a timely manner. We in Congress need to make sure that we are allocating enough resources to ensure that these labs are able to meet the demand.

Victims of violent crimes, especially victims of sexual violence, have the right to have their cases resolved as quickly as possible. They need to be able to move on, knowing that they are safe from the person who hurt them.

It is therefore important that Congress continue to support efforts to ensure that states and local government have the resources to test and analyze DNA evidence and that prosecutors have the resources to go after these suspects. For these reasons I support this bill, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

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

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), who has worked without ceasing on legislation that will help our law enforcement officers.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this bipartisan piece of legislation, the Justice Served Act, H.R. 4854. As the lead Democrat sponsor of this piece of legislation and co-chair of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus, I want to thank Judge CARTER for authoring this bill.

Currently, funding is available through the Debbie Smith Act to reduce the DNA rape kit backlog. However, these funds do not address the growing backlog in the prosecution pipeline.

Unfortunately, this backlog is occurring because resources are limited and there are not enough funds to reopen every case, even when DNA analysis has identified a suspect. That is not acceptable.

In my home State of New Jersey, we are well familiar with this issue. Due

to a lack of resources and regulations, the extent of the untested rape kit backlog in New Jersey is unknown. That itself is unacceptable.

Addressing the rape kit backlog would bring justice for the many rape victims across our State and many others; victims like a 15-year-old girl who was assaulted while working at a deli in New Jersey a few years ago, and whose assailant was finally brought to justice in 2013 using DNA evidence, but only after he assaulted another young woman.

As a result, many of the rapists going undetected are repeat offenders. Countless assaults could be prevented and trauma spared if we caught these perpetrators the first time.

And addressing the backlog can bring justice to the falsely accused as well. Last year, we learned the story of Rodney Roberts, a New Jersey man who was coerced by his own lawyer to plead guilty for the kidnapping and rape of a 17-year-old girl in 1996, despite professing his innocence.

For 10 years, Roberts appealed to have his DNA tested against the original rape kit, but prosecutors claimed it was nowhere to be found.

Eventually, the rape kit was located and the DNA evidence cleared him of all wrongdoing in 2014, after he served 10 years in jail.

There are too many incidents in which an untested rape kit is lost, prosecutors do not have resources, and innocent people are harmed.

To address this funding gap, the Justice Served Act authorizes the Debbie Smith Act to provide prosecutors with the resources and the funds to reopen, investigate, and close cold cases.

Going forward, I look forward to working with Judge CARTER to ensure that the Debbie Smith Act is properly funded so we can keep our promise to survivors of sexual assault.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the National District Attorneys Association, the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, and Debbie Smith for their support for H.R. 4854.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the Justice Served Act.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. PASCRELL for making that commitment that the resources under the Debbie Smith Act will still be viable and ready to be used for those sexual assault, sexual violence victims as this legislation was intended, but a provision in the bill allows the resources to also keep in line that nothing will undermine the investigation of sexual assault cases, sexual violence cases, but it allows the hand of justice to move on further for those who are the victims of violent crimes and to ensure that perpetrators of violent crimes are prosecuted as quickly as possible, again, under the equal and balanced hand of justice.

So H.R. 4845, the Justice Served Act of 2018, provides funding to State and local prosecutors to help them tackle

the backlog of violent crime cases, including cold cases, where suspects have been identified through DNA evidence.

Certainly, there may be some overlap. I want to make it very clear to our victims of sex crimes, domestic violence, and other crimes dealing with those particular issues, that these dollars are enhanced dollars to be able to do the violent crimes.

While it is important that State and local prosecutors have the resources they need, it is also important that Congress remain vigilant and continue to support efforts to clear the backlogs of untested and unanalyzed DNA evidence, including rape kits.

The backlog in many jurisdictions is enormous. This was our intent, to move forward, to provide justice to those who have suffered, some have lost their life.

So in the spirit of expanding justice to ensure that justice is for all, I rise to support this legislation in keeping with its initial purpose, to solve the backlog of DNA kits, and now to be able to assist in the solving and bringing to justice the perpetrators of violent crimes.

Mr. Speaker, I again ask my colleagues to support the underlying legislation, I thank the sponsors of it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, to paraphrase what Debbie and Rob Smith said, getting a hit is nice, but ensuring justice is served is even better. And it is, I think, a good amendment to the Debbie Smith Act that we allow these funds to be used for this purpose and close more of these cases that are solved by the DNA testing that was the original purpose of the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, I thank Judge CARTER for his fine work on it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4854.

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. GOODLATTE. 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.

#### SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER ASSESSMENT ACT OF 2018

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5242) to require the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education to conduct a survey of all public schools to determine the number of school resource officers at such schools, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.  
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5242

*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 “School Resource Officer Assessment Act of 2018”.

#### SEC. 2. SURVEY OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education shall jointly conduct and submit to Congress, a survey of the assignment of school resource officers at public elementary schools and secondary schools, which shall include, with respect to each such school that chose to respond to such survey, a determination of whether—

(1) on or after January 1, 2018, such a school has been assigned a school resource officer; and

(2) in the case of a school that has been assigned such an officer—

(A) the number of such assignments; and

(B) whether each such assignment is on a full-time or part-time basis.

#### SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **ESEA TERMS.**—The terms “elementary school” and “secondary school” have the meanings given the terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

(2) **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER.**—The term “school resource officer” has the meaning given the term in section 1709(4) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10389(4)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5242.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5242, the School Resource Officer Assessment Act of 2018. As we focus on our work in this Chamber this afternoon, it is fitting that we recognize that it is, as my colleagues have so far pointed out, National Police Week.

One of my great privileges as a Member of Congress is to interact with members of the law enforcement community and see firsthand the selflessness and true sense of service that they bring to their work.

Any one of us might say we want to protect and serve our communities, but it is these fine men and women who walk the walk every day. Their tireless efforts to improve public safety and build relationships across communities and with all of their fellow citizens deserve our appreciation and our total support and respect.

One of the best ways we as legislators can support members of the law enforcement community is by using data and not emotion as the basis of the decisions we make here in Washington that impact the way local law enforcement officials have to do their jobs.

H.R. 5242, the School Resource Officer Assessment Act of 2018, seeks to improve our decisions by providing better data on the work of law enforcement in schools.

The research and evidence that comes from the appropriate use of data can improve our understanding of how these policies work and the best ways to support the efforts of community leaders across our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the tireless sacrifices made by those in the law enforcement community and their families especially, and I thank them for their service. I simply urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5242. This legislation under consideration today will improve our understanding about the role of school resource officers. But we must acknowledge that this bill barely scratches the surface of what is actually required to keep our schools safe, and I urge this body to do more.

In the wake of February’s tragic shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, many have called for a so-called Federal focus on hardening of our schools, which includes increasing Federal dollars to hire more police officers and embracing the most harsh punishments for school discipline, and even allowing school teachers to carry firearms, despite the overwhelming evidence that many of these initiatives do more harm than good.

In fact, anyone hoping for a discussion of evidence-based methods for preventing school violence must be profoundly disappointed at our reaction since February.

Anyone hoping that the call for harsher school discipline would be sensitive to how it would be applied to students of color and those with disabilities must be disappointed.

Anyone hoping this Chamber would find the political will to take a stand with parents, students, and the overwhelming majority of Americans to take action on sensible gun legislation must be disappointed.

We have failed to act as one after another of these unthinkable tragedies have become commonplace.

In the decades since the 1999 shooting at Columbine High School, States and districts have rushed to increase school-based law enforcement presence. The Parkland tragedy serves as a painful reminder that this effort has not, despite its best efforts, eliminated mass school shootings.

Nearly two decades later, mass shootings in schools still persist, while

student behavior has been criminalized, leading to millions of students entering the school-to-prison pipeline.

H.R. 5242 would direct the Departments of Justice and Education to conduct voluntary data collection on school districts’ hiring of law enforcement officers. And I would remind my colleagues that we have a tool that collects a lot of data, not only on the presence of school officers, but also on how they impact school equity.

□ 1700

I urge my colleagues to stand in defense of the Civil Rights Data Collection. That is the Civil Rights Data Collection which collects data on equity in education, data such as access to advanced placement courses, data on suspensions, data on access to pre-K and other questions of access and equity, and would call on the Trump administration to affirm its intent to maintain the integrity of that collection.

Mr. Speaker, I also urge my colleagues to stand with students and parents in defense of civil rights under the guise of school safety. The Trump administration has signaled its intent to revoke the Education-Justice discipline guidance that provides districts with the tools to address racial disparities in discipline in a way that would not jeopardize school safety and ensure that school law enforcement officers are trained to serve in a school setting.

Without a shred of evidence, Secretary DeVos has blamed mass school shootings on civil rights protections and the guidance that clarifies district-level obligations under Federal civil rights law.

I urge my colleagues to join me in calling on President Trump and Secretary DeVos to discontinue their misinformation campaign and maintain the entire so-called rethink discipline package. As districts rush to hire resource officers, this body must commit to maintaining resources that empower districts to do so without negatively impacting equity in education.

Mr. Speaker, I also urge this body to increase investments in education. Teachers and students need access to mental health services, counseling, and evidence-based violence prevention programming. Teachers need comprehensive support, including increased salaries. The conversation on school safety that speaks only to hardening of the schools and hiring law enforcement officers will harm far more people than it will protect.

Lastly, I urge this body to consider and pass commonsense gun safety legislation. Gun violence in and outside of the school is a public health epidemic that merits bold and bipartisan congressional support. Meanwhile, this bill does provide for the collection of data and the hiring of police officers in our schools. This information can be helpful as we decide how to best allocate resources to address school safety.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for supporting the bill.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS), my good friend.

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5242, the School Resource Officer Assessment Act of 2018, as amended. I am the author of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, so far, in 2018, there have been 21 school shootings that have resulted in injuries or loss of life. While it is impossible for us to anticipate every attempt and impossible to enact regulations that would prevent them, one thing we can do is to ensure that honorable, patriotic, public servants are available to guard our schools, students, and teachers against acts of violence. Considering the recent string of school shootings, it has become clear that increasing the use of school resource officers should play a major role in protecting our schools.

Currently, there are 95,230 public schools in the United States. Our research has clarified that hard data does not exist regarding law enforcement assets at these schools. We estimate—and we can only estimate—that there may be a 30 percent utilization of school resource officers across the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, the first step in promoting school safety is evaluating what SRO assets we have on the ground and how public schools are using them. After we have a clear understanding of the field, we in Congress will be able to more effectively direct resources to where they are most needed. That is why I have introduced this bill.

My bill would simply give Congress the information we need to make effective decisions regarding school safety by requiring the U.S. Attorney General and the U.S. Secretary of Education to gather data regarding the number and status of school resource officers assigned to each public school in the United States.

My bill is a commonsense, information-gathering bill that has bipartisan support and has been endorsed by the National Association of School Resource Officers. This legislation is the first piece of several initiatives I will be introducing and supporting to secure our schools.

I would like to thank Chairwoman FOXX and Ranking Member SCOTT, who are on the Education and the Workforce Committee, and their staffs for their help in getting this bill to the floor. I would also like to thank the co-sponsors of my bill, in particular, Representative RUPPERSBERGER, for his help in this process.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense legislation.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for introducing this bill. I urge my colleagues to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS), my friend, for introducing this bill. I am bringing it forward as an opportunity to support safer communities and those who take on the responsibility and make the sacrifices to make our schools safer.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. HIGGINS for his service not just to this institution and to his constituents, but to the citizens of this country he protected as a military police officer, as well as those in Louisiana, where he served as local law enforcement. Like all of the men and women we honor for National Police Week this week, our colleague from Louisiana has “walked the walk” and it is an honor to serve with him.

Mr. Speaker, I simply urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 5242, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ZELDIN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5242, 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.

#### MEDGAR EVERS HOME NATIONAL MONUMENT ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4895) to establish the Medgar Evers National Monument in the State of Mississippi, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4895

*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 “Medgar Evers Home National Monument Act”.

##### SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) MONUMENT.—The term “Monument” means the Medgar Evers Home National Monument established by section 3.

(2) HISTORIC DISTRICT.—The term “Historic District” means the Medgar Evers Historic District, as included on the National Register of Historic Places, and as generally depicted on the Map.

(3) MAP.—The term “Map” means the map entitled “Medgar Evers Home National Monument”, numbered 515/142561, and dated February 2018.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the National Park Service.

(5) COLLEGE.—The term “College” means Tougaloo College, a private educational institution located in Tougaloo, Mississippi.

##### SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF MEDGAR EVERS HOME NATIONAL MONUMENT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), there is established the Medgar Evers Home National Monument in the State of Mississippi as a unit of the National Park Sys-

tem to preserve, protect, and interpret for the benefit of present and future generations resources associated with Medgar Evers’ pivotal role in the American Civil Rights Movement.

(2) CONDITIONS.—The Monument shall not be established until the date on which the Secretary—

(A) has entered into a written agreement with the College providing that all parcels within the Medgar Evers Home National Monument boundary as depicted on the Map shall be donated to the United States for inclusion in the Monument to be managed consistently with the purposes of the Monument; and

(B) has otherwise acquired sufficient land or interests in land within the boundaries of the Monument to constitute a manageable unit.

(b) BOUNDARIES.—The boundaries of the Monument shall be the boundaries as generally depicted on the Map.

(c) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The Map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(d) ACQUISITION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may only acquire any land or interest in land located within the boundary of the Monument by—

(1) donation;

(2) purchase with donated funds; or

(3) exchange.

(e) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer the Monument in accordance with—

(A) this Act; and

(B) the laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System, including—

(i) section 100101(a), chapter 1003, and sections 100751(a), 100752, 100753, and 102101 of title 54, United States Code; and

(ii) chapter 3201 of title 54, United States Code.

(2) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(A) Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available to the Secretary for this purpose, the Secretary shall prepare a general management plan for the Monument in accordance with section 100502 of title 54, United States Code.

(B) On completion of the general management plan under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall submit it to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

(f) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

(1) MONUMENT.—The Secretary shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the College for interpretive and educational programming related to the Monument, and may enter into other cooperative agreements for the purposes of carrying out this Act.

(2) HISTORIC DISTRICT.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with the owner of a nationally significant property within the Historic District, to identify, mark, interpret, improve, restore, and provide technical assistance with respect to the preservation and interpretation of the property.

(g) NO BUFFER ZONES.—Nothing in this Act, the establishment of the Monument, or the management of the Monument shall be construed to create buffer zones outside of the Monument. The fact that an activity or use can be seen, heard, or detected from within the Monument shall not preclude the conduct of that activity or use outside of the Monument.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) each will control 20 minutes.