

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his support, and I urge all of my colleagues in the House to pass H.R. 4655, the CREEPER Act.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for his explanation of the CREEPER bill. As I stated, it is disgusting, but, more importantly, it harms our children.

What we want to do in this Congress is to ensure that not only do we register our concern for the fairness of the criminal justice system, the criminal code, but that we provide the greatest protection we can ever provide for our children.

So the idea of sex toys and the utilization of child sex toys is what I want to be clear, and the importation and transportation is a dastardly act. I hope as this bill makes its way through the Congress that we will be assured that it frames itself to go after those who are the most vile and vicious as it relates to the child sex toys and in keeping with the confines and the parameters of a just criminal code.

Might I also just say that I just feel compelled, as the gentleman I know has worked on many issues, to remind this House that we have a crisis at the border. It is very important as we relate to children and children being taken away from families—mothers—that we also turn our attention to protecting those children.

So with that point, I want to indicate my support for effective measures to protect our children. I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this truly is, as the gentlewoman from Texas said, a disgusting topic, but it is one that I think is very necessary to protect our children and to protect our society.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I, again, thank the gentleman from New York for offering it. His experience as a prosecutor and his testimony to how horrific he finds it, even as a veteran prosecutor, should tell all the Members all they need to know about how important it is to pass this bill and start doing what the United Kingdom and Australia are already doing, and that is getting after the people who would import this kind of trash into the United States.

Mr. Speaker, 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. 4655.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REAUTHORIZING AND EXTENDING GRANTS FOR RECOVERY FROM OPIOID USE PROGRAMS ACT OF 2018

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6029) to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to reauthorize the comprehensive opioid abuse grant program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6029

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 “Reauthorizing and Extending Grants for Recovery from Opioid Use Programs Act of 2018” or the “REGROUP Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE OPIOID ABUSE GRANT PROGRAM.

Section 1001(a)(27) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10261(a)(27)) is amended by striking “through 2021” and inserting “and 2018, and \$330,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. 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 materials on H.R. 6029, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, in July 2016, Congress enacted the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, otherwise known as CARA. The statistics then were shocking, and, unfortunately, they have not yet subsided. In 2016, more than 64,000 Americans died from drug overdoses, including illicit drugs and prescription opioids. This figure has nearly doubled in the past decade.

Part of CARA created a comprehensive opioid abuse reduction program at the Department of Justice which directs Federal resources for drug abuse programs targeted at the opioid problem within our criminal justice system.

By establishing this competitive grant program, CARA gives States and localities maximum flexibility to attack opioid abuse issues unique to their communities. States are now able to use the grant funds for a variety of important criminal justice programs, including alternatives to incarceration, treatment programs for incarcerated individuals, juvenile opioid abuse, investigation and enforcement of drug trafficking and distribution laws, and significant training for first responders in carrying and administering opioid overdose reversal drugs, like naloxone. States can enlist non-profit organizations, including faith-based organizations, in the fight against opioid abuse.

In 2016, CARA authorized this new program at \$103 million annually over 5 years. However, 3 months ago, Congress tripled that authorization to \$330 million, including funds for drug courts, mental health courts, residential drug abuse treatment for State prisoners, and veterans’ treatment courts. Therefore, the bill before us results in no net increase in spending authorizations and no additional burden on the American taxpayer, which is a responsible, good government approach to this epidemic.

This bill reauthorizes the CARA program through 2023, so we can make sure there is no lapse in our efforts against drug addiction.

While Members of this body should be proud of our accomplishments, there is still much more work to do. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and thereby reassure all Americans that we are committed to fighting the opioid epidemic.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is, again, a topic that is impacting so many Americans. I recall the CARA Act that the Judiciary Committee passed out some 2 years ago, a miraculous piece of legislation because we did not criminalize, we sought to help those who have been badly addicted to drugs.

I rise in support of H.R. 6029, the REGROUP Act. This bill increases the funding authorized for the Department of Justice’s Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program from \$103 million per year to \$330 million per year through the fiscal year 2023.

The opioid crisis is a national emergency, and we should certainly expend the resources to prevent opioid abuse and treat those who have become addicted. We have found that the over-criminalization of these persons who are addicted has not served us well. They have generated a whole population of persons who have been labeled under the topic, but realistically it is impacting their lives: mass incarceration.

In the United States, drug overdoses are the leading cause of accidental death, with opioids being involved in nearly two-thirds of overdose deaths. Overall, the number of drug overdose deaths has nearly quadrupled over the past 20 years. Although effective for the treatment of pain, prescription opioids are highly addictive, and nearly half of all U.S. opioid overdose deaths involve a prescription opioid.

Many Members understand that this became part of the wave of new treatment that medical school students and doctors were told and instructed, that a patient should not have to suffer pain. It had good intentions. But through that process of medical treatment became a population of extended addicted persons who began to use a prescription drug as a drug of use and recreation, and then those who were given it in the medical sense who were able to get it over and over again on the basis of pain became addicted.

Overall, the number of drug overdose deaths has nearly quadrupled, as I said, and this has been thought of as an effective treatment for pain. Prescription opioids are highly addictive, and nearly half of all U.S. opioid overdose deaths involve a prescription opioid, as I have said.

Deaths related to heroin have similarly increased as individuals often transition from more expensive prescription opioids to cheaper heroin which has had a rise in its use.

In 2016, Congress adopted this program, as I indicated, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, as we refer to it. The Judiciary Committee had a portion of that legislation. CARA was a well-intentioned initiative to enhance the efforts against opioids across the range of relevant executive branch agencies, involving the jurisdiction of several of our committee in the House.

I was pleased that the Judiciary Committee's contribution to this effort resulted in the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program which reflects an approach not strictly based on arresting and prosecuting.

At the time, I noted with approval that we were not raising sentences or expanding mandatory minimums, but instead funding a range of approaches, including anti-addiction mechanisms such as treatment alternatives to incarceration, which fell under the Department of Justice.

Such alternatives incentivized by this program include training for criminal justice agency personnel on substance abuse disorders, the implementation of mental health courts, drug courts, and veterans' treatment courts, assisting parents whose incarceration could result in children entering the child welfare system, and community-based substance abuse diversion programs.

It is well-known by Members that if you have one of these courts in your jurisdiction, they have been powerful. Mental health courts, drug courts, and veterans' courts have steered a lot of people away from incarceration. They work well. The judges believe they are constructive, and we are doing more for people.

In 2015, we learned through a Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee hearing about the success of a newly developed Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion, or LEAD, approach that was spear-

headed in cities such as Seattle and Santa Fe.

Through the program we are extending today, hopefully we will make it easier for other cities to afford to implement diversion programs such as LEAD.

Other purposes for which these grants may be used include providing training and resources for first responders in administering opioid overdose reversal drugs, expanding medication-assisted treatment programs operated by criminal justice agencies, implementing prescription drug monitoring programs, preventing opioid abuse by juveniles, and implementing prescription drug take-back programs, in addition to investigating the illicit distribution of opioids.

This funding will be an added contribution to these very vital programs, and I hope that we will be in the business every day of saving lives and turning around those addicted persons who not only are hurting themselves, but they are hurting their families.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6029, the REGROUP Act. This bill increases the funding authorized for the Department of Justice's Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program from \$103 million per year to \$330 million per year through fiscal year 2023.

The opioid crisis is a national emergency, and we should certainly expend the resources necessary to prevent opioid abuse and treat those who have become addicted.

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Overall, the number of drug overdose deaths has nearly quadrupled over the past twenty years. Although effective for the treatment of pain, prescription opioids are highly addictive and nearly half of all U.S. opioid overdose deaths involve a prescription opioid.

Deaths related to heroin have similarly increased, as individuals often transition from more expensive prescription opioids to cheaper heroin.

In 2016, Congress adopted this program as part of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or "CARA" as we often refer to it. CARA was a well-intentioned initiative to enhance the efforts against opioids across the range of relevant executive branch agencies, involving the jurisdiction of several of our Committees in the House.

I was pleased that the Judiciary Committee's contribution to this effort, resulted in the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program, which reflects an approach not strictly based on arresting and prosecuting.

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Such alternatives incentivized by this program include training for criminal justice agency personnel on substance abuse disorders, the implementation of mental health courts, drug courts, and veterans' treatment courts, assisting parents whose incarceration could result in children entering the child welfare system, and community-based substance abuse diversion programs.

In 2015, we learned through a Crime Subcommittee hearing about the success of the newly-developed Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion, or LEAD, approach that was spearheaded in cities such as Seattle and Santa Fe.

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More than 80 percent of the defendants sentenced for crack cocaine offenses were African Americans, despite the fact that more than 66 percent of crack users were either White or Hispanic.

In 2010, we reduced the sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine from 100 to 1 to 18 to 1, but we did not even make those changes apply retroactively, and the remaining disparity—and the remaining mandatory nature of the penalty—remains.

There is more to do, and there is no excuse to allow such injustices to persist even as Congress attempts to take credit for efforts to address the opioid crisis.

As former Attorney General Eric Holder said when he instituted his initiative to address some of the inequities with respect to prosecuting drug crimes, we need to be "Smart on Crime."

We do not need more "get tough" rhetoric from President Trump or Attorney General Sessions about imposing the death penalty for drug crimes. And we should not be telling prosecutors to ratchet up criminal charges and penalties for drug offenders. None of that solves the problem.

Instead of doubling down on failed policies that do nothing more than proliferate misery, we need real leadership, involving a commitment to increase resources for alternatives that we know are actually effective.

And so, while we should support this bill, we should do more to promote a broader and more just approach for all drugs, and re-instating policies that reflect the need to be "Smart on Crime."

Mr. Speaker, I hope the funding we appropriate in the years to come will match the increased authorization for funding the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program administered by the Department of Justice.

But we must do more than write checks, we must challenge ourselves to change our mindset and methodology in the way we address drug abuse across the range of substances that we have criminalized.

After years of failed policies, we should have learned that we cannot arrest or incarcerate our way out of any drug crisis, and mass incarceration—fueled primary by drug-related arrests—has harmed our communities in many ways.

Therefore, as I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill today, I also ask that we commit ourselves to extending this conversation past today so that we can work together to reform our drug laws, our sentencing

laws, and broaden our approaches to preventing and addressing drug abuse.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), whom I failed to note in my opening remarks is the chief sponsor of this legislation and someone very dedicated to addressing problems with opioid abuse.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, H.R. 6029, the Reauthorizing and Extending Grants for Recovery from Opioid Use Programs Act of 2018, or the REGROUP Act.

In simple terms, this bill will help our Nation continue the fight against the opioid crisis. The REGROUP Act does two things. First, it reauthorizes and extends the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Program administered through the Department of Justice for an additional 2 years through 2023. Second, it also raises authorized funding levels for these programs from \$103 million to \$330 million for each fiscal year.

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Mr. Speaker, back in my district in western Pennsylvania, the opioid crisis is still a huge problem that continues to destroy lives, hurt families, and plague entire communities.

While we have made some progress, there is much more work to be done. Therefore, we must not only continue to support the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Program, but enhance it with additional funding.

Originally authorized in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016, or CARA, the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Program authorized valuable grant resources to States and localities suffering from the epidemic. These competitive grant programs offer a wide variety of support at all phases of this fight, from first responders to those suffering from substance abuse.

More specifically, the DOJ has developed various grant programs for first responders fighting on the front lines, programs that support drug courts and veteran treatment courts. It also provides grants for increasing collaboration between criminal justice agencies and substance abuse agencies. Furthermore, it even has programs that help develop the prescription drug monitoring programs.

For example, back in Beaver County and Allegheny County, we have veteran treatment courts that provide alternative justice systems where those who suffer from addiction and who run afoul of the law can actually receive the care, treatment, and intervention they need.

The alternate systems that these courts offer are precisely the type of programs that the REGROUP Act will support. Courts like these help break the cycle of addiction for individuals and, hopefully, save lives in the proc-

ess. Our whole society benefits when someone breaks the chain of addiction.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to end the opioid crisis, we must attack this problem at all levels. We must be committed to this fight for the long term, and we must increase support for these programs. The REGROUP Act will help us continue this fight against the opioid crisis.

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

Let me thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his leadership and for his concern for what has been a deadly journey for many Americans.

As I close, I would like to share just a moment of the devastating impact that this epidemic of drugs has had in many communities.

More than 80 percent of the defendants sentenced for crack cocaine offenses were African Americans, despite the fact that more than 66 percent of crack cocaine users were either White or Hispanic.

In 2010, we reduced the sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine from 100-to-1 to 18-to-1. We did not even make those changes apply retroactively. The remaining disparity and the remaining mandatory nature of the penalty remains. Therefore, there is much to do.

This bill will help us a lot, but there is no excuse to continue to allow people, as is evidenced by the recent pardon by the administration of an individual who had been incarcerated on a drug offense, no excuse for us to allow these injustices to persist, even as we proceed to work on this opioid epidemic.

So I think it is extremely important that, as former Attorney General Eric Holder said when he instituted his initiative to address some of the inequities with respect to prosecuting drug crimes, we need to be smart on crime. Treatment is very important. This legislation raising the amount of grant money to help with the courts and treatment elements will be a major aspect to saving lives.

But we do not need to continue to get tough in another arena where we are speaking about raising penalties, imposing the death penalty for drug crimes, as the Attorney General has offered. We should not be telling prosecutors to ratchet up criminal charges and penalties for drug offenders. None of that solves the problem.

What we are doing today will solve the problem. Instead of doubling down on failing policies that do not do anything more than proliferate misery for the incarcerated person who really needs treatment, as well as the family, we need real leadership involving a commitment to increase resources for the alternatives we know are actually effective.

I really do believe the veterans courts, for example, are a Godsend to many of our veterans who come back and truly need help. They are so grateful for help. They may have gotten ad-

dicted while in the service or because of circumstances after leaving the service, including issues dealing with their own psychological needs. In any event, we know that they have served their Nation.

Continuing to support those kinds of alternatives are extremely important, and we should support this bill so that we can continue those alternatives, but we need to make sure that we speak against those approaches that ignore the Smart on Crime. I would ask that we reinstitute the Smart on Crime, which diminishes the number of people who get caught up in the system who are just truly addicted from the terrible plight that they have with drug addiction.

As we work to do more, we must ensure that we look at the crisis as it relates to mass incarceration. We must also treat all of the addictions—crack cocaine—as the same, because it spreads throughout our Nation.

So as we continue this conversation, again, I add my appreciation to the Congressman from Pennsylvania, the chairman, and Ranking Member NADLER. As we rise to support this legislation, let us continue to seek to reform our drug laws, let us reform our sentencing laws, and let us broaden our approaches to preventing and addressing drug abuse.

I think the experts will tell us that that has been one of the most effective pathways to get people away from drugs and to get their lives and the lives of their families restored.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I, too, want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS). I want to thank the gentlewoman, the ranking member of the Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee for her dedication to addressing this very serious problem.

I want to urge all of my colleagues to join us in supporting this fine legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6029.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING EARLY CHILDHOOD TRAUMA RELATED TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE ACT OF 2018

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5889) to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to disseminate information, resources, and if requested, technical assistance to early