

in an apartment building while driving his own personal vehicle last September. After Lieutenant Schrage assessed the situation and determined that the residents were trapped, he took matters into his own hands.

Without regard for his own safety, he was able to enter the building and rescue a semiconscious woman trapped in her apartment, remove her from the complex, and remain with her until medical attention arrived.

After rescuing the woman, he took actions to prevent the fire from spreading to other parts of the apartment. His quick actions helped prevent further damage and loss of life in the surrounding apartments.

I am proud to recognize Lieutenant Schrage for his courage and selfless actions that saved a woman's life.

Thank you, Lieutenant Schrage and all the first responders for all that you do to protect us and keep us safe every day.

PROTECT OUR LOVED ONES WITH PREEXISTING CONDITIONS

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring awareness to the Trump administration's effort to gut the Affordable Care Act.

Last Friday, the Justice Department failed to defend a key provision of the ACA that protects people with preexisting conditions. The decision jeopardizes millions of people's healthcare in Texas.

The Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex has one of the highest uninsured rates in the entire country. The congressional district that I represent, alone, has the highest uninsured rate in the entire country.

Right now, Republicans are complicit in allowing insurance companies to discriminate against over 10 million Texans with preexisting conditions.

Mr. Speaker, this is bad, and we are asking for basic empathy. We want to make sure that people don't have to live in a constant state of panic and praying for the day that their health is in jeopardy and know that their insurance won't be there for them.

Let's save the Affordable Care Act. Let's make it stronger. These insurance plans that support hardworking families were put in place for a reason. We need to protect our loved ones with preexisting conditions, and that is what we demand.

BATTLING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

(Mr. POLIQUIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, Maine is a big small town. Our population is only 1.3 million people, and it seems like everybody, Mr. Speaker, knows everybody else. But this opioid epidemic has devastated so many of our families

in the great State of Maine, including having a big impact on my own.

Every day, one Mainer dies from an opioid epidemic up in our great State. We must continue to battle this devastating scourge on our population, and it must be all hands on deck.

Several months ago, Congress appropriated \$4 billion back to the States for increased law enforcement and early education and for recovery programs, but there is so much more, Mr. Speaker, that needs to be done. That is why this week I am so proud that the House of Representatives passed, with a big bipartisan vote, the Safe Disposal of Unused Medication Act. This allows hospice workers to safely dispose of unused opioids and other powerful medications so that they don't fall into the wrong hands.

I am grateful, Mr. Speaker, for all Democrats and Republicans here in D.C. and back in Maine who helped give our families more security. We have got to stay on the offense and battle this epidemic until we have won.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

(Mr. KHANNA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share a sad story of what happens when we do not value our workers' safety.

Cynthia Palomata was a nurse from the bay area who worked in the county jail. She complained to her supervisors that her work area had insufficient lighting for reviewing paperwork. Rather than updating the lighting system or providing her with a secured light fixture, she was given a common desk lamp. One day, she was treating a patient, and when her back was turned, the patient grabbed the lamp and hit her over the head, knocking her into a coma. She never woke up.

Every year, thousands of Americans are killed while at work, more than 4,000 in 2015 alone. That is why we have introduced, on a bipartisan basis, the Healthcare Workplace Violence Prevention Act, to stop tragedies like Cynthia's from ever taking place again. It is bipartisan and it is common sense.

The bill requires facilities to create violence prevention plans that address all levels of safety. Healthcare and social service workers face high risk.

FLAG DAY AND CELEBRATING U.S. ARMY'S BIRTHDAY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Flag Day and celebrate the U.S. Army's 243rd birthday.

Each year on June 14, we celebrate the Stars and Stripes, which the Second Continental Congress designated as a symbol of our Nation on this day in 1777.

Since our founding, our flag has flown across the country and the world. It has flown during both our most tragic moments and our greatest triumphs. It has also been a glorious symbol of hope for our brave servicemen and -women, who salute it, defend it, serve it, and, in some cases, die for it to protect our freedom and liberty.

Yesterday, I was proud to join Secretary of the Army Mark Esper, Army Chief of Staff General Milley, and the Sergeant Major of the Army to celebrate the rich history of our Army.

Without the Army 243 years ago, we would not be the great Nation that we are today. And today, we celebrate two great symbols of freedom, our Army and our flag, which both symbolize America being the land of the free and the home of the brave.

RECOGNIZING MARK GWYN

(Mr. DESJARLAIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the recent retirement of director of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, a native of Tennessee's Fourth District, Mark Gwyn. Throughout Mark's 30-year career, he served as the standard for Tennessee law enforcement.

Beginning as a patrol officer for the McMinnville Police Department in 1985, Gwyn quickly joined the TBI as a special agent, where he showed superb investigative ability, leadership skills, and work ethic.

Eight years later, he was promoted to executive officer, then to assistant director, overseeing the forensic services division, and, finally, to director of the TBI in 2004.

Serving longer than any of his predecessors, Gwyn implemented many policies and programs that helped the bureau evolve over the past several years. He steered the bureau's fight to combat illegal methamphetamine production in the State and took great steps in combating human trafficking.

He oversaw the development of Tennessee's nationally recognized fusion center, which provides numerous services that help link local, State, and Federal resources together to improve the safety of all Tennesseans.

As we look ahead, there will almost certainly be new challenges that TBI will face and difficulties that its future leaders will have to overcome. But with the foundation built during his tenure, I am certain that TBI will face these challenges with the same professionalism, efficiency, and grace that Director Gwyn has exhibited.

I thank Mark Gwyn for his service and wish him well in his retirement.

SECURING THE INTERNATIONAL MAIL AGAINST OPIOIDS ACT OF 2018

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 934, I call up

the bill (H.R. 5788) to provide for the processing by U.S. Customs and Border Protection of certain international mail shipments and to require the provision of advance electronic information on international mail shipments of mail, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 934, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means printed in the bill, the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in part C of House Report 115-751, modified by the amendment printed in part D of the report, is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 5788

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Synthetics Trafficking and Overdose Prevention Act of 2018” or “STOP Act of 2018”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Customs fees.
- Sec. 3. Mandatory advance electronic information for postal shipments.
- Sec. 4. International postal agreements.
- Sec. 5. Cost recoupment.
- Sec. 6. Development of technology to detect illicit narcotics.
- Sec. 7. Civil penalties for postal shipments.
- Sec. 8. Report on violations of arrival, reporting, entry, and clearance requirements and falsity or lack of manifest.
- Sec. 9. Effective date; regulations.

SEC. 2. CUSTOMS FEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 13031(b)(9) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 58c(b)(9)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(D)(i) With respect to the processing of items that are sent to the United States through the international postal network by ‘Inbound Express Mail service’ or ‘Inbound EMS’ (as that service is described in the mail classification schedule referred to in section 3631 of title 39, United States Code), the following payments are required:

“(I) \$1 per Inbound EMS item.

“(II) If an Inbound EMS item is formally entered, the fee provided for under subsection (a)(9), if applicable.

“(ii) Notwithstanding section 451 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1451), the payments required by clause (i), as allocated pursuant to clause (iii)(I), shall be the only payments required for reimbursement of U.S. Customs and Border Protection for customs services provided in connection with the processing of an Inbound EMS item.

“(iii)(I) The payments required by clause (i)(I) shall be allocated as follows:

“(aa) 50 percent of the amount of the payments shall be paid on a quarterly basis by the United States Postal Service to the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury to reimburse U.S. Customs and Border Protection for customs services provided in connection with the processing of Inbound EMS items.

“(bb) 50 percent of the amount of the payments shall be retained by the Postal Service to reimburse the Postal Service for services provided in connection with the customs processing of Inbound EMS items.

“(II) Payments received by U.S. Customs and Border Protection under subclause (I)(aa) shall, in accordance with section 524 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1524), be deposited in the Customs User Fee Account and used to directly reimburse each appropriation for the amount paid out of that appropriation for the costs incurred in providing services to international mail facilities. Amounts deposited in accordance with the preceding sentence shall be available until expended for the provision of such services.

“(III) Payments retained by the Postal Service under subclause (I)(bb) shall be used to directly reimburse the Postal Service for the costs incurred in providing services in connection with the customs processing of Inbound EMS items.

“(iv) Beginning in fiscal year 2021, the Secretary, in consultation with the Postmaster General, may adjust, not more frequently than once each fiscal year, the amount described in clause (i)(I) to an amount commensurate with the costs of services provided in connection with the customs processing of Inbound EMS items, consistent with the obligations of the United States under international agreements.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 13031(a) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 58c(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6), by inserting “(other than an item subject to a fee under subsection (b)(9)(D))” after “customs officer”; and

(2) in paragraph (10)—

(A) in subparagraph (C), in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting “(other than Inbound EMS items described in subsection (b)(9)(D))” after “release”; and

(B) in the flush at the end, by inserting “or of Inbound EMS items described in subsection (b)(9)(D),” after “(C).”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on January 1, 2020.

SEC. 3. MANDATORY ADVANCE ELECTRONIC INFORMATION FOR POSTAL SHIPMENTS.

(a) MANDATORY ADVANCE ELECTRONIC INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 343(a)(3)(K) of the Trade Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-210; 19 U.S.C. 2071 note) is amended to read as follows:

“(K)(i) The Secretary shall prescribe regulations requiring the United States Postal Service to transmit the information described in paragraphs (1) and (2) to the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection for international mail shipments by the Postal Service (including shipments to the Postal Service from foreign postal operators that are transported by private carrier) consistent with the requirements of this subparagraph.

“(ii) In prescribing regulations under clause (i), the Secretary shall impose requirements for the transmission to the Commissioner of information described in paragraphs (1) and (2) for mail shipments described in clause (i) that are comparable to the requirements for the transmission of such information imposed on similar non-mail shipments of cargo, taking into account the parameters set forth in subparagraphs (A) through (J).

“(iii) The regulations prescribed under clause (i) shall require the transmission of the information described in paragraphs (1) and (2) with respect to a shipment as soon as

practicable in relation to the transportation of the shipment, consistent with subparagraph (H).

“(iv) Regulations prescribed under clause (i) shall allow for the requirements for the transmission to the Commissioner of information described in paragraphs (1) and (2) for mail shipments described in clause (i) to be implemented in phases, as appropriate, by—

“(I) setting incremental targets for increasing the percentage of such shipments for which information is required to be transmitted to the Commissioner; and

“(II) taking into consideration—

“(aa) the risk posed by such shipments;

“(bb) the volume of mail shipped to the United States by or through a particular country; and

“(cc) the capacities of foreign postal operators to provide that information to the Postal Service.

“(v)(I) Notwithstanding clause (iv), the Postal Service shall, not later than December 31, 2018, arrange for the transmission to the Commissioner of the information described in paragraphs (1) and (2) for not less than 70 percent of the aggregate number of mail shipments, including 100 percent of mail shipments from the People's Republic of China, described in clause (i).

“(II) If the requirements of subclause (I) are not met, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees, not later than June 30, 2019, a report—

“(aa) assessing the reasons for the failure to meet those requirements; and

“(bb) identifying recommendations to improve the collection by the Postal Service of the information described in paragraphs (1) and (2).

“(vi)(I) Notwithstanding clause (iv), the Postal Service shall, not later than December 31, 2020, arrange for the transmission to the Commissioner of the information described in paragraphs (1) and (2) for 100 percent of the aggregate number of mail shipments described in clause (i).

“(II) The Commissioner, in consultation with the Postmaster General, may determine to exclude a country from the requirement described in subclause (I) to transmit information for mail shipments described in clause (i) from the country if the Commissioner determines that the country—

“(aa) does not have the capacity to collect and transmit such information;

“(bb) represents a low risk for mail shipments that violate relevant United States laws and regulations; and

“(cc) accounts for low volumes of mail shipments that can be effectively screened for compliance with relevant United States laws and regulations through an alternate means.

“(III) The Commissioner shall, at a minimum on an annual basis, re-evaluate any determination made under subclause (II) to exclude a country from the requirement described in subclause (I). If, at any time, the Commissioner determines that a country no longer meets the requirements under subclause (II), the Commissioner may not further exclude the country from the requirement described in subclause (I).

“(IV) The Commissioner shall, on an annual basis, submit to the appropriate congressional committees—

“(aa) a list of countries with respect to which the Commissioner has made a determination under subclause (II) to exclude the countries from the requirement described in subclause (I); and

“(bb) information used to support such determination with respect to such countries.

“(vii)(I) The Postmaster General shall, in consultation with the Commissioner, refuse any shipments received after December 31,

2020, for which the information described in paragraphs (1) and (2) is not transmitted as required under this subparagraph, except as provided in subclause (II).

“(II) If remedial action is warranted in lieu of refusal of shipments pursuant to subclause (I), the Postmaster General and the Commissioner shall take remedial action with respect to the shipments, including destruction, seizure, controlled delivery or other law enforcement initiatives, or correction of the failure to provide the information described in paragraphs (1) and (2) with respect to the shipments.

“(viii) Nothing in this subparagraph shall be construed to limit the authority of the Secretary to obtain information relating to international mail shipments from private carriers or other appropriate parties.

“(ix) In this subparagraph, the term ‘appropriate congressional committees’ means—

“(I) the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

“(II) the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives.”.

(2) **JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN ON MANDATORY ADVANCE INFORMATION.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Postmaster General shall develop and submit to the appropriate congressional committees a joint strategic plan detailing specific performance measures for achieving—

(A) the transmission of information as required by section 343(a)(3)(K) of the Trade Act of 2002, as amended by paragraph (1); and

(B) the presentation by the Postal Service to U.S. Customs and Border Protection of all mail targeted by U.S. Customs and Border Protection for inspection.

(b) **CAPACITY BUILDING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 343(a) of the Trade Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-210; 19 U.S.C. 2071 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) **CAPACITY BUILDING.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, and in coordination with the Postmaster General and the heads of other Federal agencies, as appropriate, may provide technical assistance, equipment, technology, and training to enhance the capacity of foreign postal operators—

“(i) to gather and provide the information required by paragraph (3)(K); and

“(ii) to otherwise gather and provide postal shipment information related to—

“(I) terrorism;

“(II) items the importation or introduction of which into the United States is prohibited or restricted, including controlled substances; and

“(III) such other concerns as the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(B) **PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY.**—With respect to the provision of equipment and technology under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may lease, loan, provide, or otherwise assist in the deployment of such equipment and technology under such terms and conditions as the Secretary may prescribe, including nonreimbursable loans or the transfer of ownership of equipment and technology.”.

(2) **JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN ON CAPACITY BUILDING.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Postmaster General shall, in consultation with the Secretary of State, jointly develop and

submit to the appropriate congressional committees a joint strategic plan—

(A) detailing the extent to which U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the United States Postal Service are engaged in capacity building efforts under section 343(a)(5) of the Trade Act of 2002, as added by paragraph (1);

(B) describing plans for future capacity building efforts; and

(C) assessing how capacity building has increased the ability of U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Postal Service to advance the goals of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(c) **REPORT AND CONSULTATIONS BY SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND POSTMASTER GENERAL.**—

(1) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter until 3 years after the Postmaster General has met the requirement under clause (vi) of subparagraph (K) of section 343(a)(3) of the Trade Act of 2002, as amended by subsection (a)(1), the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Postmaster General shall, in consultation with the Secretary of State, jointly submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on compliance with that subparagraph that includes the following:

(A) An assessment of the status of the regulations required to be promulgated under that subparagraph.

(B) An update regarding new and existing agreements reached with foreign postal operators for the transmission of the information required by that subparagraph.

(C) A summary of deliberations between the United States Postal Service and foreign postal operators with respect to issues relating to the transmission of that information.

(D) A summary of the progress made in achieving the transmission of that information for the percentage of shipments required by that subparagraph.

(E) An assessment of the quality of that information being received by foreign postal operators, as determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security, and actions taken to improve the quality of that information.

(F) A summary of policies established by the Universal Postal Union that may affect the ability of the Postmaster General to obtain the transmission of that information.

(G) A summary of the use of technology to detect illicit synthetic opioids and other illegal substances in international mail parcels and planned acquisitions and advancements in such technology.

(H) Such other information as the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Postmaster General consider appropriate with respect to obtaining the transmission of information required by that subparagraph.

(2) **CONSULTATIONS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter until the Postmaster General has met the requirement under clause (vi) of section 343(a)(3)(K) of the Trade Act of 2002, as amended by subsection (a)(1), to arrange for the transmission of information with respect to 100 percent of the aggregate number of mail shipments described in clause (i) of that section, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Postmaster General shall provide briefings to the appropriate congressional committees on the progress made in achieving the transmission of that information for that percentage of shipments.

(d) **GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT.**—Not later than June 30, 2019, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report—

(1) assessing the progress of the United States Postal Service in achieving the trans-

mission of the information required by subparagraph (K) of section 343(a)(3) of the Trade Act of 2002, as amended by subsection (a)(1), for the percentage of shipments required by that subparagraph;

(2) assessing the quality of the information received from foreign postal operators for targeting purposes;

(3) assessing the specific percentage of targeted mail presented by the Postal Service to U.S. Customs and Border Protection for inspection;

(4) describing the costs of collecting the information required by such subparagraph (K) from foreign postal operators and the costs of implementing the use of that information;

(5) assessing the benefits of receiving that information with respect to international mail shipments;

(6) assessing the feasibility of assessing a customs fee under section 13031(b)(9) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985, as amended by section 2, on international mail shipments other than Inbound Express Mail service in a manner consistent with the obligations of the United States under international agreements; and

(7) identifying recommendations, including recommendations for legislation, to improve the compliance of the Postal Service with such subparagraph (K), including an assessment of whether the detection of illicit synthetic opioids in the international mail would be improved by—

(A) requiring the Postal Service to serve as the consignee for international mail shipments containing goods; or

(B) designating a customs broker to act as an importer of record for international mail shipments containing goods.

(e) **TECHNICAL CORRECTION.**—Section 343 of the Trade Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-210; 19 U.S.C. 2071 note) is amended in the section heading by striking “ADVANCED” and inserting “ADVANCE”.

(f) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 4. INTERNATIONAL POSTAL AGREEMENTS.

(a) **EXISTING AGREEMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In the event that any provision of this Act, or any amendment made by this Act, is determined to be in violation of obligations of the United States under any postal treaty, convention, or other international agreement related to international postal services, or any amendment to such an agreement, the Secretary of State should negotiate to amend the relevant provisions of the agreement so that the United States is no longer in violation of the agreement.

(2) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to permit delay in the implementation of this Act or any amendment made by this Act.

(b) **FUTURE AGREEMENTS.**—

(1) **CONSULTATIONS.**—Before entering into, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, any postal treaty, convention, or other international agreement related to international postal services, or any amendment to such an agreement, that is related to the ability of the United States to secure the provision of advance electronic information by foreign postal operators, the Secretary of State should consult with the appropriate congressional committees (as defined in section 3(f)).

(2) **EXPEDITED NEGOTIATION OF NEW AGREEMENT.**—To the extent that any new postal

treaty, convention, or other international agreement related to international postal services would improve the ability of the United States to secure the provision of advance electronic information by foreign postal operators as required by regulations prescribed under section 343(a)(3)(K) of the Trade Act of 2002, as amended by section 3(a)(1), the Secretary of State should expeditiously conclude such an agreement.

SEC. 5. COST RECOUPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The United States Postal Service shall, to the extent practicable and otherwise recoverable by law, ensure that all costs associated with complying with this Act and amendments made by this Act are charged directly to foreign shippers or foreign postal operators.

(b) COSTS NOT CONSIDERED REVENUE.—The recovery of costs under subsection (a) shall not be deemed revenue for purposes of subchapter I and II of chapter 36 of title 39, United States Code, or regulations prescribed under that chapter.

SEC. 6. DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY TO DETECT ILLICIT NARCOTICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Postmaster General and the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, in coordination with the heads of other agencies as appropriate, shall collaborate to identify and develop technology for the detection of illicit fentanyl, other synthetic opioids, and other narcotics and psychoactive substances entering the United States by mail.

(b) OUTREACH TO PRIVATE SECTOR.—The Postmaster General and the Commissioner shall conduct outreach to private sector entities to gather information regarding the current state of technology to identify areas for innovation relating to the detection of illicit fentanyl, other synthetic opioids, and other narcotics and psychoactive substances entering the United States.

SEC. 7. CIVIL PENALTIES FOR POSTAL SHIPMENTS.

Section 436 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1436) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) CIVIL PENALTIES FOR POSTAL SHIPMENTS.—

“(1) CIVIL PENALTY.—A civil penalty shall be imposed against the United States Postal Service if the Postal Service accepts a shipment in violation of section 343(a)(3)(K)(vii)(I) of the Trade Act of 2002.

“(2) MODIFICATION OF CIVIL PENALTY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall reduce or dismiss a civil penalty imposed pursuant to paragraph (1) if U.S. Customs and Border Protection determines that the United States Postal Service—

“(i) has a low error rate in compliance with section 343(a)(3)(K) of the Trade Act of 2002;

“(ii) is cooperating with U.S. Customs and Border Protection with respect to the violation of section 343(a)(3)(K)(vii)(I) of the Trade Act of 2002; or

“(iii) has taken remedial action to prevent future violations of section 343(a)(3)(K)(vii)(I) of the Trade Act of 2002.

“(B) WRITTEN NOTIFICATION.—U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall issue a written notification to the Postal Service with respect to each exercise of the authority of subparagraph (A) to reduce or dismiss a civil penalty imposed pursuant to paragraph (1).

“(3) ONGOING LACK OF COMPLIANCE.—If U.S. Customs and Border Protection determines that the United States Postal Service—

“(A) has repeatedly committed violations of section 343(a)(3)(K)(vii)(I) of the Trade Act of 2002,

“(B) has failed to cooperate with U.S. Customs and Border Protection with respect to

violations of section 343(a)(3)(K)(vii)(I) of the Trade Act of 2002, and

“(C) has an increasing error rate in compliance with section 343(a)(3)(K) of the Trade Act of 2002,

civil penalties may be imposed against the United States Postal Service until corrective action, satisfactory to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, is taken.”.

SEC. 8. REPORT ON VIOLATIONS OF ARRIVAL, REPORTING, ENTRY, AND CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS AND FALSITY OR LACK OF MANIFEST.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an annual report that contains the information described in subsection (b) with respect to each violation of section 436 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1436), as amended by section 7, and section 584 of such Act (19 U.S.C. 1584) that occurred during the previous year.

(b) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—The information described in this subsection is the following:

(1) The name and address of the violator.

(2) The specific violation that was committed.

(3) The location or port of entry through which the items were transported.

(4) An inventory of the items seized, including a description of the items and the quantity seized.

(5) The location from which the items originated.

(6) The entity responsible for the apprehension or seizure, organized by location or port of entry.

(7) The amount of penalties assessed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, organized by name of the violator and location or port of entry.

(8) The amount of penalties that U.S. Customs and Border Protection could have levied, organized by name of the violator and location or port of entry.

(9) The rationale for negotiating lower penalties, organized by name of the violator and location or port of entry.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 9. EFFECTIVE DATE; REGULATIONS.

(a) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Act and the amendments made by this Act (other than the amendments made by section 2) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) REGULATIONS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, such regulations as are necessary to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall be prescribed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5788, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be here today to speak in support of H.R. 5788, the Synthetics Trafficking and Overdose Prevention Act, which is short for STOP Act. By passing this important bipartisan bill today, we are standing up for the health and safety of our communities and families and closing an important loophole allowing contraband to enter the United States through international mail.

In my home State of Washington, there has been a 134 percent increase in opioid-related cases between 2004 and 2016, and opioid-related deaths increased by 33 percent. This increase, shockingly, exceeds our State's population growth, and it is why the work that we have been doing in Congress and in the Ways and Means Committee is so important.

In April, we held a hearing in the Trade Subcommittee with witnesses from the United States Customs and Border Protection and the United States Postal Service. They discussed how synthetic opioids are entering the United States through the international mail system and how we can help them put a stop to this.

The bipartisan legislation that we will vote on today supports their work by requiring advance electronic data on international mail shipments and allowing the Border Patrol to target for opioid shipments. It also holds these agencies accountable to do so much more than they have been doing by using hardline deadlines and mandates, as well as penalties. Ultimately, the bill will require the Postal Service to refuse packages for which this information is not provided unless there is compelling reason.

The opioid crisis must be addressed from every angle, and that includes stopping illicit synthetic opioids from entering our country. We must do more to protect our families, our communities, and this bill would do just that.

I want to thank Chairman BRADY and Ranking Member PASCRELL, Representative MIKE BISHOP, Representative JOHN FASO, and many of my colleagues who have worked together on this bill. I would also like to thank the staffs of each one of these Members who have worked so hard and dedicated so much time on this critical issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the STOP Act.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, June 6, 2018.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY: I write concerning H.R. 5788, the "Securing the International Mail Against Opioids Act of 2018." This legislation includes matters that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Homeland Security.

In order to expedite floor consideration of H.R. 5788, the Committee on Homeland Security agrees to forgo action on this bill. This is conditional on our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 5788 at this time, the Committee on Homeland Security does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation and will be appropriately consulted as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and asks that you support any such request.

Please place a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging our jurisdictional interest into the Congressional Record during consideration of the measure on the House floor. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, June 6, 2018.

Hon. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 5788, "Securing the International Mail Against Opioids Act of 2018," on which the Committee on Homeland Security was granted an additional referral.

I am most appreciative of your decision to waive formal consideration of H.R. 5788 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor. I acknowledge that although you waived formal consideration of the bill, the Committee on Homeland Security is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in those provisions of the bill that fall within your Rule X jurisdiction. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees on any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will include a copy of our letters in the Congressional Record during consideration of this legislation on the House floor.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 8, 2018.

Hon. TREY GOWDY,
Chairman, Committee Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOWDY: I write to you regarding H.R. 5788, the "Securing the International Mail Against Opioids Act of 2018" on which the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform was granted an additional referral. I ask that you waive formal consideration of H.R. 5788 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I acknowledge that by waiving formal consideration of this bill, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is in no

way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in those provisions of the bill that fall within your Rule X jurisdiction. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees on any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will include a copy of our letters in the Congressional Record during consideration of this legislation on the House floor.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COM-
MITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOV-
ERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC, June 11, 2018.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 5788, the Securing the International Mail Against Opioids Act of 2018. As you know, certain provisions of the bill fall within the jurisdiction of Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

So that H.R. 5788 may proceed expeditiously to the House floor, I agree to discharging the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform from further consideration thereof. I agree that forgoing formal consideration of the bill will not prejudice the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with respect to any future jurisdictional claim, and I appreciate your agreement to support appointment of members of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform as conferees in any House-Senate conference on this or related legislation. In addition, I request the Committee be consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so we may address any remaining issues within our jurisdiction.

Finally, I request you include your letter and this response in the bill report filed by your Committee, as well as in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the floor.

Sincerely,

TREY GOWDY.

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP) be permitted to control the time of the majority.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, our country is currently experiencing an epidemic of opioid-related overdoses and fatalities. My community and my State of Massachusetts are not strangers to the heartbreak and devastation that we recognize on this occasion.

There is a lot we can and should be doing about the opioid epidemic, and I am eager to work with my colleagues here in the House on comprehensive and effective solutions. For today, the bill we are to consider is a good start.

The Synthetics Trafficking and Overdose Prevention, or STOP, Act of 2018 shores up the ability of U.S. Customs to target and thwart shipments of synthetic opioids like fentanyl into the United States through the mail. It requires the U.S. Postal Service to collect important information about the

contents and senders of packages from foreign postal services.

I supported the earlier edition of this bill that was introduced in 2017 because I recognized the enormity of the devastation we face with opioids. I know that there were serious concerns with the earlier version of the bill, especially with respect to the severity of the penalties it imposed on the Postal Service. I am glad that the STOP Act that we are considering today makes important improvements to that original bill and to those penalties and provisions.

Let me especially express my appreciation for Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee Ranking Member BILL PASCRELL, who has worked together with the Democrats on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, the Senate, and the majority, obviously, to make improvements.

I understand there were some continued concerns with the bill, and we certainly want to continue to work with interested parties to address those concerns.

Given the urgency of the epidemic at hand, I am glad that we are able to support what is in front of us today, which I believe is a strong and achievable measure in this legislation to at least address part of the opioid epidemic.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), and I ask unanimous consent that he may control that time.

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

There was no objection.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of my legislation, H.R. 5788, the STOP Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is focused on stopping synthetic opioids like fentanyl and carfentanyl from entering our country through the international mail system.

These synthetic opioids can be 50 to 500 times more potent than a regular street dose of heroin, and it is the ever-growing presence of these synthetic opiates in our country that is causing overdose deaths to skyrocket. In fact, today, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, there are over 115 deaths each and every day from opioid overdose.

To address this crisis, I have been traveling across my district in Michigan hosting townhalls and roundtables, where I have heard, firsthand, the devastating impact this crisis is having in our communities.

I have also met with a wide range of officials in my district who are on the front lines of this crisis, including police and fire personnel, emergency response personnel, educators, medical

professionals, and others, all of whom are pleading for commonsense solutions at the Federal level to address this crisis, just like the bill we are voting on today.

I want to be candid; I agree. Currently, our government is not doing enough to stop the flow of synthetic opiates coming through the international mail system.

I was astounded to find out that current law treats packages coming in through private carriers like FedEx and UPS differently than it does shipments through the international mail system. Private carriers are required to provide what is known as advance electronic data, or AED, on all inbound packages, while the same is not true for shipments handled by the United States Postal Service in the international mail system.

This advance electronic data includes three primary pieces of information: where a package is from, where it is going to, and what is in it. This is actionable data that enables the CBP to target high-risk shipments for inspection and seizure.

Officials at the CBP will tell you this is all about finding a needle in a haystack. This AED information provides law enforcement the tools they need, the information they need to interdict and seize these illegal packages.

□ 1230

So here, specifically, is what my bill would do: H.R. 5788 would require the United States Postal Service to obtain AED on all international mail shipments by 2020 so that the United States Customs and Border Protection can target suspicious packages for synthetic opioids and other dangerous shipments. It also requires USPS to ramp up 70 percent AED compliance by the end of this year. The legislation would also require the United States Postal Service to refuse shipment of any foreign package that does not have AED after 2020.

Additionally, this bill includes strong enforcement and accountability provisions that will impose civil penalties against the United States Postal Service if they accept packages without AED after 2020.

Lastly, and I think most importantly, this bill gives Congress strong oversight authority, which includes bi-annual reporting to Congress and reporting by the GAO to update us on the agency's progress. In the end, it is the responsibility of Congress to ensure agencies are complying with the law.

I would like to, if I could, quickly thank Chairman BRADY, Chairman REICHERT, Ranking Member NEAL, Congressman PASCRELL, Congressmen FASO and KELLY, and all my colleagues on the House Ways and Means Committee for their support. I would also like to thank Senators HATCH, WYDEN, and PORTMAN for all their constructive input in this process.

Mr. Speaker, this is about stopping dangerous opioids from entering our

country. Too many Americans have died from the opioid crisis, and it is high time we take action to put a stop to the inflow of foreign synthetic opioids.

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

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

I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to be on the floor today regarding a bill that we have been negotiating for many months and that deals with an incredibly important topic: the opioid epidemic that is having a devastating impact across the country.

Despite current efforts, this opioid epidemic continues to ravage our communities. Every day in this country, 115 Americans lose their lives to opioids—painkillers. In 2016, my home State of New Jersey alone experienced 2,056 lives lost to this epidemic. The New Jersey Attorney General predicts that it will be 3,000 this year.

This legislation addresses one aspect of the crisis: synthetic opioids making their way into homes across the country through the mail. According to the Drug Enforcement Agency, China is the primary source of the fentanyl that enters this country. Fentanyl is often sold online and then shipped to the United States in small quantities, making it very difficult to detect.

I saw firsthand the way that the U.S. Postal Service and Customs is working together to stop the flow of synthetic opioids coming in through international mail. I visited a mail facility in Secaucus, New Jersey, with representatives from these agencies and the Food and Drug Administration. I know that the Postal Service receives an overwhelming volume of mail and they are working hard with limited resources to screen shipments. But we have some clear strategies that we can employ to create an effective system for targeting shipments that have a risk of containing these opioids, namely collecting advance electronic data, AED, on all packages that enter the United States.

The information contained in the AED typically includes the name and address of the shipper and recipient, as well as the contents of the package. CBP, Customs and Border Protection, uses this information to identify packages that may pose a risk. Customs can then place a hold on the shipment and notify carriers that a package must be presented for examination.

Private carriers have been required to collect this information since 2002, but we made the Postal Service exempt from this requirement. As a result, it has become the preferred method for shipping illicit materials, including opioids, into the United States.

The version of the STOP Act that we are considering today is an amended version of the original act, which was introduced back in 2017. We had 271 sponsors on that legislation.

The old STOP Act would have required the United States Postal Serv-

ice to collect 100 percent of that information within 1 year or face penalties of up to \$5,000 for every package for which it failed to do so. A number of stakeholders raised concerns with this approach, so we worked with them, including the Postal Service and their unions, to try to arrive at a workable solution.

As a result of these discussions and consultations, we have been able to make a number of important changes. The legislation on the floor today makes a number of significant changes that address the concerns raised by stakeholders.

First, this bill allows more time for the United States Postal Service to come into compliance. The United States Postal Service will have until the end of 2020 to transmit the AED on all international mail delivered to the United States.

This legislation includes a waiver that excludes countries that lack capacity to collect that information and pose a low risk of violating U.S. laws from the 100 percent requirement. As a result, the United States Postal Service will not be penalized for issues that are outside its control and should be able to comply with its international commitments.

Second, the amended legislation removes the requirement that the United States Postal Service hire a broker for every package that enters into the United States, saving costs and ensuring they can receive inbound mail under its current practices.

Finally, the legislation provides for a more nuanced approach to United States Postal Service penalties. Customs is required to reduce or eliminate penalties if the Postal Service does one of three things: it cooperates with Customs, it has a high compliance rate, or it takes remedial measures.

These changes were proposed by the United States Postal Service to address its concerns regarding the penalties provision. So as a practical matter, these changes mean that, if the Postal Service continues its current work, penalties will likely never be imposed. Further, the legislation does not allow penalties to be considered until 2021.

I would also like to highlight language in the bill directing the Customs and Border Protection to provide an annual report on the individuals and the companies that are not providing this information and the manner in which it imposes penalties. Requiring the CBP to report this useful information on violators and violator penalty assessments I believe will enhance the interdiction of prohibited items from entering the United States through express consignment operators.

This revised bill has support from a variety of public safety and public health groups, as well as the National Conference of State Legislatures. Just before we started today, the Fraternal Order of Police sent a supporting letter in support of this. This is good news for both sides of the aisle.

This revised bill has support from a variety of public safety and public health groups. Despite the significant changes, I understand that some of the stakeholders remain opposed, and we should understand that. We tried to work with those who have opposed. I respect the continued concerns that these stakeholders have articulated and look forward to working with them going forward.

However, with the changes that we have been able to incorporate into this legislation on a bipartisan basis, I believe that the current legislation provides an aggressive but workable approach to the United States Postal Service. I strongly support the legislation, Mr. Speaker, on the floor today, and I urge my colleagues to vote for it as well.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM).

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, all of us, everybody we know, has a lot of things that they are dealing with on a daily basis. There are challenges, and there are issues and little minicrises, until somebody gets a phone call that says that their child is in the emergency room with an opioid overdose. Then, all of a sudden, you have one crisis.

That has been happening in my constituency, and I know that has been happening in districts all across the country.

The first time this issue was brought to my attention, it was from a friend of mine. The coroner in DuPage County, Illinois, in my district, Dr. Rich Jorgensen said: Peter, there are kids who are dying of this crisis.

He kept being a voice on this and bringing it to my attention. He and others in my home county, the HOPE Taskforce, have been joining together. I have met with them. They have given me feedback. Similarly, there is another task force, the Substance Abuse Coalition in McHenry County, Illinois, doing similar work.

As I have met with them, they have said that one of the challenges is that this drug, this fentanyl, comes in through the United States Postal Service. When you first hear about this, you are incredulous about it. You say: No, that can't be.

But the more you learn, the more you realize that this is a major problem. In fact, in terms of importing this or this crossing our border, my understanding is that this is at the top of the heap.

To understand the nature, the science, and the medicine behind fentanyl is to mean that it scares the living daylight out of you. This molecule gets in your body, and the power of it is just overwhelming.

So I want to thank Mr. BISHOP, and I want to thank Mr. PASCRELL for the work that they are doing on a bipartisan basis to bring people together to work through this and to come up with solutions.

Now, this is not the only thing that is going to be happening here. This is in the context of other pieces of legislation. This is in the context of looking at treatment reimbursement, of screening, and of education. But this inbound flow is something that this Congress can do something about. Just in a nutshell, bringing together the United States Postal Service, the CBP, and also the United States State Department to work together in a coordinated fashion is something that my district is really pleased about.

So I am pleased to be here to advocate on its behalf, and I urge its passage.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. PASCRELL for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD two documents. One is an article from the Chicago Sun Times of today, "A 4-Block Radius on the West Side Is at the Heart of Chicago's Opioid Epidemic," and "The Opioid Crisis in Illinois" by the Illinois Department of Human Services.

[From the Chicago Sun Times, June 14, 2018]

A 4-BLOCK RADIUS ON THE WEST SIDE IS AT THE HEART OF CHICAGO'S OPIOID EPIDEMIC

(By Tanveer Ali and Sam Charles)

On July 15, 2016, Darwin Phillips was found dead by his mother in the basement of the home in West Humboldt Park where she and Phillips had lived since she bought it in 1979. He was 50 when he died of an overdose of heroin and two types of Fentanyl, heroin's synthetic but deadlier cousin, an autopsy found.

"A sweet guy" who worked odd jobs while grappling with mental illness and addiction and was the father of two, Phillips had overdosed five times before his fatal OD, according to his mother Jamie Roberts.

"It's a disease," says Roberts. "It's sad that people take advantage of drug addicts. It still bothers me a lot. We tried to get him help."

Phillips' death was one of 745 in Cook County in 2016 linked to opioids, according to the Cook County medical examiner's office. In Chicago, African-American victims like Phillips accounted for 362 of those deaths—48 percent.

That stands in contrast to what's going on nationally. Across the United States, white people accounted for about 78 percent of all opioid deaths in 2016, research by the Kaiser Family Foundation found.

"The epidemic in Chicago is not the national epidemic," says Amanda Brooks, chief population health officer of the PCC Community Wellness Center, (<http://www.pccwellness.org>) which focuses largely on the West Side. "The Chicago epidemic is affecting 45- to 65-year-old men on the West Side."

In 2014, there were 212 opioid-related deaths in Cook County, 129 of them in Chicago, according to the medical examiner's office. By 2017, Cook County had 1,150 opioid deaths, 764 of those in Chicago.

By comparison, Chicago saw 664 homicides in 2017 (<https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/chicago-murders-homicides-2017-steep-decline/>).

What's changed to cause the rise in opioid deaths? The rise of Fentanyl, experts say.

The powerful painkiller is legally available by prescription. But it also can easily be

manufactured illegally and typically is mixed by dealers with other illicit, though less deadly, drugs like heroin—often without users knowing they're taking Fentanyl.

"Most of our patients are not intentionally taking Fentanyl," Brooks says.

About 5 percent of the opioid deaths in 2014 were Fentanyl-related, according to medical examiner data, and 67 percent were tied to heroin.

By 2017, Fentanyl was a factor in 57 percent of opioid deaths in Cook County, while heroin played a role in 66 percent. A combination of the two played a role in 37 percent.

While the number of opioid deaths has risen sharply countywide since 2014, the impact largely has been felt in areas with a lack of resources.

In 2017, Chicago Fire Department crews were dispatched to 9,158 opioid-related overdoses, records show—up 163 percent compared to 2014. The hardest-hit parts of the city. West Side neighborhoods like Garfield Park, West Humboldt Park, Austin and North Lawndale.

A four-block radius roughly around Ridgeway and Augusta alone was responsible for 1,257 calls in 2016 and 2017—about 7.2 percent of all opioid-related calls citywide during that period.

That's the area where Phillips died.

His mother says drug dealers don't set up in the immediate area around her home, as she and her neighbors have made it clear that they want to keep their sidewalks crime-free. When the weather turned warm, Roberts resumed what's become a summer tradition for her selling snow-cones for 25 cents to \$1 outside her home.

"This," Roberts says, "is my corner."

[From the Illinois Department of Human Services]

THE OPIOID CRISIS IN ILLINOIS: DATA AND THE STATE'S RESPONSE

STATEWIDE DRUG OVERDOSE TRENDS

Nature of the Opioid Use Disorder Problem—The opioid crisis has manifested itself in the form of multiple public health problems. An analysis of the nature and extent of these problems provides evidence of the seriousness of the opioid crisis in Illinois, the widespread prevalence of these problems across our state, and the existence of populations and local areas with the most critical gaps in services.

Opioid Overdose Deaths—Perhaps none of these problems has heightened the awareness of the general public to the same degree as the recent dramatic increase in opioid overdose deaths. Drug overdose deaths in this country nearly tripled from 1999 to 2014. Among the 47,055 drug overdose deaths that occurred in the U.S. in 2014, 28,647 (60.9 percent) involved an opioid. Like many states, Illinois has recently experienced a notable increase in drug overdose deaths that can primarily be attributed to an increase in opioid overdose deaths. Provisional death records data obtained from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) show 2,278 drug-related overdose deaths during 2016. This represents a 44.3 percent increase over the 1,579, drug-related overdose deaths that were reported by IDPH for 2013. This statewide increase in drug-related overdose deaths is almost totally accounted for by an increase in opioid-related overdose deaths. Of the 2,278 Illinois statewide drug overdose deaths during 2016, over 80 percent were opioid-related fatalities. The 1,826 opioid-related overdose deaths among Illinois residents that have been provisionally reported for 2016 represents an over 70 percent increase in the number of such deaths that were reported in 2013, and a 32.1 percent increase over the 1,382 opioid-related overdose deaths that were reported to IDPH for 2015.

The maps below illustrate the number and population rates of opioid overdose deaths across Illinois' 102 counties during 2016. The map based on the number of opioid overdose deaths during 2016 provides evidence that the opioid crisis continues to impact communities and individuals throughout Illinois. Cook County accounted for nearly 50 percent of the opioid overdose death in Illinois during 2016. The 911 opioid overdose deaths reported for Cook County in 2016 represented an 87.4 percent increase from the 486 such death that were reported for this county during 2013. Specific to the City of Chicago, the 581 opioid overdose deaths in 2016 represented a 93 percent increase from the 301 such deaths reported in 2013. As has been the case in previous years, the counties bordering on Cook and other counties with relatively high resident populations, particularly Madison, Peoria, St. Clair, and Winnebago counties, were major contributors to the statewide number of opioid overdose deaths in 2016.

The state map based on county population rates of opioid overdose deaths provides further insight into the locality-specific and statewide severity of this problem in Illinois. This map shows that several Illinois counties have resident population rates of opioid overdose deaths that are not only equal to, but greater than, that of Cook County. In fact, there were 18 Illinois counties that had 2016 population rates of opioid overdose deaths that were greater than that of Cook County. Twelve (12) of the counties with the highest 2016 population rates of opioid overdose deaths are in IDHS Regions 4 and 5. These two service regions have the lowest levels of currently-available opioid use disorder (OUD) medication assisted treatment (MAT) resources in the state.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the STOP Act is to address the influx of synthetic opioids arriving through international mail. Given the growing harm to our communities from substance abuse, I, too, want to thank and commend the Ways and Means Committee for its hard work on developing this legislation. Especially, I want to point out the efforts of Mr. PASCARELL and Mr. BISHOP.

I am strongly committed to preventing the shipments of dangerous and illegal opioids into the United States. I support the intent of this bill to limit illegal trafficking of drugs, and I voted in support of this bill in the Ways and Means Committee.

However, after the last-minute changes made to this bill in the Rules Committee, I, unfortunately, cannot support H.R. 5788. The Republican leadership insisted on last-minute changes to impose civil penalties on the Postal Service for any accepted shipment lacking advance electronic data without allowing enough time to fully vet the impact of the changes with critical stakeholders.

I am concerned about the fairness of imposing civil penalties for individual shipments lacking electronic data when the Postal Service lacks direct control over whether foreign postal operators provide this data. I am concerned that having one executive branch entity impose penalties on another would set up an adversarial relationship in addressing illegal drug trafficking rather than a collaborative re-

lationship. I am also concerned that penalties are imposed based on individual shipments rather than systematic violations.

I appreciate the work of my Democratic colleagues to mitigate the negative effects of these civil penalties; however, due to the concerns of the U.S. Postal Service and the postal unions about the negative impact of these last-minute changes by Republican leadership, I cannot support this bill at this time. I am committed to stopping the shipment of dangerous drugs and to working to resolve these problems as this legislation continues to move forward.

I urge that we continue to work to improve it and make it the very best that it can be without threatening in any way the viability of postal operations.

□ 1245

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. FASO).

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. BISHOP for yielding and for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5788, the amended Synthetics Trafficking and Overdose Prevention Act of 2018. Once signed into law, this legislation will help combat our Nation's growing opioid crisis by preventing the easy importation of synthetic opioids through the United States Postal Service.

Under current law, private shipping companies are required to provide Customs and Border Protection with advance electronic data for packages inbound to the United States. The inclusion of this data makes illegally shipped items easier to track and locate.

This standard is not imposed on our own Postal Service, however, even though the U.S. Postal Service brought more than four times the number of packages into the U.S. than all private carriers like FedEx and UPS did in 2016, combined.

This bill will bring the U.S. Postal Service up to industry standards by requiring advance electronic data for 100 percent of packages by 2020 and a strong goal of 70 percent by the end of this year. Also required is a 2019 study by the GAO assessing the progress made by the Postal Service. By requiring this data of foreign shippers, we can help to keep dangerous synthetic opioids like fentanyl and carfentanil off our streets.

The abundance of fentanyl within our borders is leading to an increase in overdoses and overdose-related deaths. A recent study from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration indicated that fentanyl is now the most common fatal overdose drug in the United States. Of the roughly 42,000 opioid overdose deaths in 2016, about 20,000 of those were from fentanyl.

Mr. Speaker, just how dangerous is fentanyl and carfentanil? I can relate

to you a recent incident which occurred in our State of New York.

Seizures of fentanyl in the New York area spiked by over 1,000 percent between 2016 and 2017. In 2016, in New York City, where JFK International Airport is a major transshipment point, 62 pounds of fentanyl were seized. In 2017, 1,162 pounds were seized.

Earlier this year, in just one bust, officials seized nearly 100 pounds of fentanyl, which is said to be enough to kill the entire population of New York City and New Jersey, combined.

This bill is a commonsense, bipartisan approach to fix the problem.

I would very much like to thank Chairman BRADY, Chairman REICHERT, Mr. BISHOP, Mr. PASCARELL, and Senator PORTMAN for their important leadership on this issue, and I urge all my colleagues to support this vitally significant legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we are passing numerous bills this week dealing with the opioid crisis. Perhaps none is as important as the STOP Act. I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY), the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there aren't many today who haven't been touched by the opioid crisis in America. This swift and devastating epidemic has hit every community in America and robbed countless individuals of their hopes and ambitions.

Addiction is devastating to witness and, in some cases, it only takes 5 days for someone's son, daughter, or parent to become addicted. The sad truth is that, all too often, many become addicted after taking an opioid for a legitimate reason. This is an epidemic that has torn apart families and left in its path of destruction a generation of children without parents and parents faced with burying their kids.

We have also seen more and more news stories of law enforcement agents having near-fatal encounters with just trace amounts of these synthetic opioids such as fentanyl. In one case, a small fleck almost killed a police officer in Ohio. This is a frightening reminder of how dangerous these substances truly are.

The loss of so many Americans due to opioid addiction is unfathomable. In 2016 alone, more Americans died due to opioid overdoses than were lost over the entire Vietnam war.

The scale of the crisis is immense. The loss of potential for so many is hard to comprehend, but House Republicans and Democrats are coming together in fighting with every tool in our arsenal to combat the opioid crisis.

That is why today I rise in strong support of H.R. 5788, known as the STOP Act. This bipartisan bill addresses a serious problem that has helped fuel the opioid epidemic: cheap and illegal synthetic opioids shipped from

foreign nations through the international mail. From our speakers today you have learned about the proven techniques to stop this drug smuggling.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the leaders who brought this solution to the floor. I thank Congressman BISHOP of Michigan, the author of this bill, for his leadership; as well as Ranking Member PASCRELL of New Jersey; chairman of the Trade Subcommittee, DAVID REICHERT of Washington; Congressman JOHN FASO of New York; and Senator PORTMAN from Ohio for their diligent work to deliver a hard-hitting solution to this very serious problem.

I am confident that this bill, shaped by Republicans and Democrats working together, will make a difference in the opioid crisis and help protect many Americans. By passing this bill, we can take meaningful action to help stop the flow of the illegal smuggling of opioids into this Nation.

I urge my colleagues to join in supporting this bill.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers on my side, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN).

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, we know the opioid epidemic has, unfortunately, been tearing apart communities all across our entire country. I want to share a story in particular that is similar to the heartbreak and heartache we have heard from others today.

Keegan: Keegan Duffy was 30 years old when he died in January of last year after an accidental overdose. He had just received his master's degree, had a promising career in computer science, was an avid outdoorsman, and volunteered a lot of his time to helping the poor.

His addiction started like so many others. He was prescribed 120 pills after suffering chronic back pain. After that first pill, unfortunately, he was hooked. Despite almost a dozen attempts to break free of his addiction in rehabilitation, he could never really quite do it. Ultimately, he died of an overdose that came from fentanyl, a synthetic drug made in Asia, bought online, and smuggled into the United States.

Keegan's story was told to me personally by his mother. It was heart-breaking.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a very loving tribute to Keegan written by his mother and father, Dave and Jean Duffy.

STATEMENT OF JEAN AND DAVE DUFFY,
FATHER OF KEEGAN, JUNE 14, 2018

Keegan was 30 years old when he passed away Jan 3, 2017 of an accidental overdose of opioids. At the time of his death, he was working as a successful computer professional, having just graduated from Arizona State William Carey School of Business with a Masters degree in Information Systems. He had a natural talent for music and loved playing guitar.

He was an avid outdoorsman, golfer, boater, skier and fisherman. He was also known

for his huge heart, helping the poor find resources, teaching people how to get back in school, and giving free haircuts to homeless and needy.

Most of all he was a special son and brother to his parents and two beautiful sisters. He is missed by all of us every single day.

Keegan became addicted to Oxycodone after receiving 120 pills from a doctor for back pain, while an undergrad. He said he was addicted after taking the very first pill. His addiction became chronic progressive, despite his nearly dozen attempts to get better in well known treatment facilities, including 6 month stays.

Keegan often said, "I can figure everything else out in life, but I can't figure out how to end my cravings." Unfortunately, it's not something one can just figure out, as we all know.

I called the drug task force and the police to report several doctors, who were encouraging him to take massive amounts of this drug as well as other highly addictive drugs. For some of these doctors, this resulted in the loss of their license to practice.

One of Keegan's sisters, Bridget, is in her final year of Neuroscience in the U of Minnesota. She volunteers in homes for addicts and also has a part time job supporting research at the University, to find a vaccine to prevent opioid addiction. She plans to continue her studies in medical school.

Thank you so much for remembering Keegan.

Jean & Dave Duffy

Mr. PAULSEN. Keegan's story is why this legislation is so important and how it will save other lives.

International mail is often a very easy route that we have seen used for smuggling or the importation of dangerous fentanyl here into the United States. While private carriers have to submit advance electronic data for any of their data about packages that come here into the United States, the Postal Service has been exempt.

So we have a loophole. That loophole is being exploited by smugglers, giving traffickers an easy opportunity to have fentanyl come into America. The STOP Act closes that loophole.

It is supported on a bipartisan basis. It will make it harder and much more difficult to smuggle in fentanyl-laced drugs that not only murdered Keegan but, unfortunately, have inflicted pain through tragic deaths in other countless families across our country and so that we can save other American lives, Mr. Speaker.

I thank Mr. BISHOP and Mr. PASCRELL for their leadership on this legislation. I look forward to seeing it passed later today, because we are finding solutions to the opioid epidemic.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS).

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5788.

Mr. Speaker, there are many facets of opioid abuse and overdoses. We are going to need many pieces of legislation to deal with all of them. This is a particularly important piece of legislation. It deals with the use of the U.S. mail service to import synthetic opioids.

As an anesthesiologist, I have used synthetic opioids for over 30 years, es-

pecially the synthetic opioid fentanyl. After it was discovered, it was widely used in a very important drug, especially to treat our sickest patients; but now it is a killer drug, frequently used illegally, mixed with heroin.

Because of its very specific pharmacologic action, it is highly lethal when misused. To add to that, Mr. Speaker, now there is a derivative called carfentanil that is 100 times more potent.

Why is it so important that we secure our mail system?

A grain of rice is 29 milligrams. That is the weight of a grain of rice. Fentanyl the size of a grain of rice will kill 29 people. That is how lethal it is. If it is carfentanil, it is 100 hundred times more potent. That grain of rice-sized piece of carfentanil will kill 2,900 people.

Obviously, the mail system can be used to transport these drugs. Because these are so highly lethal, in Maryland, half our overdose deaths now involve fentanyl or a derivative.

Because these are so small, so concealable, so highly lethal, we have to secure all mechanisms by which these drugs can be transmitted to be used illegally. The mail system right now, because of loopholes that exist that we have heard about today, can be used to transport those drugs to kill our youth. They are imported from foreign countries, where, without any remorse, these drugs are shipped to the United States and result in overdose deaths here.

Mr. Speaker, we have to pass H.R. 5788. We have to secure our mail system and take the scourge of these fentanyl, carfentanil, and other synthetic opioids off our streets where they are killing young Americans.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5788, the STOP Act, sponsored by my good friend MIKE BISHOP.

This important piece of legislation would secure our mail system from fentanyl and other dangerous synthetic opioids that are flooding into the United States from foreign countries, namely China and Mexico.

The opioid crisis kills more than 100 Americans each day and caused more than 45,000 deaths last year alone. In 2016, more Americans died from a drug overdose than we lost in Vietnam. A third of those deaths are attributable to fentanyl.

Over the last few years, I have witnessed my kids losing their peers to this crisis, and it is terrifying.

Yesterday, I spoke to the mother of Nate Gordon, a young man from my district, who lost his life due to a fentanyl-laced overdose. Nate's mother and the rest of his family are heartbroken.

We have a responsibility to stem the tide of this crisis and prevent more families from suffering the tragic loss

of one who is loved to opioid addiction. A vital component of this effort is plugging the holes in our mail system and stopping illicit substances from entering the United States.

So far this year, Customs and Border Patrol, working with the U.S. Postal Service, has seized more than 790 pounds of fentanyl. That is enough fentanyl to kill 179 million people. To put that in perspective, that is more than half our population.

My friend Mr. HARRIS talked about the size of a grain of rice. How about 1 gram, Mr. Speaker, a Sweet'n Low packet, something that we use every day? It is enough to kill 500 people.

The STOP Act is a great companion to the bill I recently introduced with my friend TOM COTTON that provides the U.S. Postal Service with more resources to screen international mail to stop these insane amounts of drugs coming into our country.

I thank my friend from Michigan for his thoughtful work to implement this much-needed policy change. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

□ 1300

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

Mr. Speaker, I plead with you and my brothers and sisters on the other side of the aisle. I think we are making a big step today in this piece of legislation. I know there are other pieces.

I would recommend, Mr. Speaker, that we approach this deadly epidemic—and it is deadly—in the same way that we approached the epidemic at the end of the eighties and the early nineties, and that was the epidemic of the HIV virus. No one wanted to talk about it, Mr. Speaker, so people died when they could have been saved if we had had knowledge of prevention, if we had had knowledge of how we take care of those folks.

It took us until the beginning of the nineties, until we opened up local clinics, until people felt less involved in a stigma. Then they had to come out from the shadows to protect the rest of the population, including themselves. Then we came together, and the Federal Government passed the Ryan White legislation, which has been a big help on the HIV virus. Then we came together.

Unfortunately, maladies bring Americans together. Well, that is good that we do come together, though.

I ask and plead that we have the same vigor in approaching opiates and approaching fentanyl, which is coming in from other countries. If we do that, we will not only survive; we will help those—and we will prevent many from falling into the trap. You have heard some people talk about that trap today, starting with painkillers and moving on to even more dangerous drugs.

We are going to get through this. We are going to get through this. Yesterday we passed by voice vote legislation

to change the protocol on how we approach the patients, not only in the emergency rooms of America, but in many departments and hospitals across the United States. We need to find alternatives to the very opiates that are making fools of us. Those alternatives shall be part of the solution, part of the solution to getting to the promised land, as the gentleman says.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. BISHOP. I want to thank Mr. BRADY. I want to thank my good friend from Massachusetts, RICHIE NEAL, and all of those who worked on this legislation: DAVID REICHERT and many more. I congratulate our persistence in getting through a lot of hurdles.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking Mr. PASCRELL. I would like to thank the staff as well for all of their hard work in this process.

This is an epidemic. This is an issue that is not a Republican issue. This is not a Democrat issue. This is our issue. It is happening every day. Mr. Speaker, 115 Americans are dying each and every day due to opioid overdose. We are talking about mothers, fathers, children—too many children in our communities.

We know the current system is failing Americans. We are allowing these foreign criminals and drug dealers to exploit a very obvious loophole in the law. That is why this bill is so important. That is why it is important for Members of Congress to come together and get something done.

This bill sets hard deadlines that will require all packages coming into our country to have this actionable data that will enable the U.S. Customs and Border Protection to interdict and seize shipments of these dangerous packages and keep them off the streets, the American streets.

In closing, I just would like to say to all those here today: I know that we all have a story. I want to reiterate that we all have a story, and we have now a moral obligation to close this obvious loophole. I call upon my colleagues to support this important bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 934, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. 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 question will be postponed.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FOR RECOVERY IN VIABLE ENVIRONMENTS DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials on the bill, H.R. 5735.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 934 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 5735.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1309

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 consideration of the bill (H.R. 5735) to amend the United States Housing Act of 1937 to establish a demonstration program to set aside section 8 housing vouchers for supportive and transitional housing for individuals recovering from opioid use disorders or other substance use disorders, and for other purposes, with Mr. SIMPSON in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

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

Mr. Chairman, I received a letter not long ago from a constituent, Jim, from Dallas County. The first three words were: I need help.

In the letter, he talks about his grandson, Joshua, who is a good kid. Jim became his guardian at age 6, but Joshua took a bad turn at age 16. It was at age 16 he started using opioids. His life has never been the same.

Jim writes that at first his grandson started out with pills and then, later, street drugs and ended up on heroin. No surprise here, Mr. Chairman: His usage escalated, and he ended up dropping out of school in the last semester of high school.

Along the way, he found a menial job here, a menial job there, but he