

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 22 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“2210. Certification of the President’s management of Presidential records.”.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Section 2203(g) of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) One year following the conclusion of a President’s term of office, or if a President serves consecutive terms one year following the conclusion of the last term, the Archivist shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report on—

“(A) the volume and format of electronic Presidential records deposited into that President’s Presidential archival depository; and

“(B) whether the electronic records management controls of that President met the requirements under sections 2203(a) and 2206(5).”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1376, the Electronic Message Preservation Act of 2017, introduced by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), the ranking member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The Electronic Message Preservation Act of 2017 will ensure the Federal Government continues to take the necessary steps to modernize its recordkeeping.

Despite the significant shift to electronic communications over the last two decades, many Federal agencies are just now moving away from a print-to-file method of electronic record preservation. Using paper to preserve electronic records is inefficient, difficult to manage, difficult to search, and risks loss of the records. Paper-based systems can also increase the cost to the taxpayer.

At the end of 2016, the Office of Management and Budget began requiring agencies to preserve records electronically if they were created electronically. This bill codifies that requirement. This bill ensures agencies will continue to electronically manage

their records, where possible, and closes gaps in current law.

H.R. 1376 also requires electronic Presidential records be held to the same archival standards as those of executive agencies.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Maryland for his work on this important issue this Congress and in the previous Congress.

I encourage my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Electronic Message Preservation Act of 2017, and I want to thank Mr. GOWDY, our chairman, for getting this bill to the floor as he has today.

I introduced this bill with the goal of modernizing the Federal and Presidential Records Acts. This bill would require the Archivist of the United States to issue regulations mandating that all Federal agencies manage and preserve their email records electronically. This bill would help ensure that email records from Federal agencies and the White House are preserved.

According to an October 2017 report from the National Archives and Records Administration, approximately 46 percent of agencies continue to print and file paper copies of email messages. These records are more likely to get lost and are harder for agencies to retrieve during record searches under the Freedom of Information Act.

This bill would put into statute what agencies are already required to do under a directive issued by the Archivist and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

In 2016, the National Archives issued a document for agency records officers titled: “Why Agencies Need to Move Toward Electronic Recordkeeping.” The document identified a number of reasons, including long-term cost savings, information security, and more efficient and effective implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

This bill also would require the Archivist to establish standards for the preservation and management of email records that are Presidential records and to certify annually that the White House has records management controls in place that meet those standards.

Under this bill, the Archivist must report 1 year after a President leaves office on whether the controls used by the President met the required standards. This legislation would provide accountability to encourage every President to have the controls in place that are necessary to preserve emails and other electronic records.

This bill has been passed by the House with bipartisan support several times before. I urge my colleagues to support the bill again today, and I hope that the Senate will act on the bill and send it to the President’s desk before the end of the year.

Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman from North Carolina and I have laid

out very nicely exactly and eloquently what this bill is all about. It is very important that we modernize all of our systems in the Federal Government, and recordkeeping is so important.

We see it, particularly in our committee, the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, because we are constantly trying to get records and requesting records and occasionally subpoenaing records. So this is a way, I believe, to make that whole process more effective, efficient, and transparent.

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

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1376.

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.

#### GOOD ACCOUNTING OBLIGATION IN GOVERNMENT ACT

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5415) to require agencies to submit reports on outstanding recommendations in the annual budget justification submitted to Congress, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5415

*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 “Good Accounting Obligation in Government Act” or the “GAO-IG Act”.

#### SEC. 2. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE AND INSPECTOR GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

(a) REQUIRED REPORTS.—In the annual budget justification submitted to Congress, as submitted with the budget of the President under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, the head of each agency shall include the following:

(1) A report listing each public recommendation of the Government Accountability Office that is designated by the Government Accountability Office as “open” or “closed, unimplemented” as of the date on which the annual budget justification is submitted.

(2) A report listing each public recommendation for corrective action from the Office of Inspector General of the agency for which no final action has been taken as of the date on which the annual budget justification is submitted.

(3) A report on the implementation status of each public recommendation described in paragraphs (1) and (2), which shall include the following:

(A) With respect to a public recommendation that is designated by the Government Accountability Office as “open” or “closed, unimplemented”—

(i) that the agency has decided not to implement, a detailed justification for the decision; or

(ii) that the agency has decided to adopt, a timeline for full implementation.

(B) With respect to a public recommendation for corrective action from the Office of Inspector General of the agency—

(i) for which the agency has taken action not recommended and considers closed, an explanation of the reason why the agency took different action with respect to each audit report to which the public recommendation for corrective action pertains; and

(ii) for which no final action has been taken, an explanation of the reasons why no final action was taken with respect to each audit report to which the public recommendation for corrective action pertains.

(C) With respect to an outstanding unimplemented public recommendation from the Office of Inspector General of the agency that the agency has decided to adopt, a timeline for implementation.

(4) An explanation for any discrepancy between—

(A) the most recent semiannual report submitted by the Inspector General of the agency and the report submitted under paragraphs (2) and (3); and

(B) any report submitted by the Government Accountability Office relating to public recommendations that are designated by the Government Accountability Office as “open” or “closed, unimplemented” and any report submitted under paragraph (1) and (2).

(b) **ADDITIONAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN AGENCIES.**—The head of a covered agency shall include in the annual budget justification described in subsection (a) a written response to each recommendation designated by the Comptroller in the annual priority recommendation letter sent to such head as high priority for attention by that head.

(c) **COPIES OF SUBMISSIONS.**—The head of each agency or covered agency, as applicable, shall provide a copy of the information submitted under subsections (a) and (b) to the Comptroller General and the Inspector General of the agency.

(d) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this bill may be construed to affect an authority provided to an Inspector General of an agency under the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), including the authority of such Inspector General to identify each recommendation on which final action has not been taken.

(e) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **AGENCY.**—the term “agency” means—

(A) a designated Federal entity, as defined in section 8G(a)(2) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.); and

(B) an establishment, as defined in section 12(2) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

(2) **COVERED AGENCY.**—The term “covered agency” means the following:

(A) Each agency described in section 901(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(B) The Internal Revenue Service.

(C) The Securities and the Security and Exchange Commission.

(D) Any additional agency determined by the Comptroller General.

(3) **SEMIANNUAL REPORT.**—The term “semiannual report” means the semiannual report submitted to Congress by each Inspector General under section 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

### SEC. 3. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 5415, the GAO-IG Act.

The Government Accountability Office and inspectors general are two of the best sources for recommendations to improve the operations of the Federal Government. Their efforts help fight waste, fraud, and abuse; promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness within the executive branch; and save taxpayer dollars.

GAO and inspector general audits and investigations often end with corrective recommendations to the agency reviewed. As of May 2018, the GAO has issued more than 1,500 products with about 4,800 open recommendations.

Since 2014, IGs have issued over 8,900 reports, with approximately 40,300 total recommendations. During that same time period, IGs identified over \$99 billion in potential savings through their audits, investigations, and recommendations.

But all of these recommendations are only as valuable as the agency's commitment to implement them. I introduced the GAO-IG Act to ensure every agency evaluates and implements recommendations by GAO and the inspector general. The bill requires agencies to include the unresolved GAO and IG recommendations within their annual budget justification to Congress.

Agencies must also report on the implementation status of each recommendation and why they are not fully implemented. This creates a formal process in which agencies must take stock of their open and unimplemented recommendations each year. This increased transparency will encourage each agency to work with GAO and its inspector general to identify and implement high-priority open recommendations.

I would like to thank Representatives PALMER, DUNCAN, BISHOP, and FITZPATRICK for their cosponsorship of this legislation. I would also like to thank Chairman GOWDY and Ranking Member CUMMINGS of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform for their support. The bill passed out of the committee unanimously by voice vote earlier this year.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Mr. WALKER for introducing this well-thought-out bill and very important bill.

I support this bill, which would increase the transparency and accountability of Federal agencies. The bill would require agencies to include in their budget justifications to Congress a summary of the recommendations made by GAO or the agency's inspector general. Agencies would also be required to explain what steps they are taking to address these recommendations or, if they disagree with them, why they disagree.

GAO and inspectors general provide critical oversight of the executive branch. Knowing what agencies are doing or not doing to address GAO and IG recommendations will assist Congress in conducting its constitutional oversight role. This is, indeed, a commonsense measure that I strongly support. I just want to urge the House to pass this bill.

One of the things that has concerned many of us in the Congress is the issue of accountability. Accountability is so very, very important.

We all have a tremendous amount of respect for the inspectors general and for GAO. Over and over again, they make recommendations, and the question becomes: Whatever happens to those recommendations? Are they placed on a shelf and never to be seen again, or are they put into place? After all, the American people are spending a lot of money with regard to the research and the investigations conducted by the IG and the research conducted by the GAO.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we are very supportive of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5415, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

### EXTENDING VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES CENTENNIAL COMMISSION ACT

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4446) to amend the Virgin Islands of the United States Centennial Commission Act to extend the expiration date of the Commission, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.