

with ties to ISIL used bitcoin and other virtual currencies to fund attacks in Indonesia.

The same things that make virtual currencies appealing to everyday consumers, speed and convenience, make these currencies appealing to those who want to finance illegal activities. Many forms of virtual currencies also offer their users anonymity, making them particularly attractive to those seeking to circumvent American law enforcement and financial institutions.

In order to effectively confront this threat, we need to fully understand it. We need a comprehensive assessment of how virtual currencies might be abused for illegal and nefarious ends.

My bill would require DHS to conduct such an assessment and share its findings with law enforcement officers who are on the front lines of the war on terror.

Indeed, this bill will help provide law enforcement officials at all levels with the 21st century solutions, information, and resources they need to counter this emerging threat.

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

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, Congresswoman RICE from New York, for introducing this bill.

Over the past 12 months, there has been growing concern by administration officials, as well as security and financial experts, about potential threats associated with cryptocurrencies.

In July 2018, a Department of Justice task force reported noted criminals are using virtual currencies to collect, hide, and launder funds, as well as purchase illegal goods and services. Both the Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service have ongoing efforts to review registered digital currency providers and identify illicit use.

The legislation we are considering today, sponsored by the gentlewoman from New York (Miss RICE), adds to this effort by directing the Department of Homeland Security to develop and disseminate a threat assessment of threat posed by individuals using virtual currencies to carry out activities in furtherance of terrorism, including the provision of material support or resources to a foreign terrorist organization.

The bill also requires DHS to share the threat assessment with State and local law enforcement.

As the threat of terrorism evolves, so do the methods to finance and support the actors who plot to attack the United States. The Federal Government must evolve as well to meet these novel and technologically based challenges.

This bill positions the Department to detect the new, digital-based methods in terrorist financing and support that have already occurred and to prepare

for those that are sure and soon to follow.

The potential of terrorist organizations to use virtual currencies to carry out an attack, or a smuggling network to launder illicit proceeds through cryptocurrency markets, should be a major concern to the Department of Homeland Security. Requiring the Department to conduct a threat assessment is appropriate and timely.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman RICE for bringing this bill forward, and I urge a “yes” vote.

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

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 428 is an important piece of legislation that was approved by a voice vote last Congress. This bill will help DHS effectively address terrorists’ actual and potential use of virtual currencies.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues in the Freedom Caucus, who care so much about national security and domestic security, to put their money where their mouths are, to put political pettiness aside, let these votes go through as they are meant to, because these are bipartisan bills, DHS bills that are supported broadly by Members of this House. Let’s get on with this, since this is an issue that we all care about.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation, H.R. 428, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Miss RICE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 428.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PATHWAYS TO IMPROVING HOMELAND SECURITY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL ACT

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 449) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002, to direct the Assistant Secretary for State and Local Law Enforcement to produce and disseminate an annual catalog on Department of Homeland Security training, publications, programs, and services for State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 449

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 “Pathways to Improving Homeland Security at the Local Level Act”.

SEC. 2. ANNUAL CATALOG ON DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY TRAINING, PUBLICATIONS, PROGRAMS, AND SERVICES FOR STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.

Section 2006(b)(4) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 607(b)(4)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (E), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (F), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(G) produce an annual catalog that summarizes opportunities for training, publications, programs, and services available to State, local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies from the Department and from each component and office within the Department and, not later than 30 days after the date of each such production, disseminate the catalog at issue, including by—

“(i) making such catalog available to State, local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies, including by posting such catalog on the website of the Department and cooperating with national organizations that represent such agencies;

“(ii) making such catalog available through the Homeland Security Information Network; and

“(iii) submitting such catalog to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Miss RICE) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 449, the Pathways to Improving Homeland Security at the Local Level Act.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my Democratic colleague, Mrs. DEMINGS, for reintroducing this measure in the new Congress.

Nearly 18 years ago, our country faced the difficult realization that, in order to effectively combat the threat of terrorism, we needed to implement a new whole-of-government approach. In other words, we need all hands on deck.

Having learned from the September 11 terrorist attacks, the Department of Homeland Security now facilitates information-sharing and collaboration efforts between the Federal, State, and local levels. This cooperation helps to

ensure that all government partners are equipped with the resources and information they need to tackle the ever-evolving threat of terrorism.

H.R. 449 will help further those efforts. This bill will ensure that our Nation's first responders at the State and local levels have easy and ready access to DHS' cutting-edge resources and training programs.

H.R. 449 would require the Department to disseminate such information in an annual catalog. In order to maximize the catalog's availability and readership, this bill also calls for the catalog to be accessible on the Department's website as well as on a secure information-sharing platform.

This measure is a great example of commonsense, bipartisan legislation that will help build safer communities from the ground up.

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

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is part of DHS' statutory mission to support State and local law enforcement, and the Office of State and Local Law Enforcement has the responsibility of proactively identifying ways in which the Department can support these important stakeholders.

The Pathways to Improving Homeland Security at the Local Level Act, sponsored by the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS), will ensure that State and local law enforcement receive vital information on available DHS resources and programs.

Under the bill, the Office of State and Local Law Enforcement will annually produce and disseminate a catalog that details the Department of Homeland Security training, publications, programs, and services available to non-Federal law enforcement agencies. The office must disseminate the catalog within 30 days of production to State and local law enforcement entities.

This catalog is currently being produced by the office, and the bill requires them to continue its production.

DHS also is required to share the catalog through the Homeland Security Information Network. Using this existing information-sharing platform will expand, hopefully, the number of State and local law enforcement partners who receive it.

This bill is intended to increase awareness of DHS tools and resources available to assist State and local law enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1330

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS).

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I reintroduced H.R. 449 to enhance counterterrorism preparedness at the local level.

In recent years, we have seen acts of terrorism, especially in planning and execution, take place in cities throughout our Nation. Whether it occurs at a church in Charleston, a synagogue in Pittsburgh, or a nightclub in Orlando, local law enforcement is the front line of defense in protecting our communities from acts of violence. It is, therefore, necessary to equip our first responders with the tools to allow them to quickly adapt to the evolving terrorist threat landscape. This bill, H.R. 449, does just that.

Today, the Department of Homeland Security's training catalogue is a primary resource for State and local jurisdictions to find opportunities to enhance their counterterrorism and preparedness capabilities.

Specifically, H.R. 449 directs DHS' Office of State and Local Law Enforcement to produce, as you have heard, and distribute an annual catalogue of training programs and services to State, local, and Tribal law enforcement communities. To ensure that this information is shared throughout the law enforcement community with agencies large and small, H.R. 449 requires this comprehensive catalogue be posted on the DHS website, as well as on the Homeland Security Information Network.

Enactment of this bill will further strengthen the Department's partnership with State and local law enforcement to help better protect the homeland. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I am fully in favor of this bill. Particularly, last week, when my colleague ANDY BIGGS and I took a bunch of our colleagues down on the border, we were assailed by our Border Patrol not having adequate weapons and not having enough bulletproof vests and light armor. A lot of times, these guys are carrying shielding that is 35 pounds. In the hot summer, your body temperature can rise very quickly above that.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill. It is a good bill. I encourage my colleagues to vote for it.

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for introducing this important bill to ensure State and local law enforcement are aware of the resources DHS can provide to them.

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

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 449, which passed the House of Representatives on suspension last Congress, will strengthen the Federal Government's relationship with our State and local law enforcement partners.

One of our top priorities on this committee is ensuring adequate training

for our first responders and creating collaborative partnerships between DHS and its local counterparts. This bill will help us accomplish that.

Mr. Speaker, I again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 449, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Miss RICE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 449.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DHS FIELD ENGAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 504) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Department of Homeland Security to develop an engagement strategy with fusion centers, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 504

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "DHS Field Engagement Accountability Act".

SEC. 2. ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY WITH FUSION CENTERS.

Section 210A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124h) is amended by—

(1) redesigning subsections (j) and (k) as subsections (k) and (l), respectively; and

(2) inserting after subsection (i) the following new subsection:

“(j) FUSION CENTER INFORMATION SHARING STRATEGY.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall develop and update at least once every five years a strategy for Department engagement with fusion centers. Such strategy shall be developed and updated in consultation with the heads of intelligence components of the Department, the Chief Privacy Officer of the Department, the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties of the Department, officials of fusion centers, officers designated as Homeland Security Advisors, and the heads of other relevant agencies, as appropriate. Such strategy shall include the following:

“(1) Specific goals and objectives for sharing information and engaging with fusion centers—

“(A) through the direct deployment of personnel from intelligence components of the Department;

“(B) through the use of Department unclassified and classified information sharing systems, including the Homeland Security Information Sharing Network and the Homeland Secure Data Network, or any successor systems; and

“(C) through any additional means.

“(2) The performance metrics to be used to measure success in achieving the goals and objectives referred to in paragraph (1).