

BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACCURACY AND TECHNOLOGICAL AVAILABILITY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2019

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4229, the Broadband Deployment Accuracy and Technological Availability Act, as amended.

We all agree that every American needs access to broadband. Government agencies, companies, and the philanthropic sector have devoted significant resources toward this goal, but our efforts are stymied by the fact that we have a fundamentally flawed understanding of where the investment is needed.

We need accurate maps to be able to close the digital divide and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) should wait until these maps are developed before spending billions of dollars in additional subsidies to build out to unserved and underserved areas.

I commend Representatives LOEBACK and LATTA, along with all of the members of the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology for their diligent work to find a bipartisan solution to this problem that will solve our mapping problem once and for all.

I'm also pleased that the legislation includes an amendment I authored that protects the privacy of Americans. The bill allows the FCC to contract out the development of a database of all buildings developed by processing millions of property records about every home, business, and community institution in the country. These records often include private data about property owners and the property itself, including property values.

My provision simply prohibits the FCC's contractor from selling this vast amount of data for marketing or other purposes, a practice common among data brokers. Our country doesn't need more data brokers. Any company using money authorized by Congress should only use its work product for the benefit of the American people in the ways that we expressly authorize.

I'm a proud cosponsor of this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to vote for it.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2019

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the House of Representatives on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. The Office's legal and drafting expertise is crucial to the House's core constitutional function of making law.

The Office was established by section 1303 of the Revenue Act of 1918 (P. L. 65-254, 40 Stat. 1057) as the Legislative Drafting Service with the charge of aiding "in drafting public bills and resolutions or amendments thereto on the request of any committee[.]" While the

early work of the Office was focused on projects for the Committee on Ways and Means, other committees, recognizing the value of expert drafting, soon began requesting assistance. The Office now works with all of the committees and Members of the House in every area of Federal law, working with policy makers to produce legally effective legislative drafts.

Throughout the Office's history, it has provided exceptional drafting services on a non-partisan, impartial, and confidential basis. Speaking during the floor debate on the establishment of the Office, the Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means described the services of Middleton Beaman, who was the first head of the Office, as "essential" and the Committee as being "indebted" to him for clarifying and simplifying the complex legislative provisions on which he worked. The Chairman emphasized that Beaman had always been "absolutely neutral" on policy matters.

The Office continues to uphold the high standard established by Beaman. A 1975 report by the House Commission on Information and Facilities concluded that there was "an unmistakable consensus among those who utilize the services of the Office of Legislative Counsel, Members and committee staff alike, that its overall operation is indeed a credit to the House." Over a quarter of a century later, in H. Res. 635 of the 111th Congress, the House recognized "the professional, non-partisan service to which the Office of the Legislative Counsel is dedicated."

While carrying out the purpose described in the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 of achieving "a clear, faithful, and coherent expression of legislative policies," the Office has also become an increasingly important source of institutional memory. Most of its attorneys, paralegals, Ramseyer staff, IT staff, front desk staff, and GPO detailees spend a career in service of the House with many staying for decades.

Such long tenures allow the Office to serve as a source of education and expertise on Congress' role in making law, including the process for introducing, amending, and passing legislation. The staff of the Office of Legislative Counsel do more than provide drafts and legal advice; they teach. As committee and Member staff transition into more senior positions on and off the Hill, they take the lessons learned from working with the Office and apply them for the rest of their careers.

It is my honor and privilege to recognize the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the House of Representatives. For 100 years, the Office has proved essential to the House in the achievement of a clear, faithful, and coherent expression of legislative policies.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOE CARDONA

HON. DONNA E. SHALALA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2019

Ms. SHALALA. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of Joe Cardona, the award-winning documentarian and former Miami Herald columnist. Mr. Cardona recently received a David Burke Distinguished Journalism Award from the United States Agency for Global Media

(USAGM) for his show "Arcoiris," the first program in Radio Marti's history to address LGBTQ+ issues in Cuba.

"Arcoiris," which means rainbow in Spanish, premiered last year and is produced and hosted by Mr. Cardona. The program provides a platform for the LGBTQ+ community in Cuba to express goals and concerns and to engage with other LGBTQ+ communities around the world. "Arcoiris" has already been enormously successful. The show has aired numerous stories, including on the experiences of gay prisoners in Cuba and the policies of Mariela Castro, director of Cuba's National Center for Sexual Education (CENESEX).

Mr. Cardona has created a space for the long-underserved LGBTQ community to prosper. I'm proud that USAGM has recognized his important work.

THE NEED FOR REVISIONS TO THE PFIC INSURANCE EXCEPTION FOR FINANCIAL GUARANTY INSURANCE COMPANIES

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2019

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, I thank the Speaker and the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee for working on an end of year bipartisan tax package and helping Congress get on with the business of legislating. While I wish that our colleagues in the Senate would take up Butch Lewis, which the House passed in July, and addresses the multiemployer pension crisis affecting millions of retirees across the country and I wish my colleagues across the aisle would have supported the Ways and Means Committee's advancement of legislation to expand the Earned Income Tax Credit and make the Child Tax Credit fully refundable, it's important for our constituents to see Congress working together.

I also know that many Americans are waiting for Congress to make essential fixes to the tax code in response to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and were hoping that Congress would add these fixes to our year-end tax package. While a couple such fixes were made, many vital revisions were left out.

I am planning to introduce bipartisan legislation early next year that will fix an unintended consequence of the recent changes to the insurance business exception to the passive foreign investment company, or PFIC, rules. I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort and cosponsor this upcoming legislation especially Members who are aware of the importance of available and affordable municipal bond financing to state and local municipalities.

This legislation is necessary to preserve the availability and affordability of financial guaranty insurance with respect to municipal bond financing for state and local municipalities. I have worked in close consultation with the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation in developing this legislation to ensure that it provides a narrow exception for financial guarantors that is specifically designed to address the issue affecting municipal bond insurance in a manner that preserves the closing of a

loophole for foreign hedge funds, the intended targets of the recent changes.

As I work with stakeholders and colleagues to finalize this legislation, I understand that the Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service are currently working on finalizing regulations with respect to the PFIC insurance business exception. I am particularly encouraged that the Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service specifically requested comments with respect to the application of those regulations to financial guaranty insurance. I would encourage the Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service to carefully consider the comments received pursuant to their request in light of the pending introduction and consideration of my legislation to address as much as possible any unintended consequences with respect to financial guarantors.

CELEBRATING THE PASSAGE OF
THE FY2020 NDAA

HON. KENDRA S. HORN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2019

Ms. KENDRA S. HORN of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I applaud the House for passing the FY20 National Defense Authorization Act in an overwhelming bipartisan vote. This bill includes important modernizations and protections for our service members, military families, and our nation's Armed Forces. It was an honor to represent Oklahomans as one of four freshmen on the House Armed Services Committee included at the bill's conference.

This legislation includes a Tenants Bill of Rights to address unsafe housing conditions on military bases and other critical protections for service members in privatized base housing. I led the effort in the House for these protections after hearing about military housing problems at Tinker Air Force Base during one of my town halls. The Tenants Bill of Rights will protect our military families from predatory contracts and provide increased oversight of privatized base housing.

I am proud this bill included legislation I introduced to address a severe shortage of pilots in both our Air Force and in the aviation industry. My provision would assist JROTC members in getting their pilot's certificate. In Oklahoma, Air Force JROTC provides specialized aeronautics and space education. With about 1,000 students participating in Air Force JROTC units alone, these programs provide an important and unique service to strengthen our aerospace workforce of the future.

This need will only become more pronounced with the establishment of the United States Space Corps within the Department of the Air Force. As the Chair of the Space Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, I have heard from and worked with experts who recognize the imminent threats that our existing space infrastructure face. Satellites that offer geolocation services, weather data, and communications are all necessary elements to our modern day infrastructure. Our new Space Corps will protect these interests from natural catastrophes while deterring aggression from those intent on harming U.S. national security.

This bill also came with vital reforms to better our servicemembers daily lives.

The FY20 NDAA includes a 3.1% pay increase for all military personnel. Members of our uniformed services have not received a pay raise in far too long. As a result, our servicemember have experienced financial difficulty and have struggled to put food on the table for their family members even while they serve their country. I am proud to represent the servicemembers of my district and thankful to have a part in ensuring they are well compensated.

This bill provides 12 weeks of parental leave for all federal employees. A landmark policy for the U.S. government, we passed an NDAA that ensures all families can have the support they need in the crucial first month of starting or expanding their families. The US is the only industrialized nation without a national paid family leave policy, and this is a step in the right direction to ensure all families have the opportunity to work and take care of their families.

It preserves funding for critical education needs. We passed a \$40 million authorization to support the schools that educate our servicemembers' children. The Impact Aid program has maintained schools in areas with small to non-existent tax bases such as Indian reservations and military bases. This funding increase ensures that every student, no matter their zip code may have equal access to an education.

The passage of the FY20 NDAA also came with crucial reforms to streamline internal processes and ensure transparency in our Defense Department.

As the sponsor of Section 1011, 1 was concerned that requiring audit firms to disclose confidential disciplinary proceedings could ultimately lead to those proceedings becoming public, contrary to the express intent of Congress. I sponsored an amendment that remedies that concern. The best way to avoid such an outcome is for the DoD to permit contracting accounting firms to provide relevant proceeding information to the Department. This preserves the confidentiality requirements of Sarbanes-Oxley while remaining consistent with the confidentiality provision included in the conference report.

In addition, I wish to make the observation that with respect to Section 1011, which amends Section 1006 of the FY 2019 NDAA, the disclosure provision covers "associated persons" in addition to the accounting firm because it is important for the DoD to know whether individuals that the accounting firm assigns to work on DoD audit contracts are subject to ongoing disciplinary proceedings.

This bill also addresses a major problem that has plagued our service members spouses for far too long. The Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (SBP/DIC) offset, also known as the "widow's tax" unfairly asked military spouses to forfeit money owed to them. More than 60,000 surviving military spouses were negatively affected by this tax, including many in my district. The FY20 NDAA repeals this reduction over a three-year phase-in, allowing surviving families to collect both payments in full, receiving the justice they deserve.

On employment practices, I worked tirelessly to extend direct hiring authority to domestic defense industrial base facilities when hiring civilian personnel. After extensive con-

versations with Lieutenant General Donald E. Gene Kirkland, the Commander of the Air Force Sustainment Center, I resolved to work to stem the staffing shortages at these crucial bases. These staffing shortages are happening across the nation, and reforms are critical to meet the workforce needs of today and tomorrow. I am happy to note that direct hiring authority reform was granted for civilian personnel at domestic defense industrial base facilities and the Major Range and Test Facility bases until 2025. These necessary changes are vital to meeting our national security and readiness needs.

I am also glad to note that this legislation increased the cap for DoD sole-source contracts that can be awarded to the tribal community. The cap was raised to \$100 million to ensure that our Native American businesses and contractors are given the opportunities to provide services for our military effectively.

The National Defense Authorization Act is the proud product of bipartisan policies and compromise and ensures the needs of our men and women in uniform are met on and off the battlefield. I am proud to have been a part of the process from subcommittee to passage and applaud my colleagues for achieving this reform through compromise and negotiation, to secure major accomplishments for all Americans while promoting our national security.

WELCOME ELOISE HOLST WAGNER

HON. HALEY M. STEVENS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2019

Ms. STEVENS. Madam Speaker, I am happy to congratulate Lindsay Holst and Dan Wagner of Chicago, Illinois, on the birth of their new baby girl, Eloise Holst Wagner. Eloise Holst Wagner was born on November 25, 2019, at Northwestern Prentice Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. Eloise weighed seven pounds and four ounces and measured 20 inches long.

I would also like to congratulate Eloise's grandparents, Gregg Holst and Michele Grossman of Reading, Pennsylvania, Tom and Carol Brubaker of Perkasi, Pennsylvania, John Wagner of Birmingham, Michigan, and Terry Ryan Kane of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Congratulations to the entire family as they welcome their newest addition of pure pride and joy.

HONORING GEORGE TORRIE
JACKSON, JR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2019

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Lieutenant Colonel George Torrie Jackson, Jr. who is a native of Jackson, MS.

LTC Jackson holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science and master's degree in Education Administration, both from Jackson State University. LTC Jackson is a 30-year member of the U.S. Army Reserve/Mississippi Army