

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise awareness of a plague affecting our Nation and our world. It is called human trafficking. There are more than 40 million victims worldwide, and it happens in our backyards right here in congressional districts throughout the country. My district, because of the geographic location in California's Central Valley, sees a disproportionately high amount of human trafficking that takes place.

Fighting this atrocity requires all of us to come together with a comprehensive strategy. Organizations like Breaking the Chains in my district are needed to support survivors. Law enforcement needs to hold perpetrators accountable.

This week as the co-chairs of the bipartisan Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus, Congressman PETE OLSON and I are introducing a resolution in the House to support the observation of National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. It is sad that we have to bring this kind of recognition, but it is the reality.

This resolution calls for the Federal Government to coordinate its efforts and fight human trafficking between agencies and State and local governments as well as other organizations. We in the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus will continue to lead and push this effort. We need to work together.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF CLEBERN H. "BOBBY" SHOWS, JR.

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Clebern H. "Bobby" Shows, Jr. who passed away on January 20 of this year at the age of 80. I send my condolences and prayers to Bobby's wife of 42 years, Sandra, as well as his family and friends.

Born and raised in Mississippi, he was a graduate of USM. During his life he worked as a cattle farmer, businessman, and public servant.

I had the distinct honor to serve alongside Bobby in the Mississippi House and knew him as a friend. Bobby was first elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives in 1992 and served the community of Ellisville for 24 years. He was well-known by his colleagues in the State legislature as a principled conservative and served as chairman of the County Affairs Committee. Throughout his time in office, Chairman Shows earned his reputation as a strong advocate for Mississippi's rural residents.

Although we are sad to hear of his passing, we take comfort in his example of a life well-lived and the legacy he leaves behind. On behalf of the

Fourth Congressional District of Mississippi, we honor the memory of Bobby Shows, a loving husband, father, man of God, and a dedicated civil servant.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY 2019

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, the world paused to commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Millions of Jews were mercilessly killed as part of what the Nazis called their final solution to the Jewish problem. This happened just 74 years ago, though many seem to forget.

From the ashes, Jewish people returned to their ancient homeland and established a dynamic democracy in the Middle East. Unfortunately, the Jewish people of Israel are again targets of extermination. Just yesterday, the deputy head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps called to erase Israel from the global political map.

We must honor the memories of the 6 million murdered by Nazis by vowing that Jews will never again be threatened with extermination. The American people stand with Israel as proven by the embassy being established in Jerusalem where I led the House delegation May 14.

We remember, and we vow: never again.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

SECURE THE SOUTHERN BORDER

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

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate all who have been here today giving speeches.

The government shutdown is now over, but the crisis continues on the border. About 10 days ago, I was down on the border, and I saw firsthand what was happening down there and talked to people who were down there.

So, hopefully, during this time period, because the Democrats said repeatedly that if we reopen the government they would negotiate, hopefully we can negotiate and come to a bipartisan resolution that will help us to secure our southern border and continue to work on other ways that we can improve our immigration process.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote

or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY CLEARANCE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION ACT

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 424) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to improve the management and administration of the security clearance processes throughout the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 424

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 "Department of Homeland Security Clearance Management and Administration Act".

SEC. 2. SECURITY CLEARANCE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended—

(1) by inserting before section 701 (6 U.S.C. 341) the following:

"Subtitle A—Headquarters Activities";

and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subtitle:

"Subtitle B—Security Clearances

"SEC. 711. DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL SECURITY SENSITIVE AND PUBLIC TRUST POSITIONS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall require the designation of the sensitivity level of national security positions (pursuant to part 1400 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, or similar successor regulation) be conducted in a manner consistent with respect to all components and offices of the Department, and consistent with Federal guidelines.

"(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall require the utilization of uniform designation tools throughout the Department and provide training to appropriate staff of the Department on such utilization. Such training shall include guidance on factors for determining eligibility for access to classified information and eligibility to hold a national security position.

"SEC. 712. REVIEW OF POSITION DESIGNATIONS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than July 6, 2019, and every five years thereafter, the Secretary shall review all sensitivity level designations of national security positions (pursuant to part 1400 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, or similar successor regulation) at the Department.

"(b) DETERMINATION.—If during the course of a review required under subsection (a), the Secretary determines that a change in the sensitivity level of a position that affects the need for an individual to obtain access to classified information is warranted, such access shall be administratively adjusted and an appropriate level periodic reinvestigation completed, as necessary.

"(c) CONGRESSIONAL REPORTING.—Upon completion of each review required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall report to

the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate on the findings of each such review, including the number of positions by classification level and by component and office of the Department in which the Secretary made a determination in accordance with subsection (b) to—

“(1) require access to classified information;

“(2) no longer require access to classified information; or

“(3) otherwise require a different level of access to classified information.

“SEC. 713. AUDITS.

“Beginning not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Inspector General of the Department shall conduct regular audits of compliance of the Department with part 1400 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, or similar successor regulation.

“SEC. 714. REPORTING.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall annually through fiscal year 2024 submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the following:

“(1) The number of denials, suspensions, revocations, and appeals of the eligibility for access to classified information of an individual throughout the Department.

“(2) The date and status or disposition of each reported action under paragraph (1).

“(3) The identification of the sponsoring entity, whether by a component, office, or headquarters of the Department, of each action under paragraph (1), and description of the grounds for each such action.

“(4) Demographic data, including data relating to race, sex, national origin, and disability, of each individual for whom eligibility for access to classified information was denied, suspended, revoked, or appealed, and the number of years that each such individual was eligible for access to such information.

“(5) In the case of a suspension in excess of 180 days, an explanation for such duration.

“(b) FORM.—Each report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form and be made publicly available, but may include a classified annex for any sensitive or classified information if necessary.

“SEC. 715. UNIFORM ADJUDICATION, SUSPENSION, DENIAL, AND REVOCATION.

“Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, in consultation with the Homeland Security Advisory Committee, shall develop a plan to achieve greater uniformity within the Department with respect to the adjudication of eligibility of an individual for access to classified information that are consistent with the Adjudicative Guidelines for Determining Access to Classified Information published on December 29, 2005, or similar successor regulation. The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate the plan. The plan shall consider the following:

“(1) Mechanisms to foster greater compliance with the uniform Department adjudication, suspension, denial, and revocation standards by the head of each component and office of the Department with the authority to adjudicate access to classified information.

“(2) The establishment of an internal appeals panel responsible for final national security clearance denial and revocation determinations that is comprised of designees who are career, supervisory employees from com-

ponents and offices of the Department with the authority to adjudicate access to classified information and headquarters, as appropriate.

“SEC. 716. DATA PROTECTION.

“The Secretary shall ensure that all information received for the adjudication of eligibility of an individual for access to classified information is consistent with the Adjudicative Guidelines for Determining Access to Classified Information published on December 29, 2005, or similar successor regulation, and is protected against misappropriation.

“SEC. 717. REFERENCE.

“Except as otherwise provided, for purposes of this subtitle, any reference to the ‘Department’ includes all components and offices of the Department.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended—

(1) by inserting before the item relating to section 701 the following new item:

“Subtitle A—Headquarters Activities”;

and

(2) by inserting after the item relating to section 707 the following new items:

“Subtitle B—Security Clearances

“Sec. 711. Designation of national security sensitive and public trust positions.

“Sec. 712. Review of position designations.

“Sec. 713. Audits.

“Sec. 714. Reporting.

“Sec. 715. Uniform adjudication, suspension, denial, and revocation.

“Sec. 716. Data protection.

“Sec. 717. Reference.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 424, the Department of Homeland Security Clearance Management and Administration Act.

Mr. Speaker, before I begin, let me say I am pleased that we have reached the end of the longest government shutdown in U.S. history. I am grateful to the women and men of DHS and their families for their professionalism during this difficult month. We should all recognize that they continue to serve our country every day by keeping our citizens safe.

Mr. Speaker, I have reintroduced H.R. 424, the Department of Homeland Security Clearance Management and Administration Act, to reform how the department manages its security clearance processes. It is no secret that the security clearance process is in dire need of change.

Since September 11, there has been massive growth in the amount of classified material across the Federal Government. In many cases, material is over-classified where it is kept at a higher classification level or at a higher classification level for longer than needed. The explosion in the number of Federal positions requiring security clearances has driven an enormous backlog in security clearance background investigations.

As of last Congress, the average waiting period for an initial background check for a top-secret clearance was 390 days—more than a year. The average waiting period for a reinvestigation of an individual holding a top-secret clearance was 518 days—nearly 1½ years.

The delays caused by this enormous backlog represent very real barriers to employment and promotion within government. Many individuals with clearances do not actually need clearances to do their jobs. According to a 2014 report by the Office of Management and Budget, 40 percent of all individuals with clearances did not even have access to classified information as part of their work.

Misclassification of national security positions is not only wasteful of government resources but creates needless barriers to entry and advancement. Clearly, the clearance system is in desperate need of significant reform.

H.R. 424 would help put DHS on a path to rightsizing its ranks by ensuring that national security positions are properly designated.

H.R. 424 would also require DHS to conform, from time to time, that its security designations are still appropriate. This would ensure that the department is not needlessly limiting the applicant pool for positions that do not require access to classified information.

While the executive branch is exploring ways to improve the way in which positions are designated for clearances, H.R. 424 would allow DHS to become a leader in modernizing and streamlining this system.

Finally, H.R. 424 would require DHS to keep applicants' and employees' personal information safe from data breaches.

Taken together, these reforms represent progress toward fixing the broken clearance system. It will save DHS money, time, and other resources by streamlining the clearance and designation systems.

Fundamentally, enactment of H.R. 424 would begin to break down barriers to employment and promotion that prevent Federal employees from advancing in their careers.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 424, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 424, the Department of Homeland Security Clearance Management and Administration Act.

President Trump has directed a major security clearance and background information overhaul across the executive branch. This effort is underway, and significant progress has been made to reduce the backlog and improve the quality of background investigations. The bill we are considering today complements this initiative.

H.R. 424 requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct an inventory of the department's positions that require security clearances, which currently number over 100,000, and determine what positions may be duplicative or are no longer necessary. It is just good government to periodically review the positions that require a "need to know" and to ensure DHS is not allocating funds for unnecessary background investigations. Security clearances are costly to investigate, adjudicate, and maintain.

The bill would ensure that DHS conducts a thorough accounting of its workforce needs and reduces the number of positions with security clearances if determined appropriate. The bill would also require additional transparency on how security clearances are adjudicated, including when there are reasons to suspend or deny a security clearance.

Chairman THOMPSON's legislation is an example of the accounting that each Federal department should be conducting today and would lead to a leaner and more secure Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. Speaker, the bill is identical to the version the House passed last Congress, and I would just reiterate this is good government, bipartisan legislation. I urge its support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1230

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 424, which passed by voice vote in the last Congress, will help improve critical aspects of DHS' security clearance process.

The truth is that not every position requires a clearance, not every document needs to be classified. Our intelligence and law enforcement officials should focus their limited time and resources on protecting materials that are truly sensitive. Access to those materials should be granted carefully and appropriately to individuals who actually need to handle those materials.

Enactment of H.R. 424 would not only make DHS a leader in this space, but it would help break down barriers to employment and growth within the Department. Mr. Speaker, I ask for my colleagues' support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COHEN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 424.

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.

FEDERAL INFORMATION RESOURCE TO STRENGTHEN TIES WITH STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 495) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require an annual report on the Office for State and Local Law Enforcement.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 495

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 "Federal Information Resource to Strengthen Ties with State and Local Law Enforcement Act of 2017" or the "FIRST State and Local Law Enforcement Act".

SEC. 2. ANNUAL REPORT ON OFFICE FOR STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT.

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

(1) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

"(5) ANNUAL REPORT.—For each of fiscal years 2020 through 2024, the Assistant Secretary for State and Local Law Enforcement shall submit 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 a report on the activities of the Office for State and Local Law Enforcement. Each such report shall include, for the fiscal year covered by such report, a description of each of the following:

"(A) Efforts to coordinate and share information regarding Department and component agency programs with State, local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies.

"(B) Efforts to improve information sharing through the Homeland Security Information Network by appropriate component agencies of the Department and by State, local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies.

"(C) The status of performance metrics within the Office of State and Local Law Enforcement to evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to carry out the activities specified in subsection (a).

"(D) Any feedback from State, local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies regarding the Office of State and Local Law Enforcement, including the mechanisms utilized to collect such feedback.

"(E) Efforts to carry out all other responsibilities of the Office of State and Local Law Enforcement."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to

revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 495, the FIRST State and Local Law Enforcement Act.

I thank my Democratic colleague, Ms. JACKSON LEE, for reintroducing this measure in the new Congress.

H.R. 495 would require DHS to submit an annual report to Congress on the activities of the Office for State and Local Law Enforcement.

This bill was written, informed by a report I had my staff prepare to look at DHS' progress at implementing the 9/11 Commission Act on its 10th anniversary in 2017. The report recommended that DHS continuously refine its information-sharing networks.

Central to this effort is the Department's engagement with State and local law enforcement. Specifically, H.R. 495 requires an annual report that highlights the activities of this office.

Pursuant to H.R. 495, each report must contain detailed information on existing programs and performance metrics to evaluate their effectiveness. More importantly, each report must include feedback received from these law enforcement agencies so that future collaboration can be meaningful.

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 495, the Office of State and Local Law Enforcement Information Sharing Review Act, introduced by my friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The Office for State and Local Law Enforcement is part of the Department of Homeland Security and currently resides in the Office of Partnership and Engagement. The Office provides information on DHS' resources that are available to State and local law enforcement agency partners and a point of contact for questions regarding DHS' policies and programs.

This bill requires the Office for State and Local Law Enforcement to provide a report on the efforts of the Office to improve information sharing between DHS and law enforcement agencies, an overview of the performance metrics used to measure success and any feedback provided by the State and local stakeholders, and an overview of ongoing activities of the Office.

This reporting requirement is intended to assist the Office in identifying areas of improvement in the Department's information-sharing efforts and coordinating with the relevant DHS components to close any identified gaps.