

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta is the home of this Nation's largest pediatric sickle cell disease program with more than 1,800 children and teens. Georgia is home to over 8,000 people who have sickle cell disease, one of the Nation's most impacted populations.

On this Thursday, February 7, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta will be hosting a briefing at 1 p.m. right here in the Capitol in room HVC-201 to discuss innovations in sickle cell disease treatment.

Madam Speaker, more than 100,000 Americans have and suffer from sickle cell disease. It is a painful, genetic blood disorder that prevents the children from getting air. It is debilitating.

Madam Speaker, I ask that we stand proudly and support the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

INVEST IN MEANINGFUL PHYSICAL BARRIERS AT OUR BORDER

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

Mr. GIANFORTE. Madam Speaker, Border Patrol agents recently made the largest fentanyl bust in the agency's history. A suspect attempted to cross our southern border with nearly 400 pounds of meth and enough fentanyl to kill 57 million Americans.

Montana faces a meth epidemic that is tearing our families apart. We must secure the border to cut off the meth supply that cartels push through the ports of entry and across our porous borders.

Securing the border with a physical barrier enjoys bipartisan support. More than 60 Democrats in the House and the Senate have claimed a physical barrier should be part of the solution.

Both U.S. Senators from Montana have voted for physical barriers. Yet, despite bipartisan support for a physical barrier, the Speaker recently declared there is not going to be any money for a wall.

Madam Speaker, I urge Members of the border security conference committee to listen to lawmakers from both parties and invest in meaningful physical barriers at our southern border.

REVERSE TRANSGENDER MILITARY BAN

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

Mr. PAPPAS. Madam Speaker, yesterday, I welcomed a transgender veteran from New Hampshire named Tavion as my guest to the State of the Union. I am proud to say that he was warmly received here in the people's House.

Tavion didn't give a big speech last night but he still delivered a powerful message. His story and exemplary service stand as a direct rebuttal to the

false claims and flimsy logic used to justify the Trump administration's ban on transgender military service.

By politicizing our military and marginalizing patriot servicemembers, this unjust policy is weakening America's Armed Forces. Any American who is prepared to risk life and limb in defense of our Nation deserves our undying respect.

In spite of our political differences, my sincere hope is that members of both parties can come together to support our men and women in uniform, regardless of gender identity.

Madam Speaker, the American people sent us to Washington to stand up for our constituents and our values. We can live up to that responsibility by reversing the transgender military service ban and honoring brave trans vets like Tavion.

□ 1215

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS DURING THE 116TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

FEBRUARY 6, 2019.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STENY H. HOYER, the Honorable JAMES E. CLYBURN, the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, the Honorable ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT, the Honorable ELLIAH E. CUMMINGS, the Honorable DORIS O. MATSUI, the Honorable JOHN P. SARBAKES, the Honorable GERALD E. CONNOLLY, the Honorable DONALD S. BEYER, JR., the Honorable ANTHONY G. BROWN, the Honorable A. DONALD MCEACHIN, and the Honorable JAMIE RASKIN to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through the remainder of the One Hundred Sixteenth Congress.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the appointments are approved.

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 5, 2019.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
*Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 5, 2019, at 5:17 p.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment S. 49.

With best wishes, I am.

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 6, 2019.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
*Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 6, 2019, at 11:11 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 439.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS ACT OF 2019

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 876) to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to carry out a plan for the purchase and installation of an earthquake early warning system for the Cascadia Subduction Zone, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 876

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; DEFINITION.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Pacific Northwest Earthquake Preparedness Act of 2019”.

(b) CASCADIA SUBDUCTION ZONE DEFINED.—In this Act, the term “Cascadia Subduction Zone” means the landward-dipping fault that is approximately 684 miles long, separates the Juan de Fuca and North America plates, and stretches along a portion of the western coast of the United States beginning off Cape Mendocino, California, along the State of Oregon, the State of Washington, to Northern Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

SEC. 2. EARTHQUAKE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOR CASCADIA SUBDUCTION ZONE.

(a) PLAN FOR PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION.—

(1) DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDING.—The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall—

(A) develop a plan for the purchase and installation of an earthquake early warning system for the Cascadia Subduction Zone; and

(B) identify the funds necessary for implementation of the plan.

(2) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a copy of the plan.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that summarizes the actions taken to implement the plan.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

(2) EARTHQUAKE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM.—The term “earthquake early warning system” includes—

(A) improvements to regional and geodetic networks that support building a capability for an earthquake early warning system; and

(B) seismometers, Global Positioning System receivers, and associated infrastructure.

SEC. 3. EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI TASK FORCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish an Earthquake and Tsunami Task Force for the purpose of developing a comprehensive strategy and recommendations on how the Nation should prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to a covered event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

(b) TASK FORCE.—

(1) MEMBERSHIP.—The membership of the Task Force shall include a cross section of subject matter experts representing the following:

(A) Relevant Federal agencies.

(B) The States of Oregon, Washington, and California.

(C) Indian tribes, local governments, and private sector representatives that may be impacted by a covered event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

(D) Universities, academia, and research institutions with expertise in topics relevant to the work of the Task Force.

(2) CHAIRPERSON.—The Administrator (or the Administrator's designee) shall serve as the chairperson of the Task Force.

(3) DETAILED EMPLOYEES.—Members of the Task Force may detail employees to assist the Administrator (or the Administrator's designee) in fulfilling the responsibilities of the Task Force.

(c) COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY.—

(1) STRATEGY.—The comprehensive strategy to be developed under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(A) A description of how Federal agencies will coordinate to develop the ability to prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to the impacts of a covered event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

(B) A strategy to ensure collaboration between the Department of Transportation, the Department of Energy, the Coast Guard, the Corps of Engineers, and other Federal agencies, as appropriate, for purposes of—

(i) completing a needs assessment of Federal facilities in need of hardening for a covered event; and

(ii) developing a strategic plan to mitigate and retrofit Federal, State, tribal, and local critical assets for freight, energy, and transit purposes to withstand a covered event and to help save lives during and immediately after a covered event.

(C) A strategy—

(i) to assist State, tribal, and local governments in developing and implementing a coordinated and comprehensive plan to prioritize Federal, State, tribal, local, and private investments and activities to develop the ability to prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to the impacts of a covered event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone; and

(ii) to link any existing statewide mitigation plan with such a coordinated and comprehensive plan.

(D) With respect to the strategy described in subparagraph (C), an examination of the feasibility of the public sector, the private sector, and individuals to acquire earthquake insurance.

(E) An identification of funding opportunities to implement the comprehensive strategy and any recommendations made by the Task Force, including—

(i) existing funding opportunities across Federal agencies and other sources; and

(ii) potential new funding opportunities.

(F) An identification of barriers to obtaining funding for the implementation of the comprehensive strategy and recommendations on how to remove the barriers.

(G) A strategy for appropriate Federal agencies to collaborate with and assist State, tribal, and local governments in developing recommendations for cost-effective mitigation alternatives for aging State, tribal, and locally owned critical infrastructure.

(H) A strategy for assisting State, tribal, and local governments in developing a recovery plan prior to a covered event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone that addresses how State, tribal, and local governments may want to rebuild after the event.

(I) An identification of the steps taken to date to develop an onshore and offshore earthquake early warning system and a description of the purpose and scope of such a system.

(J) An evaluation of the types of offshore earthquake early warning systems and recommendations and a cost estimate for an earthquake early warning system appropriate for the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

(K) Recommendations on how an earthquake early warning system should operate, including whether and how the system should interface with the private sector.

(L) A description of appropriate roles and responsibilities for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments, including who should operate and maintain an earthquake early warning system, the cost of the system, and possible funding sources for the system.

(M) A plan on how to integrate an earthquake early warning system into existing and new public alert warning systems and technologies, including mobile systems.

(2) USE OF EXISTING PLANS.—In developing the comprehensive strategy, the Task Force may use existing plans, studies, and other resources.

(d) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The recommendations to be developed by the Task Force under subsection (a) shall include recommendations on—

(1) potential administrative or legislative changes required to implement the comprehensive strategy;

(2) the funding required to implement the comprehensive strategy and the recommendations; and

(3) the order of priority for implementation of the comprehensive strategy.

(e) NATIONAL ACADEMIES.—

(1) COLLABORATION.—The Task Force shall work simultaneously and collaboratively with the National Academies.

(2) AGREEMENT.—The Task Force shall enter into an agreement with the National Academies under which the National Acad-

emies shall develop recommendations for a Federal research strategy to advance scientific understanding of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and resulting tsunami preparedness, including the following:

(A) Geologic conditions, ground motions, and tsunami hazards.

(B) Implications of an effective automated early warning system.

(C) Effects of mega-earthquake and tsunami events on the built and natural environment.

(D) Social and behavioral factors for effective disaster preparedness and response.

(E) Cost-effective mitigation alternatives for legacy and aging infrastructure.

(F) Strategic planning for freight, energy, and transit network robustness.

(G) Tools that help communities invest their resources for the greatest benefit.

(H) Any other topics identified as necessary by the Task Force or the National Academies.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report of the Task Force that includes the following:

(1) The comprehensive strategy to be developed under subsection (a).

(2) The recommendations to be developed under subsections (a), (d), and (e).

(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(2) COVERED EVENT.—The term “covered event” means an earthquake, tsunami, or combined earthquake and tsunami event.

(3) TASK FORCE.—The term “Task Force” means the Federal interagency task force to be established under subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 876, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this overdue action by the Federal Government, the Pacific Northwest Earthquake Preparedness Act of 2019, as amended.

Next month will mark the eighth anniversary of the devastating 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Tohoku, Japan. Japanese officials estimate the event caused 100,000 buildings to totally collapse, 270,000 buildings to half collapse, and partially damaged almost 750,000 buildings.

Fifteen thousand people died. Most of the deaths were caused by the resulting

tsunami and not the earthquake because Japan has an early warning system for earthquakes, and it worked. It sent alarms and text messages warning citizens to take cover and likely prevented many deaths and injuries.

Within 15 seconds to 1 minute of warning, depending on location, the earthquake warning system alerted Japan's high-speed rail system to stop trains, reducing deaths and injuries; production lines had time to cease operations; and property damage economic losses were way less than would have been otherwise.

I went with then-Chairman Denham over to observe their system and discuss what they are doing now. Now what they are doing is they realize that most of the people died because they did not have ocean sensors, and they underestimated the height of the tsunami. They told people to take shelter in places 10 to 12 feet above wave level. The waves were much bigger and, subsequently, many of those people died.

So they are not waiting. The technology currently exists for a realtime warning system that will give them even more notice of an earthquake and will give them more accurate wave heights on the resulting tsunami so people can take proper shelter.

We have the same opportunity to do that here in the United States if we take action soon.

The Cascadia subduction zone sits off the coast of Oregon and northern California—right at that border, essentially—and experts believe it has generated at least a dozen major earthquakes between magnitudes 8 and 9, which is an awesome earthquake, and resulting tsunamis over the last 5,000 years.

This January was the 319th anniversary of the last large quake, and many scientists say that we are overdue and it could happen at any time. It will be essentially a mirror image of the subduction zone off the coast of Japan that caused the devastating 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

The technology is here. The question is whether we want to invest in an offshore earthquake early warning system now or wait until thousands of people have died and catastrophic property damage occurs. We need to invest now rather than later.

This bill will begin to address the very real threat of a combined earthquake and tsunami off the Pacific Northwest coast before it happens. Some forecasts say there is a 10 percent chance of a magnitude 8 to 9 in the next 30 years; others predict a 35 to 40 percent chance in the next 50 years.

This bill directs the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop a plan to identify funds to purchase equipment necessary for an earthquake early warning system and to report to Congress on the implementation of the plan.

It also requires the President to establish an earthquake and tsunami

task force. The task force will consist of representatives from potentially impacted areas as well as earthquake and tsunami experts to develop a comprehensive strategy and recommendations on how the Nation should prepare for, plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and adapt to an earthquake, tsunami, or combined event of a large magnitude in the Cascadia subduction zone.

We need to take this threat seriously and prepare accordingly. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, as my colleague has noted, earthquakes strike without warning and result in potentially catastrophic casualties and massive damage to buildings and infrastructure.

As was seen in Japan 8 years ago, earthquakes in the coastal regions such as the Pacific Northwest can be followed by devastating tsunamis with huge loss of life. They can't be prevented, but they impact life, property, and our economy. What we can do is warn our citizens of that threat.

H.R. 876, the Pacific Northwest Earthquake Preparedness Act of 2019, directs FEMA to plan the development of an earthquake early warning system, not unlike that in Japan, for the Cascadia subduction zone. The bill directs the President to establish an earthquake and tsunami task force to develop a comprehensive strategy and recommendations on how to prepare and plan for seismic events.

Good planning and preparedness can save lives and property, and this legislation will help us to prepare for, mitigate against, and respond to disasters along the Cascadia subduction zone.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Michigan for his support of the bill, and I will look to support him on issues that deal with the Great Lakes in the future or other concerns that he may have.

This is just something that, as a nation, as we see threats to our citizens around the country, we should be pushing for preparedness and for resilience. This bill, if we move forward with the plan and put out the instrumentation, will save lives and will be a tremendous benefit to the Nation as a whole.

Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I support passage of H.R. 876, the Pacific

Northwest Earthquake Preparedness Act of 2019, as amended. I commend my friend from Oregon, Chairman DEFAZIO, for addressing the urgent need to develop better earthquake and tsunami warning systems in the region of our country most vulnerable to such natural disasters. In fact, my own committee, the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, has had for many years a leading role in strengthening earthquake and tsunami preparedness and response in order to minimize the loss of life and property.

In December 2018, we enacted a reauthorization of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP), which was first authorized in 1977 but had not been updated since 2004. In the 15 years since, our scientific understanding of earthquakes as well as how we apply that science to save lives and property have evolved significantly. In the reauthorization, we updated the program to reflect those developments.

Four agencies participate in NEHRP. The National Science Foundation and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) carry out fundamental research in the earth sciences that contributes to our understanding of earthquakes. In addition, USGS develops and manages ShakeAlert—the earthquake early warning system. The National Institute of Standards and Technology is the lead agency for NEHRP and also carries out applied research in support of more earthquake resilient building codes. FEMA provides earthquake training and awareness to States and territories and assists communities in creating seismic mitigation plans. Each of these agencies has a unique and essential role as clearly defined in the NEHRP statute. I want to thank my colleague Chairman DEFAZIO for working with me to ensure that H.R. 876 does not unintentionally create any confusion or uncertainty as to the respective roles and responsibilities of each of these agencies.

Our committee also has a lead role in tsunami warning and preparedness. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has run a tsunami early warning system for many years. In 2006, the Science Committee passed the Tsunami Warning and Education Act. We updated that program just last Congress through H.R. 353, thanks to the leadership of another colleague from Oregon and a valued Member of the Science Committee, Rep. SUZANNE BONAMICI.

We all share the same goal of taking advantage of the strengths and resources of our federal agencies to minimize the tragic loss of life and the economic impact of large scale natural disasters. If H.R. 876 becomes law, I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure good coordination and collaboration between the new activities required in H.R. 876 and the ongoing activities under the NEHRP and Tsunami warning programs. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 876.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 876, 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.

FAIRNESS FOR BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS ACT OF 2019

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 866) to provide a lactation room in public buildings.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 866

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 “Fairness For Breastfeeding Mothers Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. LACTATION ROOM IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

(a) LACTATION ROOM IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS.—Chapter 33 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3318. Lactation room in public buildings

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY.—The term ‘appropriate authority’ means the head of a Federal agency, the Architect of the Capitol, or other official authority responsible for the operation of a public building.

“(2) COVERED PUBLIC BUILDING.—The term ‘covered public building’ means a public building (as defined in section 3301) that is open to the public and contains a public restroom, and includes a building listed in section 6301 or 5101.

“(3) LACTATION ROOM.—The term ‘lactation room’ means a hygienic place, other than a bathroom, that—

“(A) is shielded from view;

“(B) is free from intrusion; and

“(C) contains a chair, a working surface, and, if the public building is otherwise supplied with electricity, an electrical outlet.

“(b) LACTATION ROOM REQUIRED.—Except as provided in subsection (c), the appropriate authority of a covered public building shall ensure that the building contains a lactation room that is made available for use by members of the public to express breast milk.

“(c) EXCEPTIONS.—A covered public building may be excluded from the requirement in subsection (b) at the discretion of the appropriate authority if—

“(1) the public building—

“(A) does not contain a lactation room for employees who work in the building; and

“(B) does not have a room that could be repurposed as a lactation room or a space that could be made private using portable materials, at a reasonable cost; or

“(2) new construction would be required to create a lactation room in the public building and the cost of such construction is unfeasible.

“(d) NO UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize an individual to enter a public building or portion thereof that the individual is not otherwise authorized to enter.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 33 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item related to section 3316 the following new item:

“3318. Lactation room in public buildings.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 866.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, today I rise in support of my bill, the Fairness For Breastfeeding Mothers Act of 2019, a bill that would require buildings that are either federally owned or leased to provide designated private and hygienic lactation spaces for nursing mothers.

The House passed this bill by voice vote when I offered it last Congress. The House also passed this bill in the 114th Congress as an amendment to the Public Buildings Reform and Savings Act of 2016. I appreciate the prior support of my colleagues, and I hope they will join me today in support of this important legislation once again.

For years, Federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have encouraged breastfeeding. The benefits are so great that the Affordable Care Act amended Federal law to require employers to provide a designated, non-bathroom space for returning employees to pump breast milk for their newborns, ensuring that new mothers would be able to continue the essential practice even after returning to work.

My bill would extend this requirement to include not only employees, but visitors and guests to Federal facilities across the Nation. Actually, Federal facilities visited by millions of Americans and others should lead the way.

My bill does not require the expenditure of Federal funds or require space to be mandated. It would simply allow visitors to Federal buildings to make use of spaces that are already available to Federal employees or to access similar spaces within those buildings.

In Washington, D.C., alone, there are millions of tourists who visit Federal sites, such as the Lincoln Memorial and the Smithsonian Institution. Increasingly, families understand the unique benefits of breastfeeding as encouraged by Federal agencies and programs, and visitors to these buildings who have newborns and babies should have a private space to breastfeed or pump.

The benefits of breastfeeding are well-documented. Breast milk contains antibodies and hormones that boost babies’ immune systems. Studies have shown lower risks of asthma, diabetes, respiratory infections, and other diseases among breastfed babies.

□ 1230

Breastfeeding also has benefits for nursing mothers, who, research has

shown, have lower risks of diabetes and certain forms of cancer.

Given the significant health benefits of breastfeeding for both baby and mother already recognized in Federal policy, my bill is a logical step to ensure that visitors to Federal sites have access to clean, hygienic, and private spaces to nurse or pump.

It is also important to ensure that lactation spaces are accessible to individuals with disabilities. While the Americans with Disabilities Act does not apply to Federal buildings, the lactation spaces required by my bill would be subject to a similar law, the Architectural Barriers Act, which requires buildings and facilities that are designed, built, or altered with Federal dollars or leased by Federal agencies, to be accessible to individuals with disabilities whenever possible.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I join my colleague in support of H.R. 866, which provides that federally managed buildings or federally owned buildings open to the public nursing rooms that are available.

The bill would apply to buildings that are already open to the public and which have nursing rooms for employees yet somehow do not manage to provide those to the general public, and they should. The requirements would not apply if the existing space cannot feasibly be opened.

As the gentlewoman notes, it does not create additional cost.

The legislation passed the House last Congress by voice vote and, if enacted, will help visiting mothers to our facilities in both the capital here and throughout the Nation.

Madam Speaker, I urge support for this legislation, and I urge the Senate to finally take up this legislation. To move it forward, I join my colleague in saying that it is about time that we open up the nursing rooms in Federal facilities to the general public in support of the care of newborns and young children.

Madam Speaker, I have no remaining speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, we have had this act come up in a Republican House. It has now come up in a Democratic House. What more do we need in order for it to be clear that this is, shall we say, motherhood legislation and that the whole House is for it?

Madam Speaker, I have no remaining speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 866.