

State Department has not provided information to us that we have requested—about how to gain a waiver, what is the process, and what is the yes/no here.

I think I know why. It is because there isn't one, as countless examples and stories have shown.

We have got to continue to shine a spotlight on the millions of Americans whose lives have been thrown into chaos due to the President's reckless and ill thought-through process. I, as an American, am going to continue to fight on their behalf.

VIOLENCE AGAINST HEALTHCARE WORKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, on June 11 of this month, the House Education and Labor Committee reported out legislation, H.R. 1309, the Workplace Violence Prevention for Healthcare and Social Service Workers Act. Mr. Speaker, this is a culmination and a milestone of a 7-year process that began in 2013.

Like many Members of Congress, I have been hearing about stories of rising violence in emergency rooms, ambulances, and treatment facilities to nurses, doctors, and nurses aides that showed a disturbing trend.

One such case was Helene Andrews, a registered nurse from Danbury, Connecticut, who was assaulted multiple times during her career. Shortly before she retired, while she was dispensing medication to a patient, she was thrown to the floor and her pelvis was shattered.

In 2013, former Congressman George Miller of California and I requested a report from the Government Accountability Office to dig deeper to determine how pervasive this violence is and what strategies are at our disposal to reverse this trend. The report, which was completed in 2016, found that workers in healthcare facilities experienced substantially higher rates of nonfatal injuries due to violence in the workplace compared to workers overall.

Between 2006 and 2016, there was a 70 percent increase in violent incidents that occurred in healthcare and social service workplaces that resulted in employees being away from work. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, healthcare and social service workers are nearly five times more likely to suffer a serious injury from workplace violence than workers in other settings.

Up to 30 percent of hospital workers report being assaulted at work. For employees in psych hospitals, that number is drastically higher. Nearly 50 percent of emergency room physicians have been physically assaulted at work, and 80 percent report that this violence affects patient care.

Despite these alarming statistics, we know that violence against this workforce is, in fact, grossly underreported. Many medical professionals are discouraged from reporting incidents, fear further stigmatizing patients, or are just told: "Move on. Shake it off. It is part of the job."

Mr. Speaker, during the course of work on this legislation, we actually heard from the Cleveland Clinic in northeast Ohio, which is one of the largest healthcare networks in America. The CEO of Cleveland Clinic, Tom Mihaljevic, gave his 2019 state of the clinic address, where he described that there is a national epidemic of violence against healthcare workers, especially in emergency room departments. Last year alone, nearly 30,000 weapons were confiscated from patients and visitors in that healthcare network. At the time we did the markup, one of the members of our committee actually expressed disbelief that, in fact, that statistic was accurate.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter I supplied to Congresswoman FOXX at the end of last week citing Mr. Mihaljevic's report, which was a YouTube that is easily found, as well as an article from Modern Healthcare, which quoted this amazing and astonishing statistic.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
2nd District, CT, June 21, 2019.
Rep. VIRGINIA FOXX,
Ranking Member, Committee on Education
and Labor, Washington, DC.

DEAR RANKING MEMBER FOXX: During our June 11th mark up of H.R. 1309, the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act you questioned the veracity of a statement I made regarding the high number of weapons confiscated from patients and visitors at the Cleveland Clinic in 2018. The number I cited, 30,000, is indeed alarming. It is also accurate, and further evidence that health care and social service workers require enforceable protections to limit potential violence against them at their place of work.

During the mark up, you asked publicly that I verify this statistic, so I would like to share with you two resources which confirm that 30,000 weapons were confiscated from the Cleveland Clinic's Northeast Ohio facilities in 2018.

In Cleveland Clinic CEO Dr. Tom Mihaljevic's 2019 "State of The Clinic" address from February 27, 2019, he states: "there is a national epidemic of violence against health care workers, especially in emergency departments . . . last year alone, nearly 30,000 weapons were confiscated from patients and visitors." You can view the address here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pOr2Uq1NzuY>

Additionally, a March 11, 2019 Modern Healthcare article entitled "Healthcare workers face violence 'epidemic'" cites Dr. Mihaljevic's address and reports that "In 2018, the clinic confiscated a staggering 30,000 weapons from patients and visitors in its system in the Northeast Ohio region." The article can be read here: <https://tinyurl.com/y5thhm4r>

Given your understandable alarm upon hearing that the tens of thousands of employees working at these facilities face daily exposure to violence, I would welcome your support of H.R. 1309. As you know, violence against this workforce is on the rise. Both

Democratic and Republican OSHA Secretaries believe an enforceable standard is the best way to reverse this trend, and this legislation will ensure that happens in a timely manner.

Thank you,

JOE COURTNEY.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, it is obviously not limited just to the State of Ohio. We know these incidents are preventable.

Since 1996, OSHA has published voluntary guidelines that recommend commonsense preventative measures that employers can take to reduce the risk and severity of violent incidents, and that is what our bill does. It basically requires, through OSHA, that there be a violence prevention plan in healthcare settings.

It is not one size fits all. It recognizes that some facilities are different from others. But, in fact, there has to be a way to train staff to understand patient risk, to understand ways to de-escalate violence, and a way to design workforces to reduce the incidence of violence.

In addition, it requires that there be a reporting mechanism to OSHA when these incidents occur. Today, in a hospital, if there is a slip and fall, it must be reported; if there is a chemical leak, it must be reported; but if a nurse is punched, kicked, or spit at, that is not required to be reported, and that is what our bill will do.

The legislation was reported out with a favorable report. We have 187 cosponsors of the legislation. It is bipartisan, and it will be brought up this summer for final action.

We have waited far too long to protect the caregivers, the people in the caring professions which every American relies on and depends on to be healed, consoled, and cared for. Yet it is clear from the GAO report that they are being subjected to incidents of violence which, again, are totally unacceptable and which hinder their ability to do their mission. It is time to pass H.R. 1309.

Again, I applaud the support from the emergency room physicians, the emergency room nurses, and the American Nurses Association, as well as a host of other groups that are affiliated with our healthcare delivery system.

Let's protect the caregivers. Let's pass H.R. 1309.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of North Carolina) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God, Father of us all, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Please send Your spirit upon this assembly, that the men and women who serve the United States in contentious times such as these might better work together for the benefit of our Nation. This is not easy, so bless them with Your wisdom and give them the patience and understanding to rise to the demands of their calling.

So also we ask Your blessing upon our world, where so many live and, unfortunately, die in nations and regions cursed by violence and division. We are mindful, O God, of the descendants of Abraham in the Middle East. Imbue them with the grace to see their brothers and sisters in one another. Lord, have Mercy.

Lord, be with us this day and all days, and may all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CONAWAY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

HONORING REPRESENTATIVE BILL PASCRELL

(Ms. SHERRILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SHERRILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor our colleague, Representative BILL PASCRELL, for whom the fire headquarters in his hometown of Paterson, New Jersey, is being named.

Representative PASCRELL has been a tireless champion of our country's firefighters. In 2000, he led the passage of the FIRE Act, the only Federal program to deliver grant funds directly to local fire departments. In 2015, he helped secure a \$7.5 million grant for the Paterson Fire Department, which prevented a dangerous reduction of forces. He is co-chair of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus.

Just this month, I proudly cast my vote for Representative PASCRELL's amendment to increase funding for the Firefighter Cancer Registry to ensure

our firefighters can get the care they need.

As a representative of New Jersey and as an American, I am grateful for all the work the Congressman has done to ensure protection and care for the brave men and women who put their lives on the line to keep our communities safe.

Though I regret I cannot be there with him this morning in Paterson, I congratulate Representative PASCRELL on this well-deserved honor.

OBSERVING ALZHEIMER'S AND BRAIN AWARENESS MONTH

(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, June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month.

As a member of the Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease, I am grateful to continue supporting families facing Alzheimer's. Additionally, I appreciate the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act that President Donald Trump signed into law in December last year.

Currently, there are more than 5 million Americans who live with Alzheimer's, with 16 million family members and friends who serve as caregivers. It is inspiring to know that 313,000 caregivers in South Carolina provide over 352 million hours of unpaid care.

South Carolina has extraordinary facilities to provide exemplary care for Alzheimer's patients in a friendly environment, including Carroll Campbell Place of Lexington Medical Center, honoring our late Governor.

Support and research are provided by the Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's, with walks held annually in more than 600 communities nationwide, with Taylor Wilson organizing the Midlands events.

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

WISHING MARK WILLIAMS GOOD LUCK IN HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, it is with a bittersweet heart today that I rise to recognize my current chief of staff, Mark Williams.

Mark will finish 16 years of service with the House of Representatives and be moving on to the private sector. He has been my chief for 4½ years. He served, faithfully, Todd Rokita, Sam Johnson, and myself. He is one of those quiet professionals who makes this place work.

He is a consummate professional, and I am a better Member of Congress because of his wise counsel, his advice,

his hard work, and his dedication to my team and our team.

I wish he and his wife, Noel; son, Nolan; and daughter, Katherine all the best and Godspeed in this next endeavor. They will be missed. Although we won't see them on a day-to-day basis, they are still a part of Team Conaway and also my family.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Mark good luck. We love him.

WELCOMING CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION WINNER CINDY LAM

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today, I welcome Cindy Lam to the Capitol. Cindy is the winner of Pennsylvania's 15th Congressional District Congressional Art Competition.

The annual art competition organized by the Congressional Institute showcases the artwork of high school students from across every congressional district in the country.

Cindy just finished up her sophomore year at DuBois Area Senior High School earlier this month. Her artwork entitled "Self" is a prism-colored pencil drawing.

Cindy's artwork was selected, by an independent panel of judges, from 68 entries, which is one of the largest groups of students to participate in the 15th District's Congressional Art Competition. All the winning pieces will be displayed for the year in the Cannon tunnel, where they will be viewed by Members of Congress, staff, and many visitors of the Capitol every day.

Today, Cindy is participating in a reception where she and fellow winners from across the country will be honored for their talented work.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Cindy and all the students who participated in the competition.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1500

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of North Carolina) at 3 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Miss Kaitlyn Roberts, one of his secretaries.