

Mr. DEUTCH. Madam Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 549, the Venezuela TPS Act.

The situation in Venezuela is dire. It is outrageous, Madam Speaker, that some in this Chamber would blame the horrific situation in Venezuela on the people of Venezuela. It is the Maduro regime that is committing horrific human rights abuses.

People are being killed and tortured. The media has been censored. Opponents of the regime have been imprisoned. The economy is failing. Food is scarce. Essential medicines cannot be found.

The mass corruption and poverty have forced more than 4 million people to flee the country for their lives.

I have witnessed desperate Venezuelans crossing the border into Colombia in need of food. I spoke with families who traveled hours and hours to Cucuta for one meal for their children. I saw warehouses filled with food and humanitarian assistance that Maduro refuses to allow in to help his people.

The dreadful living conditions, extreme violence, and persecution warrant extending TPS to Venezuelans living in the United States.

We must stand with the Venezuelan people, the legitimate government of President Juan Guaido, and the return of freedom and democracy. For right now, passing this bill will ensure Venezuelans in the U.S. are protected from being deported to life-threatening conditions.

Madam Speaker, this bill will save lives. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL. Madam Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Florida has 6 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Virginia has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. CLINE. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY), my colleague.

Mrs. MURPHY. Madam Speaker, I support this bipartisan bill to extend temporary protected status to Venezuela.

There are over 400,000 Venezuelans living in the United States, and more than half live in Florida. About 200,000 of these men and women would receive TPS if this bill becomes law. They could work legally, pay taxes, and contribute to our economy for a period of time, without living in fear of deportation.

Venezuela is in absolute crisis, and making Venezuelans in the U.S. go home right now is immoral. In many cases, it could be a death sentence.

Requiring people who have sought refuge in America to return to a failed state violates our core values as a nation.

Let me be clear: Passing TPS is a critical step, but it seeks to treat the

symptom of a disease rather than trying to cure the disease itself. The disease is the cruel, undemocratic, and incompetent regime of Nicolas Maduro.

For Venezuela to prosper and for the U.S. to protect its national security, the Maduro regime must go. America should work with its allies in the region and use all elements of our national power to support the Venezuelan patriots who are fighting to reclaim their country from the regime that has destroyed it.

Then, and only then, will Venezuela be sufficiently stable and safe so these proud Venezuelans can return to the country they love.

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

As was said earlier, there are very few detained noncriminal Venezuelans with removal orders, and there is no mechanism currently in place for directly removing aliens to Venezuela.

Madam Speaker, we stand with the people of Venezuela in their fight against the socialist regime of Nicolas Maduro.

We recognize that only through change in leadership and a change in direction will Venezuela change course and begin to rebound, in terms of adopting economic reforms and abandoning the socialist policies of the Maduro regime.

We stand with the people, and we stand ready to embrace the newly elected President, should he take control of the country.

But this bill, H.R. 549, is a bill that is simply not appropriate for the circumstances right now. This broken TPS system that we have would not be sufficient to accommodate the hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans who would seek to use it.

Suffice it to say, it is similar to helping people by throwing them a raft full of holes.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 549, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In response to Mr. CLINE's concern, once again, TPS is the law of the land. It is under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act. All we are asking is to place Venezuela as a country that is designated under TPS in this bill.

We are talking about people who are suffering. We cannot send them back to a humanitarian emergency.

We wrote a letter to the Trump administration, asking them to grant TPS for Venezuelans. They have the ability to do so at the administrative level right now, but they have refused. They say they are supportive of Venezuelans, but I seriously question that when they disagree with the importance of granting TPS for the thousands of Venezuelans living in this country today. We cannot send them back to a brutal regime, to a regime that is actually killing its own citizens.

I would like to express my support for H.R. 549. There is, as I mentioned, widespread poverty and shortages of food and water. The government is in disarray, and we can't wait any longer. We have to help our Venezuelan brothers and sisters in the United States, and this bill accomplishes just that.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support H.R. 549. We must do it, "lo tenemos que hacer." This is the moment.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 549, as amended.

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. BROOKS of Alabama. Madam 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.

□ 1815

HONORING AMERICAN VETERANS IN EXTREME NEED ACT OF 2019

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2938) to exempt from the calculation of monthly income certain benefits paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2938

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 "Honoring American Veterans in Extreme Need Act of 2019" or the "HAVEN Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF CURRENT MONTHLY INCOME.

Section 101(10A) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

"(B)(i) includes any amount paid by any entity other than the debtor (or in a joint case the debtor and the debtor's spouse), on a regular basis for the household expenses of the debtor or the debtor's dependents (and in a joint case the debtor's spouse if not otherwise a dependent); and

"(ii) excludes—

"(I) benefits received under the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 301 et seq.);

"(II) payments to victims of war crimes or crimes against humanity on account of their status as victims of such crimes;

"(III) payments to victims of international terrorism or domestic terrorism, as those terms are defined in section 2331 of title 18, on account of their status as victims of such terrorism; and

"(IV) any monthly compensation, pension, pay, annuity, or allowance paid under title

10, 37, or 38 in connection with a disability, combat-related injury or disability, or death of a member of the uniformed services, except that any retired pay excluded under this subclause shall include retired pay paid under chapter 61 of title 10 only to the extent that such retired pay exceeds the amount of retired pay to which the debtor would otherwise be entitled if retired under any provision of title 10 other than chapter 61 of that title.”.

SEC. 3. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CLAY). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

The overriding principle of the bankruptcy system is to give people who are overwhelmed with unmanageable debt a fresh start through meaningful financial relief.

The Bankruptcy Code, either directly or indirectly, affects millions of Americans, and all types of businesses, from large to small.

The system is supposed to work for everyone, from consumer debtors and small business owners, to family farmers, servicemembers, and veterans, and give them a new pathway to economic prosperity. But as we have heard during a recent oversight hearing held by the Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial, and Administrative Law, the bankruptcy system is not working.

In light of these concerns, the House Judiciary Committee unanimously passed four bipartisan pieces of legislation to address this concern. These include H.R. 2938, the Honoring American Veterans in Extreme Need Act of 2019, or the HAVEN Act. This legislation, which has been championed by my colleague on the committee, Congresswoman LUCY MCBAATH, addresses a fundamental unfairness in current bankruptcy law that affects veterans receiving disability benefits.

Although Social Security benefits are not treated as income for purposes of the Bankruptcy Code’s means test, veterans’ disability benefits do con-

stitute income under this test, even though, much like Social Security, these benefits are a lifeline to many of its recipients and are otherwise protected from seizure by creditors.

By counting such benefits as income, many veterans become ineligible for the more immediate discharges available under Chapter 7 and, instead, they are steered into Chapter 13, which requires a debtor to make payments to creditors pursuant to a 3- to 5-year plan before he or she can receive a discharge.

H.R. 2938 corrects this obvious inequity. It would treat certain veterans’ disability benefits paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense the same as Social Security payments under the Bankruptcy Code’s means test.

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

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

I speak in support of the bill, and I want to thank the gentleman from Rhode Island for his leadership on this issue.

We should all honor and support America’s veterans and their families. The HAVEN Act does that by making sure disability and death benefits received by veterans and their families receive special protection during the difficult process of bankruptcy.

I also want to thank the gentlewoman from Georgia for her leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. MCBAATH), the author of the legislation.

Mrs. MCBAATH. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to bring the HAVEN Act to a vote on the House floor today; and I thank Chairman NADLER, our subcommittee chair; Mr. CICILLINE, my Republican cosponsor; Mr. STEUBE, and all the cosponsors who supported the expeditious passage of this bill. I want to thank the veterans and the advocates for putting their support behind this legislation as well.

I introduced the HAVEN Act to support veterans facing significant financial hardship. No one wants to turn to bankruptcy. It is a path toward debt relief that carries serious financial consequences.

But it is an important option for those with the most serious financial circumstances, and we must make sure our bankruptcy system is serving our veterans. These servicemembers deserve an opportunity to get back on their feet with dignity.

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I would simply state that the HAVEN Act makes the Bankruptcy Code work better and more fairly for our Nation’s veterans and those who depend on them; so I encourage my colleagues to support the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass the HAVEN Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2938, 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.

NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVISTS DEBT RELIEF EXTENSION ACT OF 2019

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3304) to exempt for an additional 4-year period, from the application of the means-test presumption of abuse under chapter 7, qualifying members of reserve components of the Armed Forces and members of the National Guard who, after September 11, 2001, are called to active duty or to perform a homeland defense activity for not less than 90 days, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3304

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 “National Guard and Reservists Debt Relief Extension Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVISTS DEBT RELIEF AMENDMENT.

Section 4(b) of the National Guard and Reservists Debt Relief Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-438; 122 Stat. 5000) is amended by striking “11-year” and inserting “15-year”.

SEC. 3. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.