

This is a guy who promised to get things done. This project, I can tell you firsthand, was not moving anywhere until Mr. BUCSHON took the lead. This is why I am proud to be able to recognize him now and thank him very much for his support of this bill.

Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON).

Mr. BUCSHON. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to rise today in support of H.R. 3245, the Restore the Harmony Way Bridge Act.

The Harmony Way Bridge is a local landmark and was an engineering marvel when it opened in 1930. Throughout the 20th century, the bridge connected Posey County, Indiana, and White County, Illinois, creating an access point for commerce and recreation for Hoosiers from the New Harmony and surrounding communities, as well as those from White County, Illinois.

Unfortunately, in 2012, the bridge was permanently closed due to safety concerns related to structural issues. While the community has pushed to refurbish and reopen the bridge, until now, Federal law has stood in the way.

That is why the Restore the Harmony Way Bridge Act is important. It will convey the bridge to the Indiana and Illinois bridge authorities and remove the Federal conditions set out on the bridge.

I am glad to see this bill on the floor today, and I want to give thanks to all those who have helped in the effort. First, I thank Susie Davis, from my staff, for her work on this bill. I thank Lora Arneberg from the New Harmony, Indiana, community, whose hard work has been invaluable in promoting the bridge restoration.

I also thank Indiana State Senator Jim Tomes and State Representative Wendy McNamara for their efforts at the State level.

Furthermore, I thank my colleagues: Congressman SHIMKUS, Indiana Senators BRAUN and YOUNG, Illinois Senators DURBIN and DUCKWORTH, and all the members of the Indiana and Illinois House delegations, who are all cosponsors of this bill, for helping me lead this effort in Congress and finally solving this problem.

The Restore the Harmony Way Bridge Act will breathe life once more into the Harmony Way Bridge.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me on this monumental occasion and support this bill.

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

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, again, this is a bipartisan success story. This is an issue so many of us have worked hard on together. To see it pass today with the support of Republicans and Democrats is something that I can tell you a few years ago I didn't think would happen.

This is an opportunity, too, for me, again, to thank the hardworking people in Congressman SHIMKUS' office.

I remember learning about this project from my fellow staffer who lived right near the New Harmony Way Bridge, Holly Healy, who gave me the lowdown on why it was important to pass this legislation. That was back in 2003.

I am proud to thank Holly today for her dedication and the hard work that she has done on behalf of Congressman SHIMKUS over the years. Today is the day we finally get to make this happen so that bridge can be repaired and that bridge can be reopened.

Madam Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I urge that the House do support and pass this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. TORRES of California). 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. 3245.

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.

POST-DISASTER ASSISTANCE ONLINE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1307) to provide for an online repository for certain reporting requirements for recipients of Federal disaster assistance, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1307

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 "Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act".

SEC. 2. SUBPAGE FOR TRANSPARENCY OF DISASTER ASSISTANCE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF REPOSITORY FOR REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the head of each covered Federal agency, shall establish a subpage within the website established under section 2 of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note) to publish the information required to be made available to the public under this section.

(b) SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Not later than 30 days after the end of a calendar quarter, each covered Federal agency that made disaster assistance available to an eligible recipient during such quarter shall, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, make available to the public on the

subpage established under subsection (a) the information described in subsection (c), and ensure that any data asset of the agency is machine-readable.

(c) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—The information described in this subsection is, with respect to disaster assistance provided by the covered Federal agency—

(1) the total amount of disaster assistance provided by the agency during such quarter;

(2) the amount of disaster assistance provided by the agency that was expended or obligated to projects or activities; and

(3) a detailed list of all projects or activities for which disaster assistance dispersed by the agency was expended, obligated, or used, including—

(A) the name of the project or activity;

(B) a description of the project or activity;

(C) an evaluation of the completion status of the project or activity;

(D) any award identification number assigned to the project;

(E) the Catalog for Disaster Assistance number assigned by the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(F) the location of the project, including ZIP codes; and

(G) any reporting requirement information being collected by a covered Federal agency with respect to that agency's disaster assistance.

(d) GUIDANCE.—Each covered Federal agency, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Secretary of the Treasury, shall issue such guidance as is necessary to meet the requirements of this Act.

(e) AGREEMENT WITH PRIVATE ENTITY.—The Director, if necessary for purposes of transparency, may enter into an agreement with a private entity, including a nonprofit organization, to develop the subpage required under this section.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act, the following definitions apply:

(1) COVERED FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term "covered Federal agency" means—

(A) any agency providing assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.);

(B) the Small Business Administration; and

(C) the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(2) DISASTER ASSISTANCE.—The term "disaster assistance" means any funds that are made available by the Federal Government in response to a specified natural disaster, including—

(A) any assistance provided by the Administrator of the Small Business Administration as a result of a disaster declared under section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b));

(B) any assistance provided by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for—

(i) activities authorized under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, and economic revitalization in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a major disaster declared pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.); and

(ii) flood insurance coverage provided under the National Flood Insurance Program pursuant to the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.); and

(C) any assistance provided under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

(3) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—The term "eligible recipient"—

(A) means any entity that receives disaster assistance directly from the Federal Government (including disaster assistance received through grant, loan, or contract) other than an individual; and

(B) includes a State that receives disaster assistance.

(4) SPECIFIED NATURAL DISASTER.—The term “specified natural disaster” means—

(A) a fire on public or private forest land or grassland described in section 420 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187);

(B) a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5170);

(C) an emergency declared by the President under section 501 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5191); and

(D) any other natural disaster for which a disaster declaration is made by the Federal Government.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) 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 in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1307.

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 support of H.R. 1307, the Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act, introduced by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).

When a major disaster strikes, the American people should know how and where their disaster funds are spent without wading through reams of inscrutable government paperwork.

H.R. 1307 would simplify the data collection process for Federal disaster recovery projects and activities by establishing an online repository to which agencies could submit information on projects and spending.

In order to increase transparency to the public, the bill would also create a page on USASpending.gov for the public to track agency disaster recovery activities and the amount of assistance expended, on a quarterly basis.

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Federal agencies need to be accountable to the victims of disasters so that they can have peace of mind when they are at their most vulnerable.

I strongly support the bill, and I urge my colleagues to join me.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1307, the Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act, is going to improve our

oversight of Federal disaster assistance and projects.

By increasing the accountability and transparency in Federal spending following disasters, this bill is going to help ensure that funds are invested more wisely and better able to help Americans who are trying to recover and rebuild their lives.

H.R. 1307 is going to require various agencies that offer disaster assistance to publicly report data on disaster spending and obligations. It is critical, as we continue to work to reform and improve our disaster response and recovery programs, that we have the most accurate data available. That is important for our oversight, as well as for the taxpayers in holding agencies accountable.

I want to thank the Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management Subcommittee Ranking Member, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. PETERS, for their work on this legislation. I encourage my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER).

Mr. ROUZER. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their support and work on this bill as well.

I certainly rise today in support of this measure sponsored and introduced by my friend and colleague, Mr. MEADOWS, also from North Carolina. We know firsthand just how badly this legislation is needed.

In my district alone, which has been a victim of two major hurricanes in the last 3 years, Matthew in 2016, and Florence just this past fall, after both hurricanes, Congress appropriated disaster aid funding for rebuilding and recovery efforts. To date, very little of that money, quite honestly, has been channeled to the State.

Taxpayers in North Carolina and across the rest of the country deserve to know how the Federal Government is spending these recovery funds, or whether they are being spent at all.

More transparency means more accountability and making this disaster funding data available online to the public will help ensure that these dollars that Congress has appropriated are being spent in a timely and effective manner.

As we continue to recover from Hurricanes Matthew and Florence, and prepare for yet another hurricane season this year, it is more important than ever that we make sure we are getting the most out of every single dollar that Congress appropriates. This bill will go a long way in helping to ensure just that.

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

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As has been demonstrated by the last four bills, the Transportation Committee is doing good work, and we produced four good, bipartisan bills. I am very proud of that.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1307, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I want to thank the gentleman from Missouri. He has been a great partner in these and other ongoing efforts by the committee.

I urge the positive adoption of this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a cosponsor to H.R. 1307—the Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act, which establishes a centralized location where Federal Agencies will publish information on disaster assistance.

This legislation requires reports every 3 months, that are available to the public regarding the total amount of assistance provided by agencies, the amount of funding that obligated, and where the funds are going, including all projects or activities that received funding.

To date, roughly 32 percent, or \$13.6 billion, of all funding, \$42 billion dollars, Congress has appropriated to Puerto Rico has actually been received by the communities and families who are trying to rebuild their lives on the island.

With this legislation my constituents will know exactly how much funding is still expected to come to Puerto Rico and to their communities. They will be able to see the process that agencies are making for timely dispersals of funding and holding them accountable.

Again, I want to thank Rep. PETERS and Ranking Member MEADOWS again for their work on this Disaster recovery related bill.

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. 1307.

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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Lasky, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2249. An act to allow the Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration on the date of enactment of this Act to continue to serve as such Deputy Administrator.

STOPPING BAD ROBOCALLS ACT

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the