

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.

HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2019

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2852) to amend the National Housing Act to authorize State-licensed appraisers to conduct appraisals in connection with mortgages insured by the FHA and to require compliance with the existing appraiser education requirement, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2852

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 “Homebuyer Assistance Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. APPRAISAL STANDARDS FOR SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING MORTGAGES.

(a) CERTIFICATION OR LICENSING.—Paragraph (5) of section 202(g) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1708(g)) is amended—

(1) by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following new subparagraph:

“(A)(i) in the case of an appraiser for a mortgage for single-family housing, be certified or licensed by the State in which the property to be appraised is located; and

“(ii) in the case of an appraiser for a mortgage for multifamily housing, be certified by the State in which the property to be appraised is located; and”;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, which, in the case of appraisers for any mortgage for single-family housing, shall include completion of a course or seminar that consists of not less than 7 hours of training regarding such appraisal requirements that is approved by the Course Approval Program of the Appraiser Qualifications Board of the Appraisal Foundation or a State appraiser certifying and licensing agency”.

(b) COMPLIANCE WITH VERIFIABLE EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS; GRANDFATHERING.—Effective beginning on the date of the effectiveness of the mortgagee letter or other guidance issued pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, notwithstanding any choice or approval of any appraiser made before such date of enactment, no appraiser may conduct an appraisal for any mortgage for single-family housing insured under title II of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1707 et seq.) unless such appraiser is, as of such date of effectiveness, in compliance with—

(1) all of the requirements under section 202(g)(5) of such Act (12 U.S.C. 1708(g)(5)), as amended by subsection (a) of this section, including the requirement under subparagraph (B) of such section 202(g)(5) (relating to demonstrated verifiable education in appraisal requirements); or

(2) all of the requirements under section 202(g)(5) of such Act as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than the expiration of the 240-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall issue a mortgagee letter or other guidance that shall—

(1) implement the amendments made by subsection (a) of this section;

(2) clearly set forth all of the specific requirements under section 202(g)(5) of the National Housing Act (as amended by subsection (a) of this section) for approval to conduct appraisals under title II of such Act for mortgages for single-family housing, which shall include—

(A) providing that the completion, prior to the effective date of such mortgagee letter or guidance, of training meeting the requirements under subparagraph (B) of such section 202(g)(5) (as amended by subsection (a) of this section) shall be considered to fulfill the requirement under such subparagraph; and

(B) providing a method for appraisers to demonstrate such prior completion; and

(3) take effect not later than the expiration of the 180-day period beginning upon issuance of such mortgagee letter or guidance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. SAN NICOLAS) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Guam.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material thereon.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 2852, the Homebuyer Assistance Act of 2019, would make a commonsense update to FHA’s requirements governing appraisals, to allow licensed appraisers to conduct appraisals for FHA-backed mortgages.

The current requirement for all FHA loans to utilize a certified appraiser is simply outdated as it was put into place at a time when there were no minimum Federal standards for State licensure of appraisers, leaving concerns about consistency and competency across States. Now that we do have minimum standards for licensure, FHA’s certification requirement is not only out of date and out of alignment with Fannie and Freddie, it is also creating market pressures for lenders to require certified appraisers for all loans, even if they are not FHA loans, just in case the mortgage switches to an FHA loan midway through the process. This, in turn, makes it harder for licensed appraisers to obtain work at a time when certain areas are experiencing appraiser shortages and when we are already struggling to recruit new appraisers effectively.

There is simply no sound policy rationale to explain why licensed appraisers that are perfectly qualified to conduct appraisals for GSE loans are not qualified to conduct appraisals for FHA loans.

This bill is supported by a broad coalition of not just appraisal industry

groups but also lenders and housing advocacy groups that recognize that this is an unnecessary barrier.

I thank Mr. SHERMAN for introducing this legislation and the Republican cosponsor, Mr. DUFFY, for his support for this important bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to vote “yes,” and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2852, the Homebuyer Assistance Act of 2019.

As my friend from Guam just explained, unfortunately, there are two different standards between the regular government-sponsored enterprises that finance homes and the Federal Housing Administration, FHA. Today, FHA requires certified appraisers. This bill changes it to certified or licensed appraisers, just like the other government-sponsored enterprises, to allow the entire pool of appraisers in a given area to be allowed to be used to appraise homes. As my friend from Guam explained, there are appraiser shortages in many areas around the country, so this will, I think, be very helpful.

This bill also requires a minimum amount of training that is required by The Appraisal Foundation or State licensing agencies in order to be an appraiser that can appraise on FHA transactions.

These changes, I think, will help appraisers, and it will help make sure that there is a quality pool of appraisers regardless of whether somebody has a regular government-sponsored enterprise or an FHA loan.

Mr. Speaker, we are excited to support this. This is bipartisan. I support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Guam for yielding.

I would like to thank our colleague from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) for working with me on this bill, the Homebuyer Assistance Act of 2019. He has worked hard to ensure that this is a collaborative and bipartisan process.

I would also like to thank the chair of our committee, the gentlewoman from California, and her staff for their assistance with this bill and her support in bringing the bill forward.

There is no more important day in the economic life of a family than the day that they buy a home, and some 83 or 84 percent of those with FHA financing are purchasing their first home. Appraisers play an important role in the process.

This bill would change the rules a bit for FHA appraisers so as to bring them in line with the rules we already have for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which are the larger, federally controlled entities engaged in guaranteeing or financing homes, and it will deal with

the shortage of certified appraisers that we are experiencing in parts of the country.

Let me point out that this bill deals only with single-family homes. You could make the argument, Mr. Speaker, that you should have a certified appraiser in dealing with complex commercial, industrial, and multifamily properties. This bill focuses on single-family homes.

The bill has broad support of both consumer advocacy organizations and industry stakeholders. To name a few, the Homebuyer Assistance Act is supported by the Center for Responsible Lending, The Appraisal Institute, the National Association of Realtors, the Credit Union National Association, and the Independent Community Bankers of America.

This bill will make it easier for home buyers to buy a home with Federal Housing Administration mortgages by expanding the number of appraisers that are allowed to do the appraisals of those homes.

I am pleased to say that in the other body, Senators THUNE and TESTER have introduced a parallel piece of legislation, a bipartisan piece of legislation, and I look forward to putting this bill on the President's desk.

As other speakers have pointed out, including the gentleman from Guam, until 2010, there were no nationwide standards for licensed home appraisers. But since 2010, we have minimum Federal education, experience, and examination requirements set by the Appraiser Qualifications Board, so there is no reason at all to require that certified appraisers be involved, and it is entirely appropriate to have either certified or licensed appraisers.

This fix will help first-time home buyers. As I pointed out, over 83 percent of FHA home purchase mortgages are being made to first-time home buyers, and over one-third of all FHA loans were obtained by minority households.

The process of purchasing a home is already difficult enough for first-time home buyers. We should not have the additional challenge of finding a certified appraiser.

We have a real interest in making sure the FHA process is one that works well just as the process works for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac by allowing either licensed or certified appraisers.

As I have pointed out, this bill applies only to single-family homes, duplexes, and, I believe, R4 properties. It does not deal with complex commercial, multifamily, and industrial properties.

I am pleased to say that with the support of all of our colleagues on the committee, this bill was approved by voice vote at the Financial Services Committee. I was there on July 11; there was not one dissenting voice raised.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we can repeat that success again here on the floor, so I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this bill.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by thanking the gentleman from California for a bipartisan bill. I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin, SEAN DUFFY, from our side, the lead Republican on this bill.

This is a bill that will get more appraisers in the pool to help people who want to buy homes that are financed by the FHA.

Mr. Speaker, it is a win-win, and it is a bipartisan bill. We urge its support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I too thank the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for bringing this legislation forward and for the support of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY).

This bill removes unnecessary barriers to the home-buying process, which will help millions of Americans over time.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important piece of legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Guam (Mr. SAN NICOLAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2852, 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. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. 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.

STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT IN RURAL HOUSING PRESERVATION ACT OF 2019

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3620) to provide rental assistance to low-income tenants in certain multifamily rural housing projects financed by the Rural Housing Service of the Department of Agriculture, and to develop and implement a plan for preserving the affordability of rural rental housing, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3620

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 "Strategy and Investment in Rural Housing Preservation Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. PERMANENT ESTABLISHMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION PROGRAM.

Title V of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C. 1471 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 545. HOUSING PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION PROGRAM.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall carry out a program under this section for

the preservation and revitalization of multifamily rental housing projects financed under section 515 or both sections 514 and 516.

"(b) NOTICE OF MATURING LOANS.—

"(1) TO OWNERS.—On an annual basis, the Secretary shall provide written notice to each owner of a property financed under section 515 or both sections 514 and 516 that will mature within the 4-year period beginning upon the provision of such notice, setting forth the options and financial incentives that are available to facilitate the extension of the loan term or the option to decouple a rental assistance contract pursuant to subsection (f).

"(2) TO TENANTS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—For each property financed under section 515 or both sections 514 and 516, not later than the date that is 2 years before the date that such loan will mature, the Secretary shall provide written notice to each household residing in such property that informs them of the date of the loan maturity, the possible actions that may happen with respect to the property upon such maturity, and how to protect their right to reside in federally assisted housing after such maturity.

"(B) LANGUAGE.—Notice under this paragraph shall be provided in plain English and shall be translated to other languages in the case of any property located in an area in which a significant number of residents speak such other languages.

"(c) LOAN RESTRUCTURING.—Under the program under this section, the Secretary may restructure such existing housing loans, as the Secretary considers appropriate, for the purpose of ensuring that such projects have sufficient resources to preserve the projects to provide safe and affordable housing for low-income residents and farm laborers, by—

"(1) reducing or eliminating interest;

"(2) deferring loan payments;

"(3) subordinating, reducing, or reamortizing loan debt; and

"(4) providing other financial assistance, including advances, payments, and incentives (including the ability of owners to obtain reasonable returns on investment) required by the Secretary.

"(d) RENEWAL OF RENTAL ASSISTANCE.—When the Secretary offers to restructure a loan pursuant to subsection (c), the Secretary shall offer to renew the rental assistance contract under section 521(a)(2) for a 20-year term that is subject to annual appropriations, provided that the owner agrees to bring the property up to such standards that will ensure its maintenance as decent, safe, and sanitary housing for the full term of the rental assistance contract.

"(e) RESTRICTIVE USE AGREEMENTS.—

"(1) REQUIREMENT.—As part of the preservation and revitalization agreement for a project, the Secretary shall obtain a restrictive use agreement that obligates the owner to operate the project in accordance with this title.

"(2) TERM.—

"(A) NO EXTENSION OF RENTAL ASSISTANCE CONTRACT.—Except when the Secretary enters into a 20-year extension of the rental assistance contract for the project, the term of the restrictive use agreement for the project shall be consistent with the term of the restructured loan for the project.

"(B) EXTENSION OF RENTAL ASSISTANCE CONTRACT.—If the Secretary enters into a 20-year extension of the rental assistance contract for a project, the term of the restrictive use agreement for the project shall be for 20 years.

"(C) TERMINATION.—The Secretary may terminate the 20-year use restrictive use agreement for a project prior to the end of