

After the NTSB investigation, they found that we have got to find a better way of communicating to airmen under the NOTAM or, Notice to Airmen, alerts. So in direct response to what we have seen from the NTSB and in direct response to what we have seen in this incident, what this does is it brings together a group of experts in this field to ensure that we can find a better way to apply lessons learned to make sure that we get better and to make sure that these close calls do not happen again.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this legislation. I want to reiterate the great thanks that I have to my friend from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER) for leading this and Congressman DESAULNIER from California for working together in a bipartisan way to ensure that we are applying lessons learned. We are applying common sense. And that we are ensuring the safety of air passengers across the United States and the globe.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I want to thank Chairman DEFAZIO and Ranking Member GRAVES for their great leadership on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

I am pleased to rise in support of my bipartisan legislation that improves the safety of air travel. I would also like to thank my colleague, Mr. DESAULNIER, for his support and leadership on this legislation as well.

Notice to Airmen, or NOTAMs, are extremely important to safety in our skies. NOTAMs are critical as they relay safety information to pilots that allow them to understand the possible hazards and conditions of airports and runways before actually getting to the destination. The current system simply is not working as well as it should. NOTAMs are often buried in lengthy reports conflating important safety information with more common alerts. These inefficiencies have the potential to create life-threatening situations.

My bill creates a task force at the FAA with important input from safety experts and industry professionals to address what changes need to be made to NOTAMs to make air travel even safer than it already is.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on future legislation that directly helps the American people, and I urge support for my bipartisan bill, the Notice to Airmen Improvement Act.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, just in closing, once again, I want to thank the bipartisan work on this legislation from Mr. STAUBER and Mr. DESAULNIER. I want to thank the full committee Ranking Member SAM GRAVES and Mr. DEFAZIO, the chairman, for all working together.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this important legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I regret that Representative DESAULNIER couldn't be here today because he partnered with Representative STAUBER on this legislation. He has been very concerned and has been raising this issue with me repeatedly because of the incident at San Francisco and general concerns he had about runway intrusions and other problems. So he is on an airplane, as we speak, flying here, hopefully, safely. That is unfortunate since he won't be here to actually get credit on the floor, but I want to extend that to him.

I want to thank Ranking Member GRAVES for his support on this and the other Ranking Member GRAVES for his support on this and Representative LARSEN who is probably also on an airplane somewhere. It is rare that I would be here on a Monday, but the harbor maintenance bill attracted me to be here.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that this be adopted, and I urge a “yes” vote. This is one more little bit of an addition, or a major addition, to our safety culture in aviation in this country with the largest and most complex airspace in the world, and this is a necessary step to make it safer.

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

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. 1775.

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.

TRANSPARENCY IN FEDERAL BUILDINGS PROJECTS ACT OF 2019

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2502) to amend title 40, United States Code, to require certain prospectuses for public buildings to be made publicly available, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2502

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 “Transparency in Federal Buildings Projects Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF BUILDING PROJECT INFORMATION.

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

“SEC. 3318. AVAILABILITY OF FEDERAL BUILDING PROJECT INFORMATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, and, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis thereafter, the Administrator shall make publicly available on a subpage of the

website of the General Services Administration all prospectuses submitted pursuant to sections 3307 and 3316, and associated information subject to the following requirements:

“(1) The Administrator shall maintain such information in an easily accessible and readable, organized, downloadable, and searchable format.

“(2) The Administrator shall ensure the information is current and prospectuses and associated information updated on a regular basis.

“(3) The information required under this section shall be inclusive for a period of not less than 10 years.

“(4) The information shall include—

“(A) the last date on which the relevant webpage was updated;

“(B) approval dates of respective authorizing resolutions by each committee of jurisdiction, if applicable;

“(C) copies of respective committee of jurisdiction resolutions authorizing such prospectuses, as appropriate;

“(D) cross-references to any resubmitted or amended prospectuses and associated resolutions; and

“(E) such other information as determined by the Administrator.

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

“(1) PROSPECTUS.—The term ‘prospectus’ means prospectuses, building surveys, and fact sheets submitted to the committees of jurisdiction pursuant to sections 3307 and 3316.

“(2) COMMITTEES OF JURISDICTION.—The term ‘committees of jurisdiction’ means the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate.

“(3) ASSOCIATED INFORMATION.—The term ‘associated information’ means resolutions approved by the committees of jurisdiction and other information as required pursuant to subsection (a).”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters for chapter 33 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“3318. Availability of Federal building project information.”

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. 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. 2502.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in strong support of H.R. 2502, the Transparency in Federal Buildings Projects Act of 2019, introduced by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER).

It is simple, but it is important. It is also common sense and contributes to government transparency.

Mr. Speaker, you know that the Federal Government through the GSA is

the largest lessor or owner of commercial office space in the United States of America.

The program can use some improvement, and this will help shine a light on some of the issues and concerns we have as we look for some reforms in the way we acquire property in the most cost-effective manner for the American taxpayer. Sometimes GSA does things that make little or no sense when they get into lease agreements, like they did with the Department of Transportation, a beautiful new building. We are now going to buy the building for the second time, essentially, by having paid for the lease for a number of years. These things can be done more effectively and more efficiently, and this legislation will help set a path to that kind of cost savings.

It requires the General Services Administration to publish on its website all prospectuses for leasing, design, or construction activity; update the information quarterly, and maintain the information for no less than 10 years in a readable, accessible, and—this is key—a searchable form, not just post it and it is like, oh, sorry, there is no index. It has to be searchable.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good-government bill designed to provide taxpayers with information regarding the GSA's leasing, design, and construction projects for Federal agencies.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2502, the Transparency in Federal Buildings Projects Act. As the chairman just mentioned, it is a commonsense piece of legislation.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER) for his leadership on this bill. I am pleased that I am actually a cosponsor of this particular legislation.

H.R. 2502 does provide for greater transparency to the taxpayers on the public buildings projects and leases. It actually would require the General Services Administration, or what we refer to as GSA, to include on its websites all project proposals and associated information and submit that to Congress under the Public Buildings Act for approval.

This is a simple action, but it can have a significant impact on improving the accountability and transparency that all American taxpayers yearn for.

While GSA includes some information on its website, that information provided is somewhat limited. This bill would ensure that taxpayers know what projects have been proposed, how much they will cost, and which have been actually approved.

In 2013 the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure began filling this void by posting this information on its website. Since that time the committee's website has become a critical resource not only for the public

and private sector but also for Federal agencies. However, to ensure the continuity and that this information continues to be regularly updated and maintained, this bill would place that responsibility on GSA.

□ 1615

As I mentioned, this is a common-sense, straightforward bill. I thank Chairman DEFAZIO and Ranking Member GRAVES for their willingness to address efficient and effective government agency.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER), the sponsor of this particular piece of legislation.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES), the ranking member, and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) for their work on the issue, and Chairman DEFAZIO for his support.

The General Services Administration is required to submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works prospectuses that contain information on proposed public projects for committee consideration.

In recent years, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, as has been mentioned, has posted this information about these projects on its website to provide access to the public and private entities. While the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has become a resource for the public, and even for Federal agencies, this bill, the Transparency in Federal Buildings Projects Act, would require the GSA to make publicly available on its website all prospectuses and associated information, pursuant to the Public Buildings Act.

This sensible reform will ensure that taxpayers have more information about how their hard-earned dollars are being spent and managed. The bill would strengthen transparency and accountability in Federal construction, renovation, and leasing projects, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I am assuming that the gentleman opposite is. As we close, I thank the chairman once again for his support, and I thank the sponsor of this particular bill.

We do believe that GSA, in posting this information in a searchable fashion, will provide for a more open and transparent government.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support that, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing, again, I congratulate the gentleman from Alabama

(Mr. PALMER) for proposing this new transparency legislation. I am certain, in the end, it is ultimately going to save the taxpayers money and lead to GSA, perhaps, performing in a more efficient manner.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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. 2502.

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.

VETERAN TREATMENT COURT COORDINATION ACT OF 2019

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 886) to direct the Attorney General to establish and carry out a Veteran Treatment Court Program, as amended.

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

H.R. 886

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 "Veteran Treatment Court Coordination Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that veterans treatment courts are a successful program aimed at helping veterans charged with non-violent crimes receive the help and the benefits for which the veterans are entitled.

SEC. 3. VETERAN TREATMENT COURT PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, in coordination with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Attorney General shall establish and carry out a Veteran Treatment Court Program to provide grants and technical assistance to court systems that—

(1) have adopted a Veterans Treatment Court Program; or

(2) have filed a notice of intent to establish a Veterans Treatment Court Program with the Secretary.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Veterans Treatment Court Program established under subsection (a) is to ensure the Department of Justice has a single office to coordinate the provision of grants, training, and technical assistance to help State, local, and Tribal governments to develop and maintain veteran treatment courts.

(c) PROGRAMS INCLUDED.—The Veterans Treatment Court Program established under subsection (a) shall include the grant programs relating to veterans treatment courts carried out by the Attorney General pursuant to sections 2901, 2991, and 3021 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10581, 10651, and 10701) or any other provision of law.

(d) REGULATIONS.—The Attorney General shall promulgate regulations to carry out this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) each will control 20 minutes.