

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. 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.

SYNTHETIC OPIOID EXPOSURE PREVENTION AND TRAINING ACT

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4739) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to protect U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers, agents, other personnel, and canines against potential synthetic opioid exposure, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4739

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 “Synthetic Opioid Exposure Prevention and Training Act”.

SEC. 2. PROTECTION AGAINST POTENTIAL SYNTHETIC OPIOID EXPOSURE WITHIN U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 211 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 415 the following new section:

“SEC. 416. PROTECTION AGAINST POTENTIAL SYNTHETIC OPIOID EXPOSURE.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall issue a policy that specifies effective protocols and procedures for the safe handling of potential synthetic opioids, including fentanyl, by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers, agents, other personnel, and canines, and to reduce the risk of injury or death resulting from accidental exposure and enhance post-exposure management.

“(b) TRAINING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Together with the issuance of the policy described in subsection (a), the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall require mandatory and recurrent training on the following:

“(A) The potential risk of opioid exposure and safe handling procedures for potential synthetic opioids, including precautionary measures such as the use of personal protective equipment during such handling.

“(B) How to access and administer opioid receptor antagonists, including naloxone, post-exposure to potential synthetic opioids.

“(2) INTEGRATION.—The training described in paragraph (1) may be integrated into existing training under section 411(l) for U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers, agents, and other personnel.

“(c) PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND OPIOID RECEPTOR ANTAGONISTS.—Together with the issuance of the policy described in subsection (a), the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall ensure the availability of personal protective equipment and opioid receptor antagonists, including naloxone, to all U.S. Customs and

Border Protection officers, agents, other personnel, and canines at risk of accidental exposure to synthetic opioids.

“(d) OVERSIGHT.—To ensure effectiveness of the policy described in subsection (a)—

“(1) the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall regularly monitor the efficacy of the implementation of such policy and adjust protocols and procedures, as necessary; and

“(2) the Inspector General of the Department shall audit compliance with the requirements of this section not less than once each year for the five years after the date of the enactment of this section.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 415 the following new item:

“Sec. 416. Protection against potential synthetic opioid exposure.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CLARKE of New York. 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 this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be speaking on behalf of my bill, the Synthetic Opioid Exposure Prevention and Training Act.

We are at a crucial time in our fight against the opioid crisis in our Nation. Less expensive and extremely lethal synthetic, chemically laced, and derived drugs, rather than first-generation opioid pharmaceuticals, now drive the addiction and overdoses that cripple and break the hearts of the neighbors and families of our communities.

We must respond to this changed dynamic in the ongoing opioid crisis with legislation targeted at reducing harm and saving lives.

Most of these deadly synthetics, such as fentanyl, are imported into our country. This bill addresses a specific threat by seeking to eliminate the risk of accidental exposure to synthetics for the workers screening packages and cargo entering our country.

Much of this screening occurs only a few miles from the neighborhoods I represent in New York’s seaports and at the JFK International Airport’s International Mail Facility, the largest mail-screening facility in America, where, every day, we are finding fentanyl hidden in packages from places like China.

Whether cargo and packages are screened by CBP personnel near my district or thousands of miles away, this bill is directly relevant to the

lives of my constituents. Unfortunately, these dangerous and illegally manufactured substances get distributed in communities like mine. This is, of course, true for every district across this country.

The universal threat posed by synthetic opioids is reflected by my Democratic and Republican colleagues joining together as cosponsors of this bill. I am grateful for their support and hope that we can continue to fight the opioid crisis as a united and determined legislative body.

While there is much left to do on this front, H.R. 4739 takes crucial steps toward enhancing our ability to shut down the importation of synthetic opioids. It requires that training for CBP personnel on synthetics be regularly reviewed and updated to respond to the developing threat environment. This includes making sure workers know how to properly handle synthetic opioids and how to administer the reversal drugs, which can save lives if accidental exposure occurs.

Furthermore, my bill requires CBP to ensure that these reversal drugs are in hand at facilities where opioid screenings happen. Fentanyl, according to the CDC, is up to 100 times more potent than morphine or even heroin. Even the smallest dose can kill unless drugs like naloxone are available and quickly administered.

If the workers screening packages for substances like fentanyl don’t have the training and tools they need to be confident they can do their job safely, more of these deadly opioids will make their way into our communities, and more families will be added to the opioid crisis list of victims.

I ask each of my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, the Synthetic Opioid Exposure Prevention and Training Act.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,

Washington, DC, November 20, 2019.

Hon. BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: In recognition of the desire to expedite consideration of H.R. 4739, the Synthetic Opioid Exposure Prevention and Training Act, the Committee on Ways and Means agrees to waive formal consideration of the bill as to provisions that fall within the rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The Committee on Ways and Means takes this action with the mutual understanding that we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues within our jurisdiction. The Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of

letter on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 4739.

Sincerely,

RICHARD E. NEAL,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, November 21, 2019.

Hon. RICHARD NEAL,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN NEAL: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 4739, the "Synthetic Opioid Exposure Prevention and Training Act." The Committee on Homeland Security recognizes that the Committee on Ways and Means has a jurisdictional interest in H.R. 4739, and I appreciate your effort to allow this bill to be considered on the House floor.

I concur with you that forgoing action on the bill does not in any way prejudice the Committee on Ways and Means with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future, and I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will include our letters on H.R. 4739 in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of this bill. I look forward to working with you on this legislation and other matters of great importance to this nation.

Sincerely,

BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman.

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 4739 because of the valuable impact it will have on Customs and Border Protection officer safety.

The opioid epidemic continues to wreak havoc on communities across the Nation. It touches people from every age group, race, class, gender, and background. Parents are losing their children; children are losing their parents. It is devastating.

Illegally manufactured opioids from China and Mexico are pouring into the United States through our mail system and across our borders. The first line of defense against these illicit substances is the brave men and women of Customs and Border Protection. They work tirelessly every day to protect us, and we must make sure they have the equipment and training they need to do it safely.

The safe handling of opioids by CBP law enforcement officers is crucial, as just 2 milligrams can be lethal. H.R. 4739 requires the Commissioner of CBP to establish and regularly update a policy for the safe handling of synthetic opioids by officers, agents, canines, and other personnel.

The bill also requires that protective equipment and opioid receptor antagonists be made available for all relevant CBP employees and canines. When it comes to officer safety, we should never consider ourselves too careful.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make the Congresswoman aware that I have no further speakers on this bill, and I am prepared to close.

I urge the adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, transnational criminal organizations are constantly developing new forms of synthetic opioids and new methods for smuggling these drugs into our country. To combat such activity, Congress must ensure that CBP officers serving on the front lines are protected from accidental exposure.

This bill is one step of many that must be taken to slow the opioid crisis and end the devastation brought to our communities by this epidemic. By protecting the CBP officers and agents who operate as our frontline defenders against the importation of synthetics, this bill ensures that they will remain safe and equipped to respond to the constantly changing threat posed by synthetic opioids.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4739, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4739.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. 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.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY MENTOR-PROTEGE PROGRAM ACT OF 2019

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4727) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a mentor-protégé program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4727

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 "Department of Homeland Security Mentor-Protégé Program Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY MENTOR-PROTEGE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle H of title VIII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 451 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 890B. MENTOR-PROTEGE PROGRAM.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Department a mentor-protégé program (in this section referred to as the 'Program') under which a mentor firm enters into an agreement with a protégé firm for the purpose of assisting the protégé firm to compete for prime contracts and subcontracts of the Department.

"(b) ELIGIBILITY.—The Secretary shall establish criteria for mentor firms and protégé firms to be eligible to participate in the Program, including a requirement that a firm is not included on any list maintained by the Federal Government of contractors that have been suspended or debarred.

"(c) PROGRAM APPLICATION AND APPROVAL.—

"(1) APPLICATION.—The Secretary, acting through the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization of the Department, shall establish a process for submission of an application jointly by a mentor firm and the protégé firm selected by the mentor firm. The application shall include each of the following:

"(A) A description of the assistance to be provided by the mentor firm, including, to the extent available, the number and a brief description of each anticipated subcontract to be awarded to the protégé firm.

"(B) A schedule with milestones for achieving the assistance to be provided over the period of participation in the Program.

"(C) An estimate of the costs to be incurred by the mentor firm for providing assistance under the Program.

"(D) Attestation that Program participants will submit to the Secretary reports at times specified by the Secretary to assist the Secretary in evaluating the protégé firm's developmental progress.

"(E) Attestations that Program participants will inform the Secretary in the event of change in eligibility or voluntary withdrawal from the Program.

"(2) APPROVAL.—Not later than 60 days after receipt of an application pursuant to paragraph (1), the head of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization shall notify applicants of approval or, in the case of disapproval, the process for resubmitting an application for reconsideration.

"(3) RESCISSION.—The head of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization may rescind the approval of an application under this subsection if it determines that such action is in the best interest of the Department.

"(d) PROGRAM DURATION.—A mentor firm and protégé firm approved under subsection (c) shall enter into an agreement to participate in the Program for a period of not less than 36 months.

"(e) PROGRAM BENEFITS.—A mentor firm and protégé firm that enter into an agreement under subsection (d) may receive the following Program benefits:

"(1) With respect to an award of a contract that requires a subcontracting plan, a mentor firm may receive evaluation credit for participating in the Program.

"(2) With respect to an award of a contract that requires a subcontracting plan, a mentor firm may receive credit for a protégé firm performing as a first tier subcontractor or a subcontractor at any tier in an amount equal to the total dollar value of any subcontracts awarded to such protégé firm.

"(3) A protégé firm may receive technical, managerial, financial, or any other mutually agreed upon benefit from a mentor firm, including a subcontract award.

"(4) Any other benefits identified by the Secretary.

"(f) REPORTING.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the head of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization shall submit to the Committees on Homeland Security and Small Business of the House of Representatives a report that—

"(1) identifies each agreement between a mentor firm and a protégé firm entered into under this section, including number of protégé firm participants that are—

"(A) small business concerns;