

Defense and the House Armed Services Committee for their support and analysis in making this a quality measure for us to consider.

All Americans deserve to be treated with dignity and respect when faced with repaying a debt. This is especially true for our servicemembers who fight for our freedoms every day.

This bill will provide important safeguards, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. DEAN), the sponsor of this important legislation.

Ms. DEAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the good gentleman from Guam for yielding.

I rise in support of H.R. 5003, the Fair Debt Collection Practices for Servicemembers Act.

Every day we are reminded of the significant sacrifices our troops make to protect us, and as Members of Congress we have a responsibility to protect those who protect us.

The Fair Debt Collection Practices for Servicemembers Act works to live up to this responsibility by addressing abusive debt collection practices specifically targeting servicemembers.

According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, approximately 40 percent of the complaints filed by servicemembers concern debt collection, as compared to 26 percent by nonservicemembers. These debt collection practices are manipulative and have negative career implications for soldiers and their families.

Egregious practices include: Contacting the servicemembers' chain of command in order to extract payment, threatening punishment through the Uniform Code of Military Justice, threatening rank reduction, or threatening to revoke a soldier's security clearances.

Unfortunately, these practices do not stop with the servicemember. Some debt collectors also target military spouses, unfairly burdening our military families who sacrifice so much for us.

These tactics are egregious and must stop. Our servicemen and -women make extraordinary sacrifices for all of us. The last thing they need is harassment from debt collectors who take advantage of their service, which is why I am pleased to rise in support of this bill and to have had the chance to work with the entire Financial Services Committee, the chair, the ranking member, and the members.

Specifically, my bill amends the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act and prohibits a debt collector from communicating with a servicemember's chain of command or department for the purpose of threatening to have their rank reduced or threatening to revoke security clearance.

This legislation will help ensure that our military families are not unneces-

sarily targeted for their service to our country and shield them from bad practices. I am in awe of our servicemembers' spirit of service. We must do our part to service them.

I thank my colleagues, Representative STIVERS and Representative DAVIDSON, a fellow member of the Financial Services Committee and an Army veteran with years of service, for co-sponsoring and supporting this bill. I urge all Members to support it.

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I think that was an excellent description of why this bill is needed. We honor the 1 percent of Americans that go out, put on the uniform, and serve the other 99 percent of Americans, those who work for our freedoms every day around the world, 24/7. This is one of the least things we can do to make servicemembers' lives and the lives of those military families at the margin better.

I thank my friends for bringing this bill. I appreciate its sponsor.

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

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I thank Representative DEAN, Chairwoman WATERS, and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their good work and collaboration on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, 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. 5003, 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.

Ms. DEAN. 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.

ENSURING CHINESE DEBT TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2020

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5932) to ensure greater transparency about the terms and conditions of financing provided by China to member states of the international financial institutions, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5932

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 "Ensuring Chinese Debt Transparency Act of 2020".

SEC. 2. ENSURING CHINESE DEBT TRANSPARENCY.

(a) UNITED STATES POLICY AT THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.—The Sec-

retary of the Treasury shall instruct the United States Executive Director at each international financial institution (as defined in section 1701(c)(2) of the International Financial Institutions Act) that it is the policy of the United States to use the voice and vote of the United States at the respective institution to seek to secure greater transparency with respect to the terms and conditions of financing provided by the government of the People's Republic of China to any member state of the respective institution that is a recipient of financing from the institution, consistent with the rules and principles of the Paris Club.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—The Chairman of the National Advisory Council on International Monetary and Financial Policies shall include in the annual report required by section 1701 of the International Financial Institutions Act—

(1) a description of progress made toward advancing the policy described in subsection (a) of this section; and

(2) a discussion of financing provided by entities owned or controlled by the government of the People's Republic of China to the member states of international financial institutions that receive financing from the international financial institutions, including any efforts or recommendations by the Chairman to seek greater transparency with respect to the former financing.

(c) SUNSET.—Subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall have no force or effect after the earlier of—

(1) the date that is 7 years after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) 30 days after the date that the Secretary reports to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate that the People's Republic of China is in substantial compliance with the rules and principles of the Paris Club.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. SAN NICOLAS) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) 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.

Mr. Speaker, I very much support H.R. 5932, the Ensuring Chinese Debt Transparency Act of 2020, which seeks to reinforce U.S. policy at the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the regional development banks to press for disclosure of the amount and terms of China's bilateral lending operations abroad.

According to the International Monetary Fund, opaque loans from China's many lending institutions, especially those associated with China's Belt and Road Initiative are not only putting many emerging market and developing countries at risk of debt distress, but also complicate the IMF's ability to

monitor domestic, regional, and global financial risks associated with this debt.

While the ability to accurately identify the amount and terms of Chinese lending in developing countries is essential to better debt risk management, surveillance work, and asset risk pricing, it is important to understand that greater transparency itself is only a starting point.

In order to help low-income, emerging market, and fragile and conflict-affected states meet development goals while maintaining debt sustainability, the United States should be increasing its commitments to the multilateral development banks to offer these countries better options than China does, to provide additional financing on concessional terms of which China does very little.

Let me add that one argument for China's ongoing borrowing from the World Bank is that it allows a broader public global good to be imported into the Chinese system, things like international environmental and societal standards, high standards of transparency and open procurement processes, strong governance programs, and respect for the importance of global economic cooperation.

However, there is very little evidence that World Bank lending to China has had any such effect on Chinese behavior with respect to its own development financing abroad, and this is a serious problem.

H.R. 5932 helps us to address this problem. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the legislation, H.R. 5932, which I introduced recently, and I was fortunate to have the Speaker's assistance on this, my friend from Missouri, Mr. CLEAVER, in designing this legislation.

It is just one issue that relates to a complex set of issues around China's access to the World Bank and China's engagement in the world as a creditor.

But H.R. 5932, Ensuring Chinese Debt Transparency Act, would require the Secretary of the Treasury to instruct the U.S. executive director at each of the international financial institutions that it is U.S. policy to ensure greater transparency in Chinese Government lending to countries that are also beneficiaries of those international financial institutions.

Specifically, this bill would require the Secretary to report annually to Congress on the progress in advancing this policy, and secondly, lending to foreign countries by entities owned or controlled by the Chinese Government.

As we know, the international financial institutions include the International Monetary Fund, the IMF, the World Bank, and the regional development banks. The IMF lends to foreign countries in order to resolve balance-of-payments crises, while the develop-

ment banks finance projects with the long-term aim of alleviating poverty.

With the growth of China's global presence, there is concern that the developing nations that borrow from Beijing will become overburdened, forcing them to be rescued by the IMF or complicating the development banks' ability to properly underwrite loans for new projects.

Specifically, the Belt and Road Initiative is of significant concern. The Chinese Belt and Road Initiative is a global development strategy adopted by the Chinese Government in 2013. It involves infrastructure development and investments in nearly 70 countries and international organizations in Asia, Europe, and in Africa.

To date, according to Morgan Stanley's estimates, the Belt and Road Initiative has committed more than \$200 billion with estimates that China may invest up to \$1.3 trillion by 2027. Other estimates have the current number closer to \$400 billion. Either number dwarfs the post-World War II Marshall Plan, which, measured in today's dollars, would be \$130 billion.

However, unlike the Marshall Plan, Belt and Road Initiative financing can make underwriting assistance difficult or even unworkable for developing countries as the initiative has opaque financing terms. China simply doesn't report on this lending in any systematic way, and there is no evidence that China is adopting international transparency standards from the multilateral development banks or engages in best practices to prevent debt traps, corruption, or poor construction outcomes.

China needs to be held accountable to ensure that it is not taking advantage of vulnerable economies in these countries. In my view, the World Bank and the IMF must know the terms and conditions of opaque Chinese lending, what those entail, when they are considering a sovereign loan to a country that goes to the World Bank or the IMF for assistance.

On a trip to the Republic of Congo back in 2017, I witnessed this firsthand when I saw the burdens and impact of Chinese lending on that oil-based economy. Now, the Republic of Congo finds itself in the hands of the IMF in negotiating with them for a payments loan.

This legislation will contribute to that overall accountability by seeking to secure greater transparency consistent with the principles of the Paris Club, a group of global creditors, including the United States, who find workable solutions for nations currently in debt.

In theory, many of the underlying policies in this legislation should already be practiced; however, due to political insensitivities, inertia, and other concerns, that doesn't always happen. This legislation will underscore the United States' leadership and help develop a global multilateral effort to ensure more scrutiny for China. As China becomes a major creditor na-

tion, it should be held to a high standard.

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

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In conclusion, I would say that this is the way to build a partnership between the multilateral countries of the world that support the World Bank and the IMF and have China have more scrutiny on their opaque terms and conditions, which in turn should allow better outcomes for our developing nations around the world, less chance of falling into a debt trap.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. I thank my friend from Missouri for his assistance and my friend from Guam for managing the bill. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The fact that China continues to borrow from the World Bank affords us an opportunity to expect much more from China in return, including an insistence on transparency in China's bilateral financing operations, greater adherence by China to anticorruption and export credit international standards, and finding coordinated and sustainable solutions to countries experiencing balance of payment difficulties.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, which underscores that far greater transparency is the first essential step China must take if it is to be a responsible member of the global financial community.

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 Guam (Mr. SAN NICOLAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5932, 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. HILL of Arkansas. 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.

□ 1730

YES IN MY BACKYARD ACT

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4351) to require certain grantees under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to submit a plan to track discriminatory land use policies, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows: