

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

I have said before and I will say it again: I don't think there is a more fierce advocate for consumers than the gentlewoman who chairs the subcommittee. She has, once again, brought solid legislation to the floor. We appreciate her and her team working with us to make this bipartisan.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1430

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN). Again, I thank him for all that he has done as our Assistant Speaker and all that he has done for our Indian Tribes.

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support the Fraud and Scam Reduction Act, which includes my bipartisan Protecting Indian Tribes from Scams Act that I introduced alongside Representative GIANFORTE, to address the rise of scams during this deadly pandemic.

As our Nation grieves the loss of more than 247,000 Americans to COVID-19, and millions of families experience financial hardship, it is nothing short of reprehensible that scammers are preying on the most vulnerable amongst us.

Fraud reports to the Federal Trade Commission, which had been steady at 770,000 per quarter over the past 4 years, jumped to 1.1 million this summer, including an increase of 144 percent coinciding with the pandemic. That demonstrates why we must come together to protect Americans against fraud and theft.

Nationwide, predatory schemes have already cost Americans over \$1.5 billion in stolen assets so far in 2020. Scammers have targeted the \$1,200 economic impact payments, peddled false treatments for COVID-19, and attempted to sell defective personal protective equipment at a time when the fears and confusion over COVID-19 remain high.

These scams have put elders', military servicemembers', and families' health and finances at risk, and it is time for Congress to put an end to the despicable practice. This bipartisan effort will help Congress take additional measures to tackle this threat and better understand the scale of this crisis.

As COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations rise in New Mexico and across the Nation, I will continue working, on a bipartisan basis, to provide additional relief and alleviate the financial pressures that all New Mexicans are facing.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to protect our communities against scams and fraud.

I thank the chairman for his work. I thank Chairwoman SCHAKOWSKY for her work. And I thank Chairman and current Ranking Member GREG WALDEN for his work, his commitment to his constituents, his service to the people of America.

Mr. Speaker, GREG is a good friend. It has been fun to spar with him. It has been fun to work with him. I look forward to his public service after he retires from the U.S. House of Representatives.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New Mexico. I think it is worth pointing out that this probably won't make a lot of coverage in national media, but he chaired the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee when I chaired the National Republican Congressional Committee. We are of different parties and sort of different regions, in a way; we are both westerners. But once again, we are working together for the American people, and we do a lot of that around here. Especially on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, we have a fine record of working things out. We have 16 of these bipartisan things on the floor today, and I just wish our constituents saw more of this.

Mr. Speaker, I wish the gentleman from New Mexico well in his endeavors across the Capitol. He will bring a breath of fresh air over there, and I know his commitment to his State and all who reside in it.

I hope our paths do continue to cross in some manner. I have enjoyed serving with the gentleman from New Mexico.

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY), who is a member of our committee.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen an increase in scams targeting older Americans. These scammers promise everything from COVID cures and take-home testing kits to insurance and stimulus funds.

That is why I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2610, the Fraud and Scam Reduction Act. This bill, championed by my friend, Representative LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER, includes my bill and Representative MARSHALL's bill, the Protecting Seniors from Emergency Scams Act. This bipartisan legislation ensures that the FTC makes available resources for older Americans about the type and number of scams targeting their region. It also requires an FTC report to Congress on that information so we can prevent seniors from falling victim to scams during future pandemics.

While we may be closer to a vaccine, this will likely only increase the number of these diabolical scams. Let's arm older Americans with the right information to prevent themselves from falling victim. Let's make locally spe-

cific resources available to caregivers already working around the clock. Let's help the FTC win this fight against scammers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 2610.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from Illinois for her support of this legislation and her work on it.

Once again, I urge passage of the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would also urge passage of this bill, which, as we mentioned, includes a lot of other bills as well and makes up an important package dealing with fraud and scams.

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 New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2610, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to establish an office within the Federal Trade Commission and an outside advisory group to prevent fraud targeting seniors and to direct the Commission to study and submit a report to Congress on scams targeting seniors and Indian tribes, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMBATING PANDEMIC SCAMS ACT OF 2020

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6435) to direct the Federal Trade Commission to develop and disseminate information to the public about scams related to COVID-19, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6435

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 "Combating Pandemic Scams Act of 2020".

SEC. 2. INFORMATION ABOUT SCAMS RELATED TO COVID-19.

(a) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As expeditiously as possible after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission, in consultation with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Postmaster General, the Chief Postal Inspector, and the Internet Crime Complaint Center, shall develop and disseminate information to the public about scams related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Commission shall—

(A) include—

(i) information regarding mail, telemarketing, and internet fraud and illegal

robocalls related to COVID-19 that identifies the most common scams; and

(ii) information regarding where and how to report instances of scams related to COVID-19, including instructions on how to file a complaint with the appropriate law enforcement agency;

(B) disseminate information under such paragraph in a manner that prioritizes, and that is easily accessible by and user-friendly to, senior citizens and people with infirmities and disabilities;

(C) disseminate information under such paragraph on an internet website of the Commission that serves as a source of information for the public about scams related to COVID-19; and

(D) regularly update the information developed and disseminated under such paragraph to keep pace with the changing nature of scams related to COVID-19.

(b) DATABASE.—As expeditiously as possible after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall, in consultation with State law enforcement agencies, the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and other relevant Federal officials, establish a comprehensive national database, either within or separate from the Consumer Sentinel Network, that tracks instances of scams related to COVID-19.

(c) COMMISSION DEFINED.—In this section, the term “Commission” means the Federal Trade Commission.

SEC. 3. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. 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. 6435.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H.R. 6435, the Combating Pandemic Scams Act. This bipartisan bill was introduced by Representatives CARTER, KUSTER, HUDSON, and BLUNT ROCHESTER. I thank them for introducing this measure to help stem the tide of scams and fraud during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In July, the Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce held a hearing on increased risks during the COVID-19 pandemic. During that hearing, we heard about all the ways scammers are taking advantage of the

ongoing national emergency for personal gain. Whether phishing for stimulus checks or fundraising for fake charities, scammers are exploiting Americans already struggling financially and diverting resources away from where they could provide desperately needed help.

One new scam that has emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic is the contact tracing scam. This scam, which involves fraudsters posing as contact tracers from public health departments, is exacerbating the public health crisis by undermining one of the most effective tools we have to keep communities safe.

Instead of documenting the spread of the virus or alerting those who might have been exposed, these scammers are only interested in duping Americans into turning over sensitive personal information or downloading malicious software on their device.

H.R. 6435 will establish a comprehensive national database of scams related to COVID-19 so that the public can differentiate the real contact tracers from the imposters and learn how to identify other scams on their own. It will also require the Federal Trade Commission to inform the public about mail, telemarketing, and internet scams related to COVID-19, including how to report such scams to the appropriate agency.

Mr. Speaker, as the pandemic continues, we will continue to see more scams unfold, unfortunately. But this bill will make sure that the American public is regularly updated about scams so they can protect themselves and their loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important bill. It is going to protect consumers during this pandemic, and I call on all of my colleagues to support it.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6435, the Combating Pandemic Scams Act of 2020. I thank Representative BUDDY CARTER from Georgia, along with Representatives KUSTER, BLUNT ROCHESTER, and HUDSON, for their work and their leadership on, again, another bipartisan piece of legislation.

As we all know, we are in the midst of this horrible pandemic. COVID-19 has forced millions of Americans to isolate and rely on the internet to work, learn, receive healthcare, stay connected to loved ones, and so much more. Unfortunately, bad actors come out of the gutters wherever they live to seek to exploit times of crisis and target our most vulnerable.

During this pandemic, we have seen scammers attempt to exploit consumer fear and confusion by falsely promising additional stimulus checks, illegitimate lifesaving medications, and fake avenues to save businesses or pay employees—all scams.

H.R. 6435 aims to protect Americans, especially senior citizens and people with disabilities, from malicious and

deceptive scams. The bill directs the Federal Trade Commission to prioritize informing the most vulnerable among us about mail, telemarketing, and internet scams, all related to COVID-19.

Importantly, the bill would provide Americans with the tools they need to educate and protect themselves against these very scams. This legislation will be even more important as we work together to ensure that the COVID vaccine is delivered in a safe and timely fashion.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see H.R. 6435 under consideration today. I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER), the sponsor of the bill.

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6435, the Combating Pandemic Scams Act of 2020.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to help introduce this bipartisan bill with my colleague BUDDY CARTER in April, and I appreciate the support of our colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle. I would like to take a moment to commend BUDDY for his leadership on this important topic.

During these challenging times for our country, I have constantly been impressed by Americans' commitment to helping their neighbors pull through this crisis. Sadly, where many see an opportunity to lend a helping hand, others see a chance to make a quick buck.

Scammers have posed as medical researchers, offering opportunities to participate in clinical trials. They have attempted to sell nonexistent PPE. They have even tried to trick seniors into buying fake COVID-19 test kits. These shameful acts must not only be condemned, but Congress must take action to crack down on these scams and inform the American people of these devious efforts.

Our bipartisan legislation will help stop COVID scams by directing Federal agencies and departments to inform Americans about these criminal schemes so they can stay alert and keep themselves safe. By aggregating data and providing the public with information on mail, telemarketing, and robocall fraud schemes, Americans can defend themselves and their families.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is an important step forward, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), the coauthor of the bill who has been very active on many of these pieces of legislation.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my legislation, H.R. 6435, because of the positive impact it will have on the American people.

It has been no surprise that we have seen a rise in fraud and criminal activity as the Nation grapples with the pandemic response. In these difficult times, scammers have sought to take advantage of our fellow Americans. Whether it is elderly individuals being preyed upon by financial scammers or people ordering fake health products, there has been a number of scams facing our constituents.

That is why I introduced the Combating Pandemic Scams Act with my good friend, Congresswoman KUSTER, to address this issue.

This bill would direct the FTC, along with other Federal partners, to disseminate information about these scams to the public to better protect themselves. That information would be user-friendly, ensuring vulnerable populations, such as senior citizens and those with disabilities, would have the same amount of access. Ensuring people have the most up-to-date information on how to protect themselves is critical to getting through these trying times.

Federal agencies, such as the FTC, have been very active in going after these offenders who have targeted Americans during this pandemic. This bill will support those Federal efforts and help prepare Americans to help protect themselves from these scams.

The bottom line is, this is common-sense legislation to go after the people preying on our neighbors and communities.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their bipartisan support of this legislation and the committee staff for their work on getting this across the finish line.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation.

□ 1445

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), the chair of the subcommittee.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, here we have another great bipartisan bill that has come out of the committee I am so proud to chair, the Consumer Protection and Commerce Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee. I thank the authors of the legislation: Representatives CARTER, HUDSON, KUSTER, and BLUNT ROCH-ESTER.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a time of confusion and fear for many Americans, and scammers have noticed. Fraudsters have tried to steal stimulus checks and trick consumers with fake medical treatments and even vaccines. Seniors and those with disabilities are especially vulnerable.

This legislation will protect American consumers, especially our most vulnerable, by increasing public awareness of COVID-19 scams. It directs the Federal Trade Commission to develop and disseminate information to the public about scams related to COVID-19.

The FTC will also create a comprehensive national database that tracks the COVID-19 scams in consultation with the Attorney General and the HHS Secretary. This database will protect American consumers from malicious scams. Consumers will be armed with information about the pandemic scams and how to avoid those scams. So we must act now to prevent further harm to American consumers.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank our colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their work on this legislation. I urge its passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I also urge support for the 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 New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6435, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PANDEMIC EFFECTS ON HOME SAFETY AND TOURISM ACT

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8121) to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to study the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on injuries and deaths associated with consumer products, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8121

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Pandemic Effects on Home Safety and Tourism Act”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—COVID-19 HOME SAFETY

Sec. 101. Short title.

Sec. 102. Study and report on the effect of the COVID-19 public health emergency on injuries and deaths from consumer products.

TITLE II—PROTECTING TOURISM IN THE UNITED STATES

Sec. 201. Short title.

Sec. 202. Study and report on effects of COVID-19 pandemic on travel and tourism industry in United States.

TITLE I—COVID-19 HOME SAFETY

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “COVID-19 Home Safety Act”.

SEC. 102. STUDY AND REPORT ON THE EFFECT OF THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ON INJURIES AND DEATHS FROM CONSUMER PRODUCTS.

(a) **COVID-19 REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 3 months after the date of enactment of this section and every 3 months thereafter for

the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Consumer Product Safety Commission shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and make publicly available, a report on the effect of the COVID-19 public health emergency on injuries and deaths from consumer products.

(b) **CONTENTS OF REPORT.**—The report shall include the following:

- (1) Relevant data and statistics from—
 - (A) the data sources of the Commission;
 - (B) other appropriate agencies;
 - (C) media reports;
 - (D) poison control centers, to the extent practical; and
 - (E) any other relevant data sources.

(2) An identification of trends in injuries and deaths from consumer products, comparing data from representative time periods before and during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

(3) An identification of subpopulations that have experienced elevated risk of injury or death from consumer products during the COVID-19 public health emergency, such as minorities, infants, people with disabilities, children, or the elderly.

(4) An identification of where most injuries or deaths from consumer products during the COVID-19 public health emergency are taking place, such as the type of building or outdoor environment.

(5) A specification about whether consumer products associated with a substantial number of injuries or deaths during the COVID-19 public health emergency are—

- (A) under recall;
- (B) subject to a voluntary consumer product safety standard; or
- (C) subject to a mandatory consumer product safety standard.

(6) An identification of emerging consumer products that are posing new risks to consumers.

(c) **COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY DEFINED.**—The term “COVID-19 public health emergency” means a public health emergency declared pursuant to section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d) as a result of confirmed cases of 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19), including any renewal thereof.

TITLE II—PROTECTING TOURISM IN THE UNITED STATES

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Protecting Tourism in the United States Act”.

SEC. 202. STUDY AND REPORT ON EFFECTS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY IN UNITED STATES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the United States Travel and Tourism Advisory Board and the head of any other Federal agency the Secretary considers appropriate, shall complete a study on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the travel and tourism industry, including various segments of the travel and tourism industry, such as domestic, international, leisure, business, conventions, meetings, and events.

(b) **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION.**—In conducting the study required by subsection (a) and the interim study required by subsection (e)(1), the Secretary shall consider—

(1) changes in employment rates in the travel and tourism industry during the pandemic period;

(2) changes in revenues of businesses in the travel and tourism industry during the pandemic period;

(3) changes in employment and sales in industries related to the travel and tourism industry, and changes in contributions of the travel and tourism industry to such related industries, during the pandemic period;