

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3830, 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.

USPS FAIRNESS ACT

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2382) to amend title 5, United States Code, to repeal the requirement that the United States Postal Service prepay future retirement benefits, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2382

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 “USPS Fairness Act”.

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF REQUIRED PREPAYMENT OF FUTURE POSTAL SERVICE RETIREMENT BENEFITS.

Subsection (d) of section 8909a of title 5, United States Code, is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure before us.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us, the U.S. Postal Service Fairness Act, which I am a very proud cosponsor, would make a small but very important change to help address the dire financial condition of the Postal Service.

Common law requires the Postal Service to prefund the healthcare costs of its future retirees decades into the future. We are aware of no other entity, public or private, that faces this type of onerous financial burden. This mandate has cost the Postal Service billions of dollars since it was first imposed 14 years ago. The Postal Service has not made a payment into this fund since 2012.

This bill won't solve all the Postal Service's financial problems. Eliminating the mandate will take some paper liabilities off the books of the Postal Service, but it will do nothing to improve its cash position.

Without major structural reforms, the Postal Service will run out of cash in about 4 years. At that point, it will not be able to pay its own workers, and mail delivery would simply cease.

The Postal Service has taken significant steps to control its costs, including shrinking its workforce by close to 300,000 employees over the past 20 years. Yet, it has incurred net annual losses for 13 straight years.

The Postal Service currently funds universal mail service to nearly 159 million delivery points solely through the sale of postage. It is required to expand its network to deliver mail to approximately 1 million new addresses every year, even as the volume of mail continues to decline by a projected 45 billion mail pieces over the next decade.

So while I support this bill, more must be done to stabilize the finances of this important American institution on which so much of our population relies.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform, and Congressman CONNOLLY in particular, is working on comprehensive legislation to do just that. We will continue to work on comprehensive legislation after this bill passes.

Finally, I thank my good friend, Mr. DEFAZIO, for his tireless, passionate advocacy for this bill. I also thank Mr. REED and Mr. FITZPATRICK, on the other side of the aisle, as well as Ms. TORRES SMALL, for all of their hard work.

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

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and rise in opposition to the bill. No one has invested more time than perhaps Mr. CONNOLLY or myself on postal reform. But I think it was Winston Churchill who said that no matter how beautiful the strategy, we must occasionally look at the results. And the results of this bill will do nothing to stop the post office from hemorrhaging money.

As we look at this prefunding—and I would agree with the gentlewoman—part of our solution, part of the bipartisan solution in the previous Congress, was to look at this prefunding issue and to try to address it. But to do it as a standalone bill, Mr. Speaker, is certainly not what the doctor ordered. Because even with this, the Postal Service continues to lose money each and every day.

I would say that if this was the bomb that solved their problem, it would have already been solved because they haven't been making the payments.

What the American people need to understand is, they are wanting relief from a payment that they are not mak-

ing, and it is going to make zero difference in terms of the viability of the Postal Service.

Now, we can all agree that there need to be major reforms, but this particular bill, and the way that it is being put forth, would actually hurt the potential progress we have in addressing real reforms. With that, I sadly rise in opposition to this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), the author of the legislation.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, in a Christmas Eve bill with no legislative consideration, an otherwise noncontroversial bill, a provision was stuck in to say that the Postal Service should prefund 75 years of health benefits for retirees.

Now, think about that. That means people who have not yet been born, who have not yet gone to work for the Postal Service for a career and then might retire, we are paying for their healthcare now. Name one other entity in the United States of America, corporate or government, that does anything like this. It is nuts. And it is a piggybank.

The money isn't being put into a trust fund to pay for their health insurance. It is going into the maw of the Treasury. Who knows where it goes. It maybe makes the debt look a little smaller. That was why President Bush pushed for it. But it is accounting for the majority of the losses at the Postal Service.

□ 1515

So, yes, this will help relieve pressure on the Postal Service and on rates. And I think there are a lot of Americans who would like not to see the postal rates keep going up.

Now, there are 300 bipartisan cosponsors. There aren't too many things around here these days like that because I think many people realize this doesn't make much sense.

And the Postal Service is a critical service. It is not a government-run business to make a profit. It is the U.S. Postal Service.

Star routes don't make money. If you represent a rural area, you can't make money out there. FedEx and UPS won't go out there. They get the Postal Service to take the stuff out there. If we dismantle the Postal Service, then everybody in rural America is out of luck.

And there are a whole heck of a lot of other people who are dependent upon this: newspapers, rural newspapers, small businesses.

Many years ago, when I first started working on this, I posted something on the website: Tell me if you need the Postal Service.

People from all the small towns all around my very large district said: I sell on eBay. That is how I make a living out here in Powers, Oregon, or in

other little places around my district. I couldn't afford UPS or FedEx. I get the one package price.

So this is critical.

And, every day, hundreds of thousands of our veterans get their drugs delivered by the United States Postal Service, many of them in rural areas, hard to serve, and, sure as heck, hard for them to get to the VA hospital or get into town.

So we need to stop burdening the Postal Service with something that makes no sense. Are there other things that need to be reformed? Yes.

But once we take this \$5 billion a year burden off them—they have already put \$50 billion into a theoretical account to pay for healthcare for future postal employees who haven't been born yet, who might work there, might retire some day, and might get health benefits. That is more than enough.

And, by the way, this doesn't score in any way. So that is why we have 300 bipartisan sponsors.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues at long last to undo this stupidity.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I love the passion. The only problem is it is misplaced.

I can tell you that, if this bill would truly solve the business model that the Postal Service has, I would rise and support it. If this is all we are going to do, hallelujah. Let's do it and get it done. But the gentleman is wrong. This does not solve the problem.

You can give them a pass on \$5 billion a year, and they are still losing money. That is the whole issue. That is the crux of the issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from North Carolina. I agree with my colleague from North Carolina, let us not confuse what we are talking about here today.

I very much appreciate the postal employees who deliver the mail to my house. When I go into a post office and need to mail things, they are wonderful people and give great service. That is not the issue here. The issue is: Are we going to fund, properly, the retirement and healthcare services?

I am not necessarily opposed to addressing the United States Postal Service's requirement to prefund its retiree health benefits. Doing so, though, in this manner would be disastrous for the American taxpayer. This bill's elimination of the prefunding requirement without instituting any reforms to tackle its fiscal status, as my colleague has said, would simply mean that Congress continues to play the game of kicking the can down the road.

The fact is that there is already a long history of public retirement accounts that have either dramatically cut retiree benefits or had to rely on a taxpayer bailout as a result of not fully prefunding their plans.

This is a snowball going down the hill that is going to pick up steam.

The only way to pay off the unfunded liabilities created by the U.S. post office retiree health benefits—without enacting cost-saving reform to the U.S. Postal Service, which this bill does not—would be a taxpayer bailout.

That is why President Trump's Task Force on the United States Postal System issued formal opposition to removing the prefunding requirement. To quote the task force: "The task force does not believe that this general policy should change or that the liability for USPS retiree health benefits should be shifted to the taxpayers."

Mr. Speaker, I agree, to be clear, this bill moves taxpayers one step closer to a bailout of the USPS, and we should oppose this change on the taxpayers' behalf.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the distinguished subcommittee chairman.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and distinguished chair of the Oversight and Reform Committee.

Boy, what you just heard from my friend from North Carolina couldn't be further from the truth. This is not a taxpayer bailout. Quite the opposite. It is exactly what Mr. DEFAZIO, my friend from Oregon, described.

This is righting a wrong Congress created in the dead of night in a lame-duck session in 2006 in putting a burden on the Postal Service no other entity on the planet is required to meet. And we have an obligation, having created that problem, to fix it. That is what we are trying to do with this bill.

It is not a panacea. That is why we are working on bipartisan legislation to have a comprehensive reform bill that will address a significant amount of time for the Postal Service to build a new business model.

My friend, my other friend from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS)—I was referring to the other North Carolinian—has been working diligently with us on a bipartisan basis for many years to try to find just the right fix. I am looking forward to that bipartisan solution.

But that doesn't mean we stop everything and fix nothing. This may not return the Postal Service to solvency, but it takes a liability off the books that is real, that hurts them, that makes it harder for them to recover and to figure out how to adjust to changes in technology and the marketplace, and that is why I support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to its passage on a bipartisan basis, and I hope that we will fold this bill, the concept of this bill, into a larger, more comprehensive bill. As the distinguished chairwoman said, we need a comprehensive approach to the Postal Service after we address and fix this problem that Congress created.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia, and I want to highlight his work on this particular issue, and I agree with him that this, ultimately, will be part of what has to be dovetailed into anything we do to fix the Postal Service.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) in the spirit of letting my colleagues express their full-throated support of this bill.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my good friend, Mr. MEADOWS. We have been working on issues like this relating to the long-term solvency of our Postal Service for many years, and I look forward to standing on this floor with him in the near future when we come up with a good, comprehensive solution that addresses issues like this.

I thank him for his leadership and his support of the Postal Service and the great postal workers who make up one of the greatest services that we have in our country.

Unfortunately, the Postal Service today is forced to play by a different set of rules, and those are unfair. This bill corrects this by repealing the 2006 mandate that the Postal Service prefund future retiree health benefits.

In 2006, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act mandated that the Postal Service prefund retiree health benefits decades in advance, something no other public or private enterprise is forced to do. Over the years, this mandate has caused severe cuts and damaged the Postal Service's ability to invest in even new delivery vehicles.

I have always been a steadfast supporter of the Postal Service and its workers. In fact, after speaking to many of the postal unions in my district, like the Letter Carriers and the Rural Letter Carriers, I proudly cosponsored this piece of legislation.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on this issue and other important pieces of legislature that impact our postal unions, such as opposing the privatization of the Postal Service and protecting the 6-day delivery, door-to-door service, and our rural post offices.

Mr. Speaker, we have to work together. We need to make sure that our Postal Service remains viable. I urge a "yes" vote on this bill, and I look forward to working with everyone in this institution in the future.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments, and I would also join him. We have got a number of great unions that I have had the privilege of getting to know over this time as we looked at comprehensive reform, and his acknowledging them and his willingness to look at something that actually solves the problem is to be applauded.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to

the gentlewoman from the great State of Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE).

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2382. This legislation is a positive first step—and I emphasize first step—to address a significantly more complex issue at hand: the financial solvency crisis plaguing the United States Postal Service.

After a 30-year career in the Postal Service—and I think I am the only member of Congress who is actually a letter carrier—I come to Congress with the intention of helping USPS return to a strong financial standing through legislative reform.

While decreased mail volume plays a role, there are other actions Congress must take to provide the Postal Service with the flexibility needed to reverse and mend the downward financial trend.

For the last few years, I have worked with several colleagues on the Oversight Committee, including Representatives CONNOLLY, LYNCH, MEADOWS, and the late, amazing Chairman Elijah Cummings, to introduce comprehensive postal reform.

As the House stands poised to pass H.R. 2382, I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on the committee to introduce a comprehensive postal reform package that will provide the Postal Service with the reform needed to help lessen the financial battle.

I want to thank Chairwoman MALONEY for her leadership on this issue, and I look forward to the continued work to build the Postal Service Fairness Act.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly support H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act. I have led, with my colleagues, this important legislation that ends the unfair prefunding mandate for the Postal Service and also solves the most pressing financing problem facing our letter carriers and post offices across the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the USPS is the only Government entity—the only one—which is mandated to prefund its retirees' health benefits. 100 percent of the Postal Service's financial losses over the past 6 years—100 percent—are directly due and linked to this requirement.

This is an outdated policy which has forced the Postal Service into a horrible financial position, which has prevented it from investing in resources that would benefit all of our communities, no matter where we live.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, this legislation has widespread support from the National Association of Letter Carriers, the American Postal Workers Union, and the National Postal Mail Handlers Union.

This bipartisan bill will restore USPS' financial health by shoring up

that funding and ensuring that it has the resources to improve the Postal Service for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation. This is the priority for our postal workers, in addition to 6-day delivery as well as door-to-door service. We have to get all three done for our postal workers, our letter carriers, and our post offices that serve all of our communities.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

□ 1530

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act.

The United States Postal Service is an essential part of American life. It was established more than 231 years ago and has delivered on its promise every one of those years.

Benjamin Franklin was the first Postmaster General in the United States. And they have—while I understand it is not an official slogan, I think we have all heard this: “Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed mission.”

So we know that with more than 100 billion pieces of mail delivered each year, and a 90 percent approval rating, that we must do all that we can to support them.

Today, Members of Congress are taking the important step to help support over seven million U.S. postal workers across the country.

Since 2006, U.S. postal employees have been forced to prefund retiree health benefits 75 years in advance, making them the only government agency that must prefund future employees that have not been born yet.

This ridiculous law has caused the U.S. Postal Service to lose billions of dollars each year and has caused postal employees' uncertainty in their work. This cannot continue.

So I agree with over 300 of my colleagues that we must reverse this absurd policy. The United States Postal Service Fairness Act will repeal the prefunding that is mandated and allow the United States Postal Service to return to its pay-as-you-go system as used before.

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

I appreciate all the points that my friends opposite are making. In fact, I have made some of the very same points when we talk about reform bills.

The problem is, all the wonderful things that they are talking about in this bill do not exist. They are not making the payments. They haven't made a payment since 2010.

So how does giving relief from a payment you are not making suddenly

make the Postal Service viable? It doesn't.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST), who will give you an opposing view from our side.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The United States Postal Service has a history as old as our Nation. Our Nation's Founders believed that it was so important that they put it in the Constitution and many people back home don't realize that. Of course, you know, that is the most quoted, least read document around here.

The rural communities in southern Illinois and across our country depend on the Postal Service. It is often the only means for small businesses to engage in commerce, and for rural residents to receive packages.

The Postal Service is facing many challenges, but it is taking several important steps to provide new services mandated by the modern economy. Unfortunately, it can't accomplish these reforms with one hand tied behind its back.

The Postal Service is the only entity with this requirement. I doubt that any Federal agency would be able to meet its goals and obligations to citizens and taxpayers if they were likewise required to prefund their health benefits.

The underlying legislation helps correct this. It does not impose additional costs on taxpayers, and it will help ensure the Postal Service can continue to serve our communities as it has since our Nation's founding.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this bill. I feel very strongly about this.

The United States Postal Service moves almost half the world's mail. It is the most popular Federal agency, highest ratings. And, in fact, if you look at the interaction that we have with postal workers, in my community and elsewhere, they are deeply beloved.

I had a father-in-law who was a postal worker. In the holiday season he was burdened down with cookies and fruitcake and brandy that was given to him by the people on his route.

What we have seen, unfortunately, since 2006, is part of an assault on the finest Postal Service in the world. You have heard it said before on the floor; this is the only—not just the only Federal agency, I don't think there is any entity in the United States that is required to prefund health benefits for people who haven't yet been born but might be employed 20, 30, 40 years from now. This is part of an effort on behalf of some who literally have a jihad against the U.S. Postal Service.

I had a session in my community 2 weeks ago where we heard about a bizarre experiment on casing mail, taking that away from the letter carriers,

and it has resulted in a serious disruption in our community by people who are disconnected from the actual service that is given.

Postal jobs are the best jobs in many rural and small American towns. And there are some who feel, well, they are paid too much. They have too generous benefits or retirement. That is hogwash.

They provide that foundation in much of rural and small-town America; a beloved service, a service that provides an essential connection for virtually the entire country, 6 days a week, and, in fact, if we get our act together, there is more benefit that can be provided.

Get rid of this stupid prefunding and give them more flexibility about the services they can provide. Why aren't we using the U.S. Postal Service to help us with the census? These people know who lives in the neighborhood. Why are we hiring temporary employees?

Why can't we use the Postal Service to deal with problems in the future, if we have an outbreak of an anthrax-sort of activity in terms of lethal threats. Use the Postal Service. Give them the flexibility to provide more service. Respect the men and women who work there, and stop this stupid effort to undercut the finest Postal Service in the world.

I appreciate the committee bringing this legislation forward. I appreciate the bipartisan support, and maybe it is time we get our act straight to help them fulfill their full potential.

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

I do need to correct a few things that the gentleman from Oregon just addressed. This is not—support or being against this bill is not an attack on the Postal Service.

I mean, there is no one who has invested more time—I can promise you, when I came to Congress, fixing the Postal Service was not on my bucket list. And as we have invested time, and I see my good friend, Mr. LYNCH, my good friend, Mr. CONNOLLY, let me just tell you, we have invested days, if not weeks and months, to try to address this.

But the gentleman from Oregon is just not correct. This particular bill, while it may be part of a solution, gives them no flexibility. It gives them no additional cash flow. They are still going to go out of business if we do not come together and get something worked out for all of us to make sure that, not only do we have a postal system that works, but one that is not a mere shadow of its former self.

I will say this: I want to make sure that my postal unions and all of those that are watching very intently, you have made an impact on this Member from North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, they have let me know exactly how important this is. And yet, at the same time, I am afraid I cannot support this bill because it does not do

what we need it to do, and that is, address the problem today. This just kicks the can down the road. And unfortunately, it doesn't even kick it down the road long enough to allow the postal workers to depend on the very system that employs them.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH), my good friend and colleague.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her kindness and the courtesy afforded to me.

I do want to say that, like some other Members in this Chamber, I think at one count, I had 17 of my relatives, including my mom, several of her sisters, two of my sisters, my brother-in-law, all my cousins, who worked for the United States Postal Service, sort of the family business.

And I do thank the gentleman from North Carolina. We spent, you know, days, if not weeks, if not months, arguing over the contours of this legislation.

I want to thank Mr. DEFAZIO. And I rise in strong support of his bill.

I also thank my colleague from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for his work on this as well. And our dear colleague, Elijah Cummings, who worked on this, put his heart and soul into finding a solution.

Look, I do agree with the gentleman from North Carolina's comments, that this does not solve everything. It does not. But it is an important element of a bill that we, Republicans and Democrats, passed out of committee unanimously, without any dissent in a previous session. So it is a very important element of what we are trying to do.

There is no dispute with the gentleman from Oregon's earlier remarks that we don't ask any other group within government to fund their retiree health benefits this way. This was an idea that, I think, came out of a time when, before email and before the use of social media, the volume of mail within the Postal Service being delivered every single day, could sustain the current configuration of retiree health benefits.

Those days are long gone, and we have to figure out a way that will keep the Postal Service viable going forward.

This does not solve everything but, boy, I will tell you, this solves a lot. It buys us time to craft those other pieces that need to come together as well.

So I would argue that we should not allow the perfect to be the enemy of the good. This is a solid change here.

This is something that I think people need to understand that what we are requiring of the Postal Service right now is that, when a new employee comes into the Postal Service, we have to set aside the money, on day one, for their eventual retirement; while every other collective bargaining agreement

and pension system periodically reassesses what the demands are as that person gets closer to retirement. That is the critical time to know whether or not there are sufficient resources and a guarantee that certain resources are there for that person to enjoy the retirement and the benefits and the health benefits that they have earned.

So I just ask my colleagues to vote in support of this bill. I support Mr. DEFAZIO's bill wholeheartedly, and I thank the Speaker for his courtesy.

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

I know that everybody is tuned in in their offices, paying attention to this unbelievable debate, and so for all of you that are tuned in on C-SPAN, and as we debate this, I think it is important that I share a couple of sentences from the U.S. Postal Service. So it is not from my colleagues opposite. It is not from my point of view; but this is what they have to say about this bill: "It would neither reduce the underlying RHB liability nor improve our cash flow or our long-term financial position. It would not impact the liquidity crisis that we have."

These are not my words, Mr. Speaker. These are the words of those that are closest to the financial responsibility, the Postal Service themselves.

So if the gentlewoman is prepared to close, I will just recommend to my colleagues a "no" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are further reminded to address their remarks to the Chair, not to a perceived viewing audience.

□ 1545

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 2382, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2382, the U.S.P.S. Fairness Act, introduced by my colleague, Representative PETER DEFAZIO of Oregon.

I'd like to commend Mr. DEFAZIO and the other bipartisan sponsors of this bill—Mr. REED of New York, Ms. TORRES-SMALL of New Mexico, and Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania—for their leadership in addressing the serious fiscal challenges facing the United States Postal Service. I'd also like to recognize the relentless and united effort on the part of our postal employee unions, management associations, and other stakeholders to advance this commonsense legislation.

With the support of over 300 bipartisan cosponsors, the U.S.P.S. Fairness Act would repeal a misguided provision in current law requiring the postal service to fully fund its health care costs for future postal retirees decades before it is necessary—that's an annual average cost of over \$5.5 billion dollars. This is a requirement that federal law does not impose on any other government agency—especially one that receives zero tax dollars and instead relies on the revenue generated by its own stamps, products, and services to fund its operations. It is no surprise that the postal service has not been able to make these exorbitant annual payments since 2011.

The elimination of the so-called “pre-funding mandate” is a sensible first step towards improving the financial viability of the postal service. This bipartisan bill should also guide our approach to developing comprehensive postal reform legislation going forward. In stark contrast to the more partisan and sweeping reform proposals that have been presented to our committee in recent years, H.R. 2382 will immediately place the postal service on more sound financial footing while preserving its core public service mission to “provide postal services to bind the nation together through the correspondence of the people.”

And contrary to the degradation of postal delivery services, or the wholesale privatization of the postal service itself, H.R. 2382 is the end product of bipartisan cooperation and the subject of broad consensus among our diverse postal stakeholders. As we develop additional postal reform legislation, it is imperative that we continue to identify fundamental and practical areas of agreement.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2382.

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. FOXX of North Carolina. 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.

FEDERAL RISK AND AUTHORIZATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2019

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3941) to enhance the innovation, security, and availability of cloud computing services used in the Federal Government by establishing the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program within the General Services Administration and by establishing a risk management, authorization, and continuous monitoring process to enable the Federal Government to leverage cloud computing services using a risk-based approach consistent with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 and cloud-based operations, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3941

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 “Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program Authorization Act of 2019” or the “FedRAMP Authorization Act”.

SEC. 2. CODIFICATION OF THE FEDRAMP PROGRAM.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 36 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new sections:

“§ 3607. Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the General Services Administration the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program. The Administrator of General Services, in accordance with the guidelines established pursuant to section 3612, shall establish a governmentwide program that provides the authoritative standardized approach to security assessment and authorization for cloud computing products and services that process unclassified information used by agencies.

“(b) COMPONENTS OF FEDRAMP.—The Joint Authorization Board and the FedRAMP Program Management Office are established as components of FedRAMP.

“§ 3608. FedRAMP Program Management Office

“(a) GSA DUTIES.—

“(1) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Administrator of General Services shall—

“(A) determine the categories and characteristics of cloud computing information technology goods or services that are within the jurisdiction of FedRAMP and that require FedRAMP authorization from the Joint Authorization Board or the FedRAMP Program Management Office;

“(B) develop, coordinate, and implement a process for the FedRAMP Program Management Office, the Joint Authorization Board, and agencies to review security assessments of cloud computing services pursuant to subsections (b) and (c) of section 3611, and appropriate oversight of continuous monitoring of cloud computing services; and

“(C) ensure the continuous improvement of FedRAMP.

“(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Administrator shall oversee the implementation of FedRAMP, including—

“(A) appointing a Program Director to oversee the FedRAMP Program Management Office;

“(B) hiring professional staff as may be necessary for the effective operation of the FedRAMP Program Management Office, and such other activities as are essential to properly perform critical functions;

“(C) entering into interagency agreements to detail personnel on a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis to assist the FedRAMP Program Management Office and the Joint Authorization Board in discharging the responsibilities of the Office under this section; and

“(D) such other actions as the Administrator may determine necessary to carry out this section.

“(b) DUTIES.—The FedRAMP Program Management Office shall have the following duties:

“(1) Provide guidance to independent assessment organizations, validate the independent assessments, and apply the requirements and guidelines adopted in section 3609(c)(5).

“(2) Oversee and issue guidelines regarding the qualifications, roles, and responsibilities of independent assessment organizations.

“(3) Develop templates and other materials to support the Joint Authorization Board and agencies in the authorization of cloud computing services to increase the speed, effectiveness, and transparency of the authorization process, consistent with standards defined by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

“(4) Establish and maintain a public comment process for proposed guidance before the issuance of such guidance by FedRAMP.

“(5) Issue FedRAMP authorization for any authorizations to operate issued by an agency that meets the requirements and guidelines described in paragraph (1).

“(6) Establish frameworks for agencies to use authorization packages processed by the FedRAMP Program Management Office and Joint Authorization Board.

“(7) Coordinate with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a framework for continuous monitoring and reporting required of agencies pursuant to section 3553.

“(8) Establish a centralized and secure repository to collect and share necessary data, including security authorization packages, from the Joint Authorization Board and agencies to enable better sharing and reuse to such packages across agencies.

“(c) EVALUATION OF AUTOMATION PROCEDURES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The FedRAMP Program Management Office shall assess and evaluate available automation capabilities and procedures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the issuance of provisional authorizations to operate issued by the Joint Authorization Board and FedRAMP authorizations, including continuous monitoring of cloud environments and among cloud environments.

“(2) MEANS FOR AUTOMATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section and updated annually thereafter, the FedRAMP Program Management Office shall establish a means for the automation of security assessments and reviews.

“(d) METRICS FOR AUTHORIZATION.—The FedRAMP Program Management Office shall establish annual metrics regarding the time and quality of the assessments necessary for completion of a FedRAMP authorization process in a manner that can be consistently tracked over time in conjunction with the periodic testing and evaluation process pursuant to section 3554 in a manner that minimizes the agency reporting burden.

“§ 3609. Joint Authorization Board

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Joint Authorization Board which shall consist of cloud computing experts, appointed by the Director in consultation with the Administrator, from each of the following:

“(1) The Department of Defense.

“(2) The Department of Homeland Security.

“(3) The General Services Administration.

“(4) Such other agencies as determined by the Director, in consultation with the Administrator.

“(b) ISSUANCE OF PROVISIONAL AUTHORIZATIONS TO OPERATE.—The Joint Authorization Board shall conduct security assessments of cloud computing services and issue provisional authorizations to operate to cloud service providers that meet FedRAMP security guidelines set forth in section 3608(b)(1).

“(c) DUTIES.—The Joint Authorization Board shall—

“(1) develop and make publicly available on a website, determined by the Administrator, criteria for prioritizing and selecting cloud computing services to be assessed by the Joint Authorization Board;

“(2) provide regular updates on the status of any cloud computing service during the assessment and authorization process of the Joint Authorization Board;

“(3) review and validate cloud computing services and independent assessment organization security packages or any documentation determined to be necessary by the Joint Authorization Board to evaluate the system security of a cloud computing service;

“(4) in consultation with the FedRAMP Program Management Office, serve as a resource for best practices to accelerate the FedRAMP process;