

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE SENATE AMENDMENT TO HOUSE AMENDMENT TO SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2617, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2023; RELATING TO CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 4373, FURTHER ADDITIONAL CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS AND EXTENSIONS ACT, 2023; RELATING TO CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 1082, SAMI'S LAW; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

SPEECH OF

HON. RON ESTES

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 23, 2022

Mr. ESTES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Leader BRADY and Chairman NEAL for their yeoman-like work on SECURE 2.0. This has been a truly bipartisan and bicameral effort that will assist all Americans save more for their retirement for longer throughout their lives.

When SECURE 2.0 passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support, it had multiple provisions I helped introduce, including an increase in RMD age, retirement matching for student loan repayment, and enhancing 403(b) plans.

As the House and Senate went through negotiations on this package, I was pleased to see that Unclaimed Savings Bonds was included, something that I have been working on since before I have been in Congress.

The U.S. Treasury is sitting on potentially billions of dollars in bonds which haven't been claimed—mostly because people don't know they or their parents or grandparents even own bonds. If given access to federal records and the dormant bonds, most states would be able to make it easy for people to look up if they own lost bonds and to reclaim ownership.

Approximately \$29.7 billion in savings bonds have reached final maturity and ceased to pay interest. While Treasury claims that only one percent of all matured savings bonds have not been redeemed, it's much more.

States already have programs in place to help their residents find lost or forgotten assets. It's a program that I'm passionate about, as I helped connect Kansans with their money and assets as Kansas State Treasurer for 6 years, fighting the U.S. Treasury tooth-and-nail the entire way.

While my standalone unclaimed savings bond bill required Treasury to provide states with the names, addresses, and serial numbers—the best way to make sure Americans are reconnected with their rightful property—the provision in this bill makes Treasury's providing of serial numbers optional.

I believe that this deliberate change is due to Treasury's failure to keep accurate records.

This crucial information is necessary, and Congress overwhelmingly intended for Treasury to provide it. I would like to make it clear that it is the intent of Congress that, where possible, states should be able to access the serial numbers of unclaimed savings bonds.

Inclusion of this provision is a positive step, but Americans won't see the full benefit until Treasury stops playing games with the savings bond program.

I would briefly like to touch on the underlying Omnibus bill. It is a shame that good legislation supported by Republicans and Democrats like SECURE 2.0 has been tucked into a 4,000-plus-page bill that nobody has read in total. It contains highly partisan and reckless spending throughout, which I fundamentally oppose.

I believe that last-minute legislation like this is a terrible way to run the greatest country in the world and I urge my colleagues to vote no.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
RICHARD MILLER FROM THE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
LABOR

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 27, 2022

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise to thank Richard Miller and honor his public service as the Director of Labor Policy for the Committee on Education and Labor.

When people describe Richard, the sentiments range from "true and tireless champion of working people", "an expert on any topic relating to workers", to "unparalleled knowledge of the issues impacting workers". Folks have called him charismatic, meticulous, dedicated, committed.

Prior to working for Congress, he helped workers organize for labor rights and battle union busting campaigns from coast to coast and from north to south. Through his work for the Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers International Union, and its successor Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers Union, he led advocacy efforts to enact an occupational illness compensation program for defense nuclear workers (Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA)); protect union rights and pension security; fund hazardous waste worker training programs; enact a defense nuclear worker "conversion" and medical screening law; secure a moratorium on the sale of radioactively contaminated metals into unrestricted commerce; and authorize and secure funding for U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigations Board (CSB).

Since its enactment in 2000, EEOICPA has provided benefits to approximately 100,000 nuclear weapons complex workers (or their survivors) for diseases arising from exposure to radiation, beryllium and silica. As the Representative of the 3rd Congressional District of

Virginia, which is home to the Nation's largest private shipyard, the Committee pressed the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to expand a proposed beryllium rule to include protections for shipyard workers—particularly those around abrasive blasting. Richard led the Committee's effort, in conjunction with the Steelworkers union, to ultimately secure enforceable protections for our nation's maritime workers from exposure to this ultra-toxic element.

Beginning in 2007, Richard joined on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, investigating regulatory gaps in energy futures and derivatives markets; the Department of Energy's (DOE) program to reprocess spent nuclear fuel; price manipulation schemes in propane markets; crude oil pipeline safety; and DOE's sole-source contracting and nuclear non-proliferation programs.

In 2009, Richard came to the Committee on Education and Labor under then Chairman George Miller (no relation) and worked under my leadership for nearly eight years. Richard conducted investigations on the Upper Big Branch coal mine disaster; the performance of the Chemical Safety Board's investigations; contested case backlogs before the Federal Mine Safety & Health Review Commission; mismanaged state OSHA programs; the Department of Labor's Whistleblower Protection Program and Black Lung Benefits program, and administration proposals to cut federal workers' compensation benefits.

Richard maintained a focus on international labor rights by supporting the Speaker's Congressional Monitoring Group on the U.S.-Colombia Labor Action Plan and the bi-cameral working group on safety and labor rights in Bangladesh. Following the repeated fires and industrial disasters killing workers in that country's garment industry, and a government largely unresponsive to labor rights violations, Richard led Committee efforts to enact funding for global labor rights programs and to elevate labor rights as a priority for U.S. diplomacy with Bangladesh, while assisting Bangladeshi labor rights advocates in communicating their concerns to Congress.

As part of his work for the Committee, he has drafted bills to strengthen the Occupational Safety & Health Act, the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act, the Black Lung Benefits Act, the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). As a corollary, he led efforts to beat back three-efforts over six years to cut FECA benefit levels. As part of the American Rescue Plan Act, Richard led Committee efforts to ensure front-line workers in VA hospitals, airports, post offices, law enforcement and meat plant inspectors were able to secure workers' compensation for COVID-19 without having to meet an insurmountable burden of proof.

He has worked to stabilize the black lung benefits program by extending the black lung excise tax, reducing backlogs in adjudicating claims, driving reforms in coal operator self-insurance, and rebuilding the black lung clinics program to ensure miners receive pulmonary

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

rehabilitation and claims assistance they need. Richard even managed to convince me to go several thousand feet underground to visit a coal mine and assess its safety features. And in typical fashion, Richard was quick to ensure the invitation of one of my Republican colleagues to join in this venture.

The Committee on Education & Labor will miss his wealth of knowledge and his enthusiasm for finding ways to improve the life of those workers who lack a voice but need one. We can always count on him to offer what he would call “an observation, not a criticism.”

In conclusion, Richard has led his professional life doing the “good trouble, necessary trouble” that Congressman John Lewis has called us to do. I know that I speak for the Committee in thanking him for his service to this House and the American People and wish him well in his retirement.

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SPEECH OF

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 23, 2022

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Fiscal Year 2023 Omnibus Appropriations Bill.

One of the most basic and important responsibilities of Congress is to keep the government funded and operating, and it is our obligation to spend taxpayer money wisely. A budget is a statement of values and priorities, and this budget focuses on helping hard-working families get ahead, supporting vulnerable populations at home and abroad, and growing the economy.

This bipartisan bill invests in affordable child care, helps to address the climate crisis, increases the maximum Pell Grant award by \$500, provides \$47 billion for the National Institutes of Health to help develop treatments and cures for chronic diseases, secures funding for manufacturing jobs created by the historic bipartisan Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act, serves veterans exposed to harmful chemicals by providing \$5 billion in mandatory funding under the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act, and includes nearly \$45 billion in emergency and humanitarian aid for Ukraine. The FY23 omnibus bill also includes the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, which requires employers to give pregnant workers basic accommodations like an extra bathroom break and stool to sit on, preventing pregnant work-

ers from being discriminated against in the workplace.

This legislation includes several bills and investments I have fought for this Congress. The bill establishes a permanent, nationwide Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) program to address food insecurity among children when school is out. As the Chair of Education and Labor Committee's Civil Rights and Human Services Subcommittee, I have been working on needed updates to our federal child nutrition programs. This is an important victory that builds on the successes of the Pandemic-EBT program and it will help prevent summer hunger. I have also been fighting for increases in funding to nutrition programs for seniors through the Older Americans Act, and I am grateful that this year's bill responds to increasing need amid growing demand and rising costs by including more funding for OAA Title III nutrition programs.

My Retirement Savings Lost and Found Act is enacted under this omnibus funding bill. These provisions will create an Office of the Retirement Savings Lost and Found to provide workers with tools to locate and manage accounts after leaving an employer. Tracking retirement savings accounts after leaving an employer can be extremely difficult, and many people lose access completely. The Retirement Savings Lost and Found Act will give workers tools to access and preserve their hard-earned savings.

Economic inflation caused by increased consumer demand, global supply chain disruptions, and the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by Russia have shifted global markets and affected everyday costs. Higher prices are straining household budgets and depriving workers of the full benefits of our growing economy. I am pleased that this legislation includes a nearly \$2 billion increase for the Child Care and Development Block Grant program and an almost \$1 billion increase for Head Start. These long overdue investments follow my continued calls to improve the care economy for families and care workers, including in two letters I led that were signed by more than half of the Democratic Caucus. Additionally, this legislation will help families with rising energy costs by providing \$5 billion for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program and expanding who can access the services of Community Action Agencies. Although these are needed investments to address housing affordability and childcare access, there is still much more we need to do, including extending the powerful, enhanced Child Tax Credit that House Democrats included in the American Rescue Plan and updating the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit to remove barriers to housing development.

Ocean acidification, harmful algal blooms (HABs), and hypoxia are significant threats to coastal communities, industries, and Tribes across the United States. The ocean is resilient, but we cannot afford to wait to take action. I am pleased that this legislation invests in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Integrated Ocean Acidification Program to expand scientific research and monitoring of ocean acidification to identify risks and inform vulnerable communities, industries, and coastal and ocean managers of ways to prepare. The bill also includes harmful algal bloom and hypoxia research and monitoring investments through NOAA to strengthen research about environmental

stressors on our ocean and coastal resources and expand competitive research grants to study threats to ocean health. Although the bill does not include specific investments in blue carbon ecosystems, I will continue to advocate for natural climate solutions and appreciate the investments in improving the resilience of such ecosystems included in the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure law.

The Pacific Northwest must also be ready for a potential Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and related tsunami, so I appreciate that this legislation contains funding for NOAA's Tsunami Warning Centers and for the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP) to help prepare vulnerable communities in the event of a tsunami. Additionally, harnessing energy from waves, currents, and tides is an exciting frontier in the clean power sector, and I am pleased that this legislation includes funding for the Department of Energy's Water Power Technologies Office, which supports investments in hydropower, marine, and hydrokinetic energy technologies, including research at the Pacific Marine Energy Center in Oregon.

Education is one of the best investments our country can make. Every student in our country deserves access to a high-quality, well-rounded education, and this legislation makes investments in many important programs. I'm pleased that the omnibus legislation includes a more than \$70 million for the Institute of Education Sciences and encourages the pursuit of quick turnaround, high-reward projects to improve student achievement and advance education equity—language based on bipartisan legislation I introduced this year. Additionally, the legislation's \$1.38 billion investment in Title IV-A of the Every Student Succeeds Act will provide students with greater opportunities to receive an engaging, well-rounded education and support the development of safe, healthy, welcoming learning environments. I am also grateful that this year's federal budget continues the long, bipartisan recognition of the importance of the arts and humanities by providing \$207 million each for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The NEA was instrumental in supporting local arts organizations during the height of the pandemic, and this additional funding will allow it to foster greater creativity and promote equity in the arts around the country.

Additionally, I secured more than \$35 million in Community Project Funding for 15 projects in NW Oregon that will make our communities stronger and create new opportunities for families and workers. Addressing the climate crisis and expanding access to affordable housing are top priorities in my work, and these projects reflect my commitment to putting forward real solutions to address the challenges we face. These projects will bolster the economy in Oregon by building more affordable housing, making our roads safer and more sustainable, supporting small businesses, enhancing workforce development to provide people the skills needed for advanced manufacturing and a good job, and promoting equity in foster care.

Notably missing from this end-of-year package is comprehensive immigration reform. Further inaction harms our communities and economy. Dreamers, essential workers like farmworkers, educators, and nurses, and