

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 7535, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETERS). 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. 7535, 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.

IMPROVING GOVERNMENT FOR AMERICA'S TAXPAYERS ACT

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7331) to require the Comptroller General of the United States to provide certain information with respect to unimplemented priority recommendations as part of the Comptroller General's annual reporting to Congress, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7331

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 "Improving Government for America's Taxpayers Act".

SEC. 2. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE UNIMPLEMENTED PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Comptroller General of the United States shall, as part of the Comptroller General's annual reporting to committees of Congress—

(1) consolidate Matters for Congressional Consideration from the Government Accountability Office in one report organized by policy topic that includes the amount of time such Matters have been unimplemented and submit such report to congressional leadership and the oversight committees of each House;

(2) with respect to the annual letters sent by the Comptroller General to individual agency heads and relevant congressional committees on the status of unimplemented priority recommendations, identify any additional congressional oversight actions that can help agencies implement such priority recommendations and address any underlying issues relating to such implementation;

(3) make publicly available the information described in paragraphs (1) and (2); and

(4) publish any known costs of unimplemented priority recommendations, if applicable.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER) 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 in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure.

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, I rise today to speak in strong support of H.R. 7331, the Improving Government for America's Taxpayers Act, which was introduced by Representatives DEREK KILMER and WILLIAM TIMMONS, chair and vice chair of the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress. I thank Ranking Member COMER, and Representatives CONNOLLY, MACE, KRISHNAMOORTHY, NORMAN, PORTER, and NORTON for cosponsoring this bill.

This is an important bipartisan bill that would help improve the implementation of recommendations made to Congress by the Government Accountability Office. GAO's work for Congress is invaluable and helps us to ensure a more effective and efficient government in serving the people and the needs of the American people.

The bill would direct GAO to consolidate recommendations to Congress in one succinct report. It would also direct GAO to identify any additional oversight actions Congress should take to assist agencies in implementing their open priority recommendations. Implementing GAO's recommendations to agencies and Congress would help improve government efficiency and save taxpayers' dollars.

As we seek greater transparency and accountability within our Federal Government, I appreciate the bipartisan approach that Chair KILMER and Vice Chair TIMMONS have taken on this bill. I commend my colleagues, Senator PORTMAN and Senator PETERS, for supporting this bill in the Senate.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the Government Accountability Office serves a vital role in examining agency spending and advising lawmakers and Federal agencies how to make government work better for the American people.

GAO makes many recommendations regarding specific actions executive branch agencies should take to save taxpayer dollars. It also suggests legislative actions Congress could take to improve government performance.

Despite GAO's successes, there are more than 100 actions executive branch agencies could take to be more effective and achieve greater efficiency.

H.R. 7331 will consolidate open GAO recommendations for review by congressional leadership and the appropriate committees of jurisdiction. It will annually highlight the congressional oversight and legislative actions

suggested to address these recommendations.

In doing so, the bill will help ensure that Congress has the tools it needs to pass needed legislation and spur executive agencies to implement needed reforms.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Pennsylvania does not have any further speakers, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 7331 will help Congress address specific—but fixable—issues across our sprawling Federal Government which are causing waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement.

This bipartisan legislation will help improve the functioning of the American people's government and ultimately save taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 7331, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7331, 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.

FIRST RESPONDER FAIR RETURN FOR EMPLOYEES ON THEIR INITIAL RETIREMENT EARNED ACT

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 521) to permit disabled law enforcement officers, customs and border protection officers, firefighters, air traffic controllers, nuclear materials couriers, members of the Capitol Police, members of the Supreme Court Police, employees of the Central Intelligence Agency performing intelligence activities abroad or having specialized security requirements, and diplomatic security special agents of the Department of State to receive retirement benefits in the same manner as if they had not been disabled, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 521

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 "First Responder Fair Return for Employees on Their Initial Retirement Earned Act" or the "First Responder Fair RETIRE Act".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) it is in the best national and homeland security interests of the United States for Federal agencies to retain the specialized knowledge and experience of individuals who suffer an injury or illness while serving in a covered position (as defined under the amendments made by this Act); and

(2) Federal agencies should ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that an individual who can no longer carry out the duties of a covered position, and is reappointed to a position in the civil service that is not a covered position, is reappointed within the same Federal agency, in the same geographic location, and at a level of pay commensurate to the position which the individual held immediately prior to such injury or illness.

SEC. 3. RETIREMENT FOR CERTAIN EMPLOYEES.

(a) CSRS.—Section 8336(c) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3)(A) In this paragraph—

“(i) the term ‘affected individual’ means an individual covered under this subchapter who—

“(I) is performing service in a covered position;

“(II) while on duty, becomes ill or is injured as a direct result of the performance of such duties before the date on which the individual becomes entitled to an annuity under paragraph (1) of this subsection or subsection (e), (m), or (n), as applicable;

“(III) because of the illness or injury described in subclause (II), is permanently unable to render useful and efficient service in the employee’s covered position, as determined by the agency in which the individual was serving when such individual incurred the illness or injury; and

“(IV) is appointed to a position in the civil service that—

“(aa) is not a covered position; and

“(bb) is within an agency that regularly appoints individuals to supervisory or administrative positions related to the activities of the former covered position of the individual;

“(ii) the term ‘covered position’ means a position as a law enforcement officer, customs and border protection officer, firefighter, air traffic controller, nuclear materials courier, member of the Capitol Police, or member of the Supreme Court Police.

“(B) Unless an affected individual files an election described in subparagraph (E), creditable service by the affected individual in a position described in subparagraph (A)(i)(IV) shall be treated as creditable service in a covered position for purposes of this chapter and determining the amount to be deducted and withheld from the pay of the affected individual under section 8334.

“(C) Subparagraph (B) shall only apply if the affected employee transitions to a position described in subparagraph (A)(i)(IV) without a break in service exceeding 3 days.

“(D) The service of an affected individual shall no longer be eligible for treatment under subparagraph (B) if such service occurs after the individual—

“(i) is transferred to a supervisory or administrative position related to the activities of the former covered position of the individual; or

“(ii) meets the age and service requirements that would subject the individual to mandatory separation under section 8335 if such individual had remained in the former covered position.

“(E) In accordance with procedures established by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, an affected individual may file an election to have any creditable service performed by the affected individual

treated in accordance with this chapter without regard to subparagraph (B).

“(F) Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to apply to such affected individual any other pay-related laws or regulations applicable to a covered position.”.

(b) FERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 8412(d) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;

(B) by inserting “(1)” before “An employee”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(2)(A) In this paragraph—

“(i) the term ‘affected individual’ means an individual covered under this chapter who—

“(I) is performing service in a covered position;

“(II) while on duty, becomes ill or is injured as a direct result of the performance of such duties before the date on which the individual becomes entitled to an annuity under paragraph (1) of this subsection or subsection (e), as applicable;

“(III) because of the illness or injury described in subclause (II), is permanently unable to render useful and efficient service in the employee’s covered position, as determined by the agency in which the individual was serving when such individual incurred the illness or injury; and

“(IV) is appointed to a position in the civil service that—

“(aa) is not a covered position; and

“(bb) is within an agency that regularly appoints individuals to supervisory or administrative positions related to the activities of the former covered position of the individual;

“(ii) the term ‘covered position’ means a position as a law enforcement officer, customs and border protection officer, firefighter, air traffic controller, nuclear materials courier, member of the Capitol Police, or member of the Supreme Court Police.

“(B) Unless an affected individual files an election described in subparagraph (E), creditable service by the affected individual in a position described in subparagraph (A)(i)(IV) shall be treated as creditable service in a covered position for purposes of this chapter and determining the amount to be deducted and withheld from the pay of the affected individual under section 8422.

“(C) Subparagraph (B) shall only apply if the affected employee transitions to a position described in subparagraph (A)(i)(IV) without a break in service exceeding 3 days.

“(D) The service of an affected individual shall no longer be eligible for treatment under subparagraph (B) if such service occurs after the individual—

“(i) is transferred to a supervisory or administrative position related to the activities of the former covered position of the individual; or

“(ii) meets the age and service requirements that would subject the individual to mandatory separation under section 8425 if such individual had remained in the former covered position.

“(E) In accordance with procedures established by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, an affected individual may file an election to have any creditable service performed by the affected individual treated in accordance with this chapter without regard to subparagraph (B).

“(F) Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to apply to such affected individual any other pay-related laws or regulations applicable to a covered position.”.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(i) in section 8414(b)(3), by inserting “(1)” after “subsection (d)”; and

(ii) in section 8415—

(I) in subsection (e), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “(1)” after “subsection (d)”; and

(II) in subsection (h)(2)(A), by striking “(d)(2)” and inserting “(d)(1)(B)”; and

(iii) in section 8421(a)(1), by inserting “(1)” after “(d)”; and

(iv) in section 8421a(b)(4)(B)(ii), by inserting “(1)” after “section 8412(d)”; and

(v) in section 8425, by inserting “(1)” after “section 8412(d)” each place it appears; and

(vi) in section 8462(c)(3)(B)(ii), by inserting “(1)” after “subsection (d)”.

(B) Title VIII of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4041 et seq.) is amended—

(i) in section 805(d)(5) (22 U.S.C. 4045(d)(5)), by inserting “(1)” after “or 8412(d)”; and

(ii) in section 812(a)(2)(B) (22 U.S.C. 4052(a)(2)(B)), by inserting “(1)” after “or 8412(d)”.

(c) CIA EMPLOYEES.—Section 302 of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act (50 U.S.C. 2152) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) EMPLOYEES DISABLED ON DUTY.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

“(A) the term ‘affected employee’ means an employee of the Agency covered under subchapter II of chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, who—

“(i) is performing service in a position designated under subsection (a);

“(ii) while on duty in the position designated under subsection (a), becomes ill or is injured as a direct result of the performance of such duties before the date on which the employee becomes entitled to an annuity under section 233 of this Act or section 8412(d)(1) of title 5, United States Code;

“(iii) because of the illness or injury described in clause (ii), is permanently unable to render useful and efficient service in the employee’s covered position, as determined by the Director; and

“(iv) is appointed to a position in the civil service that is not a covered position but is within the Agency; and

“(B) the term ‘covered position’ means a position as—

“(i) a law enforcement officer described in section 8331(20) or 8401(17) of title 5, United States Code;

“(ii) a customs and border protection officer described in section 8331(31) or 8401(36) of title 5, United States Code;

“(iii) a firefighter described in section 8331(21) or 8401(14) of title 5, United States Code;

“(iv) an air traffic controller described in section 8331(30) or 8401(35) of title 5, United States Code;

“(v) a nuclear materials courier described in section 8331(27) or 8401(33) of title 5, United States Code;

“(vi) a member of the United States Capitol Police;

“(vii) a member of the Supreme Court Police;

“(viii) an affected employee; or

“(ix) a special agent described in section 804(15) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4044(15)).

“(2) TREATMENT OF SERVICE AFTER DISABILITY.—Unless an affected employee files an election described in paragraph (3), creditable service by the affected employee in a position described in paragraph (1)(A)(iv) shall be treated as creditable service in a covered position for purposes of this Act and chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, including eligibility for an annuity under section 233 of this Act or 8412(d)(1) of title 5, United States Code, and determining the amount to be deducted and withheld from

the pay of the affected employee under section 8422 of title 5, United States Code.

“(3) BREAK IN SERVICE.—Paragraph (2) shall only apply if the affected employee transitions to a position described in paragraph (1)(A)(iv) without a break in service exceeding 3 days.

“(4) LIMITATION ON TREATMENT OF SERVICE.—The service of an affected employee shall no longer be eligible for treatment under paragraph (2) if such service occurs after the employee is transferred to a supervisory or administrative position related to the activities of the former covered position of the employee.

“(5) OPT OUT.—An affected employee may file an election to have any creditable service performed by the affected employee treated in accordance with chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, without regard to paragraph (2).”

(d) FOREIGN SERVICE RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY SYSTEM.—Section 806(a)(6) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4046(a)(6)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(D)(i) In this subparagraph—

“(I) the term ‘affected special agent’ means an individual covered under this subchapter who—

“(aa) is performing service as a special agent;

“(bb) while on duty as a special agent, becomes ill or is injured as a direct result of the performance of such duties before the date on which the individual becomes entitled to an annuity under section 811;

“(cc) because of the illness or injury described in item (bb), is permanently unable to render useful and efficient service in the employee’s covered position, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(dd) is appointed to a position in the Foreign Service that is not a covered position; and

“(II) the term ‘covered position’ means a position as—

“(aa) a law enforcement officer described in section 8331(20) or 8401(17) of title 5, United States Code;

“(bb) a customs and border protection officer described in section 8331(31) or 8401(36) of title 5, United States Code;

“(cc) a firefighter described in section 8331(21) or 8401(14) of title 5, United States Code;

“(dd) an air traffic controller described in section 8331(30) or 8401(35) of title 5, United States Code;

“(ee) a nuclear materials courier described in section 8331(27) or 8401(33) of title 5, United States Code;

“(ff) a member of the United States Capitol Police;

“(gg) a member of the Supreme Court Police;

“(hh) an employee of the Agency designated under section 302(a) of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act (50 U.S.C. 2152(a)); or

“(i) a special agent.

“(ii) Unless an affected special agent files an election described in clause (iv), creditable service by the affected special agent in a position described in clause (i)(I)(dd) shall be treated as creditable service as a special agent for purposes of this subchapter, including determining the amount to be deducted and withheld from the pay of the individual under section 805.

“(iii) Clause (ii) shall only apply if the special agent transitions to a position described in clause (i)(I)(dd) without a break in service exceeding 3 days.

“(iv) The service of an affected employee shall no longer be eligible for treatment under clause (ii) if such service occurs after the employee is transferred to a supervisory

or administrative position related to the activities of the former covered position of the employee.

“(v) In accordance with procedures established by the Secretary, an affected special agent may file an election to have any creditable service performed by the affected special agent treated in accordance with this subchapter, without regard to clause (ii).”

(e) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall promulgate regulations to carry out the amendments made by subsections (a) and (b).

(2) CIA EMPLOYEES.—The Director of the Central Intelligence Agency shall promulgate regulations to carry out the amendment made by subsection (c).

(3) FOREIGN SERVICE RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY SYSTEM.—The Secretary of State shall promulgate regulations to carry out the amendment made by subsection (d).

(4) AGENCY CERTIFICATION.—The regulations promulgated to carry out the amendments made by this Act shall include a requirement that the head of the agency at which an affected employee or special agent (as the case may be) incurred the applicable illness or injury certifies that such illness or injury—

(A) was incurred in the course of the employee’s or special agent’s duties; and

(B) permanently precludes the employee or special agent from rendering useful and efficient service in the covered position but would not preclude the employee or special agent from continuing to serve in the Federal service.

(5) AGENCY REAPPOINTMENT.—The regulations promulgated to carry out the amendments made by this Act shall ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, the head of each agency appoints affected employees or special agents to supervisory or administrative positions related to the activities of the former covered position of the employee or special agent.

(6) TREATMENT OF SERVICE.—The regulations promulgated to carry out the amendments made by this Act shall ensure that the creditable service of an affected employee or special agent (as the case may be) that is not in a covered position pursuant to an election made under such amendments shall be treated as the same type of service as the covered position in which the employee or agent suffered the qualifying illness or injury.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this Act—

(1) shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) shall apply to an individual who suffers an illness or injury described in section 8336(c)(3)(A)(i)(II) or section 8412(d)(2)(A)(i)(II) of title 5, United States Code, as amended by this section, section 302(d)(1)(A)(ii) of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act, as amended by this section, or section 806(a)(6)(D)(i)(I)(bb) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended by this section, on or after the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. 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 gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER) 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 in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure.

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, I rise in strong support of H.R. 521, the First Responder Fair RETIRE Act, which was introduced by the chairman of the Government Operations Subcommittee, Representative CONNOLLY, along with Representatives FITZPATRICK and LANGEVIN.

This bipartisan bill makes an important change to the law governing certain retirement programs which cover Federal first responders and law enforcement officials in the event that they become disabled on the job and continue government service in a different capacity.

Currently, these Federal employees are enrolled in and pay into a system with mandatory retirement at the age of 57, or after 20 years of service. This system also requires greater retirement contributions from the employee.

Under current law, when these employees become injured and disabled in the course of their work—which is inherently dangerous—they lose the benefits they earned before they became disabled.

H.R. 521 would allow employees in positions covered by enhanced retirement programs to retain their original benefits if they are injured and disabled on the job and choose to continue working for the Federal Government.

□ 1500

The employees covered under this bill include law enforcement officers, firefighters, nuclear materials couriers, and diplomatic security special agents. These are, by definition, high-risk jobs. Denying them the retirement that they were guaranteed when they entered public service is deeply unfair.

The men and women who sign up for dangerous jobs to serve our Nation should not be punished if they sustain injuries on the job—especially when, despite these injuries, they choose to continue their career in public service in a new capacity. These people should be rewarded, not punished.

I commend Chairman CONNOLLY for his leadership on this bill which enjoys bipartisan support in both the House and Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important

bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, our Federal law enforcement and safety officers should not have to risk losing their retirement benefits if they are disabled in the line of duty. Likewise, Federal agencies should not lose talented employees who could otherwise continue their service in an alternative capacity.

Fortunately, this narrowly tailored bill fixes a technological flaw for Federal law enforcement officers who are injured on the job. The First Responder Fair RETIRE Act gives disabled public safety officers the option to continue serving their country in a different capacity. This bill covers first responders, including special agents, Customs and Border Protection officers, firefighters, air traffic controllers, nuclear materials couriers, CIA agents, and members of the Capitol Police and Supreme Court Police.

To be clear, H.R. 521 only applies to injuries sustained while on duty and as a direct result of the performance of such duties. Moreover, it only applies to officers who choose to continue Federal service and continue to pay into the accelerated annuity system as they did prior to their injury. If they leave Federal service, they are not eligible for this benefit.

In conclusion, the First Responder Fair RETIRE Act ensures that our Federal law enforcement officers are not penalized when they make sacrifices in service to our Nation. H.R. 521 will also ensure the Federal Government agencies who employ these American heroes are able to retain their talent and skills for continued public service.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to support this bill, I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Operations.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the chairwoman of the full committee, and my friend, Mr. KELLER from Pennsylvania, for their strong support for righting a wrong.

Federal firefighters and law enforcement officers put their lives on the line every day for us. America depends on brave men and women to serve in these demanding, arduous, and hazardous duty positions. These individuals face the very real daily potential that an on-the-job injury could leave them disabled and unable to return to their previous service.

Given the hazardous nature of the job required of Federal first responders, Congress recognized that risk and created an accelerated retirement system for these positions and established a mandatory retirement age of 57.

Referred to as 6(c) for the section of the law in which this system was created, Federal first responders are qualified for an annuity after serving 20 years and reaching the age of 50. They pay a greater percentage of their salaries into this retirement system, and their annuity amount is calculated at a higher rate than other Federal employees recognizing the risks they take.

Unfortunately, not all Federal first responders can complete those 20 years of service. In cases where Federal first responders become injured and are no longer able to complete the essential functions of their jobs, they can be placed in civil service positions that don't qualify for 6(c) benefits. Any Federal first responder transferred to the FERS retirement system loses their eligibility to retire after 20 years of service no matter how many years they have got in the system or how much they paid into it.

Additionally, the employee is not reimbursed for the higher contributions required of them to be in the 6(c) system. The years of service are credited as if the Federal first responder who is injured had been in the normal 30-year retirement system for the Federal employees.

The First Responder Fair RETIRE Act offers a correction to current law and rights this wrong, authorizing Federal first responders to stay in 6(c) retirement if they are placed in a position outside of that system after returning to work from a duty-related injury. The bill also allows those employees to receive a refund of their accelerated contributions should they be separated from service.

The First Responder Fair RETIRE Act allows the Federal Government to uphold the retirement promise it made to its first responders. These first responders are Capitol Police officers, Secret Service agents, and other Federal law enforcement officers and firefighters across numerous Federal agencies.

For example, Bob Beckley was a smokejumper out West with the U.S. Forest Service. He parachuted out of a plane in 1985, and he landed in a tree in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness area in Idaho trying to stop a blaze. The tree's branches broke, dropping Mr. Beckley 80 feet and breaking his back in five places. He died twice before he could be revived and evacuated.

After—thank God—his recovery, Mr. Beckley, 10 years into his firefighting career, chose to work for the Forest Service in another position, but the reward for his bravery, his injury, and his service was his removal from the 6(c) retirement system. He watched his firefighter brothers and sisters all retire with full benefits at the 20-year mark that he no longer qualified for.

I will also highlight the story of Justin Moore, a U.S. Capitol Police officer right here in the U.S. Capitol. He was severely injured by being beaten right here in this Capitol on January 6. I heard firsthand from Justin and his

colleagues about their heroism defending each and every one of us from a violent mob. Justin was beaten from behind with a blunt object suffering severe concussions, contusions, and several crushed vertebrae in his neck. In just a few weeks, Justin will undergo what is likely career-ending surgery. He may no longer be physically able to perform his law enforcement duties. Seventeen years into his career, Justin—a veteran and father of three—will lose the retirement benefits he has paid into when he is reassigned to a civilian position just 3 years short of qualifying.

We want to incentivize our first responders to continue their service to this Nation. We shouldn't punish them for injuries they sustained protecting us, and we should reward their actions with continued inclusion in the retirement system they signed up for at the start of their service.

This bill is endorsed by the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the National Fraternal Order of Police, the National Federation of Federal Employees, the International Association of Firefighters, the National Association of Police Organizations, the National Treasury Employees Union, and the Senior Executive Association.

Mr. Speaker, I thank our 22 bipartisan cosponsors, and, in particular, my original cosponsors: BRIAN FITZPATRICK and JAMES LANGEVIN. I thank the chairwoman for her leadership and support on this important endeavor.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Pennsylvania has no further speakers, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to help advance the First Responder Fair RETIRE Act through the House. This legislation ensures that our Federal law enforcement and public safety officers can continue their service to our Nation after being injured in the line of duty.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 521, 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 York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 521, 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. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

BENNY C. MARTINEZ POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 203) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4020 Broadway Street in Houston, Texas, as the "Benny C. Martinez Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 203

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

SECTION 1. BENNY C. MARTINEZ POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4020 Broadway Street in Houston, Texas, shall be known and designated as the "Benny C. Martinez Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Benny C. Martinez Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER) 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 in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 203, to honor Benny Martinez.

Mr. Martinez was born in Goliad, Texas, in 1934. He attended segregated schools before his father moved the family to Houston so that Mr. Martinez and his siblings would not have to pick cotton for a living.

At the age of 18, Mr. Martinez was inducted into the U.S. Army. He first went to boot camp in El Paso, Texas, and was then sent to supply handling school for the Quartermaster Corps in Fort Lee, Virginia. After completing this training, he was sent to Korea where he was assigned to the 564th Quartermaster Company.

On June 23, 1958, Mr. Martinez was discharged from Active Duty and transferred to the Army Reserves at Fort Hood, Texas, where he served as a medic until his final discharge on September 4, 1962. After his honorable dis-

charge, he returned home to Houston and re-engaged with his local community.

Mr. Martinez went on to graduate from Houston Community College as a licensed vocational nurse in 1967. He later obtained a bachelor of general studies degree from the University of Houston-Downtown College. Mr. Martinez put his education degree to use as an associate teacher at Crockett Elementary.

Mr. Martinez was most known for his collaboration with fellow members of the League of United Latin American Citizens to organize a gala for President John F. Kennedy during the President's trip to Texas. Historians credit this meeting as the very first time a sitting United States President met with a Latino civil rights group.

Mr. Martinez was a member and active participant in many civic engagement organizations including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American GI Forum, The American Legion, LULAC, and the Knights of Columbus. He was also an honorary member of the Goliad Rotary Club and active volunteer for the American Red Cross.

Due to his 35 years of service, Houston and Harris County declared Benny C. Martinez Day on August 27, 1997, and February 17, 1998. Mr. Martinez passed away at the age of 85 on December 29, 2019.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in honoring his legacy by naming the Post Office at 4020 Broadway Street in Houston, Texas, as the Benny C. Martinez Post Office Building, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 203, which names a Houston post office for Benny Martinez.

Mr. Martinez was a native Texan and attended segregated schools in his hometown of Goliad before moving to Houston with his family in the pursuit of greater opportunities. He served in the U.S. Army and was deployed during the Korean war.

After he was honorably discharged, Mr. Martinez went back to school at Houston Community College and the University of Houston. He recognized the importance of education and became an associate teacher in the Houston School District and raised money for student scholarships.

Most famously, Mr. Martinez worked with the League of United Latin American Citizens to organize a gala for President Kennedy held the night before his assassination during his trip to Texas in 1963. This was the first time a sitting President met with a Latino civil rights group. Mr. Martinez was a leader in the civil rights movement and is deserving of this honor.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1515

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

the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA), the vice chair of the Committee on Financial Services' Subcommittee on Diversity and Inclusion.

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman and the ranking member for such kind remarks about a dear friend and colleague back home, Benny Martinez.

They have covered a lot of what was said, but I will repeat some of it because I think it is important, not just for people in my district to hear it, but for people across the district because, with the naming of this Post Office, Mr. Speaker, it will mean the first post office named for a Latino in the Houston area, which, too, is a remarkable achievement.

Mr. Martinez was a community leader, an advocate for Mexican-American civil rights, an Army veteran, a nurse, a Houston, Texas educator, and a friend.

Benny and his family came from humble beginnings in Goliad, Texas, but moved to Houston, like many others, to find more opportunities.

In 1956, at the age of 18, Benny was inducted into the U.S. Army. After completing his training, he was sent to Korea, where he was assigned to the 564th Quartermaster Company.

Benny put his education degree to use and worked as an associate teacher in the Houston School District at Crockett Elementary.

On top of this, Mr. Speaker, he served many organizations. As was mentioned, he was a lifelong member of LULAC, the League of United Latin American Citizens; the Veterans of Foreign Wars; the Knights of Columbus; and the American GI Forum. He also found time to be an usher at his local church.

The thing that has been mentioned but that I want to underscore, because it was another historical note, is that he is better known for facilitating a historic meeting between a Texas LULAC chapter—again, the League of United Latin American Citizens—and then-President John F. Kennedy in 1963. This event is the first known meeting between a U.S. sitting President and a Hispanic civil rights group—very noteworthy.

After a lifetime of a lot of achievements, Mr. Martinez passed away at 85 in 2019. This bill would name the post office after him. I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill in the memory of a history maker and a pioneer in our community.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 203, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs.