

the Federal Government's single largest expenditure.

Now more than ever, we need to address the runaway spending that has created this debt crisis while sending inflation skyrocketing and costing American families an extra \$10,000 a year.

Pennsylvanians cannot afford business as usual from Washington. It is time to put an end to the wasteful spending in our budget. It is time to stop the inflation that has driven up the prices of gas and groceries. It is time to rein in the runaway spending and once again pass a budget that is truly worthy of the American people.

STATE OF EDUCATION IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, as we in Washington argue over the budget and the depletion of FEMA funds for rebuilding, children in the Virgin Islands are suffering from excessive heat in classrooms that has affected the academic calendar year of students in the territory. Excessive heat has literally contributed to substantial interruption of the learning at a critical part of the school year.

Students have been so deeply affected by these issues that they have taken to the streets on the island of St. Croix to protest what they believe to be the current administration's lack of maintenance of the school. Our students have embraced the spirit of protest that runs so strongly in the heritage of Virgin Islanders as a means of challenging the establishment.

A week ago, St. Croix teachers, led by a local arm of the AFT, executed a job action and staged a strike to call attention to a myriad of issues that continue to plague the schools in the territory—lack of AC units or fans amidst a heat wave, much-needed electrical upgrades, limited supplies, et cetera. The students themselves joined the teachers, and I am incredibly proud of the youth.

We need to put pressure on FEMA. We need to work collaboratively together to get these schools in the order they need to be for the children. Virgin Islanders must come together for our children.

HOUSE REPUBLICAN ACHIEVEMENTS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, 8 months into the newly elected House Republican majority, led by our Speaker, KEVIN McCARTHY, we are delivering on the Commitment to America.

On behalf of American families, we are fighting to tackle inflation and

lower the cost of living, defending national security, making America energy independent, securing the southern border, preserving constitutional freedoms, promoting fiscal responsibility, and much more.

Highlights of the accomplishments so far include defunding the Biden army of 87,000 IRS agents, eliminating the military vaccine mandate, establishing the bipartisan committee to strengthen America against the threats of the Chinese Communist Party, passing the Secure the Border Act to address the chaos at the border, passing the largest deficit reduction package in American history, passing the Parents' Bill of Rights, passing the Lower Energy Costs Act.

In conclusion, God bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years as the global war on terrorism continues, moving from the Afghanistan safe haven to America with Biden open borders.

FOOL ME TWICE, SHAME ON YOU

(Mr. CASTEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, there was a time in Washington less than a year ago when if the Speaker of the House of Representatives gave you their word, it meant something.

That is no longer true.

Earlier this year, Speaker McCARTHY stood in the Oval Office with the President of the United States and negotiated a deal to raise the debt limit and fund the government. Today, instead of keeping his end of the deal, Speaker McCARTHY is refusing to even allow bills to come to the floor that would honor that promise and avert a government shutdown.

His failures mean that 1.3 million Active-Duty troops will have to continue to work but not be paid for their service.

His failures mean that 7 million women and children will not receive the nutrition assistance that they depend on.

His failures mean that every one of you can expect flight disruptions, less border security, fewer food and rail safety inspections.

There is an old saying, Mr. Speaker: Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me. Shame on Speaker McCARTHY for forcing the American people to suffer all this foolishness.

CONGRATULATING CONSTABLE CHRISTOPHER BATES, SR.

(Mr. WEBER of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Constable Christopher Bates, Sr., of Jefferson County Precinct 2, for being named the 2023 United States Constable of the Year by the National Constables and Marshals Association.

Constable Bates is a mainstay in the Jefferson County community, a leader in his precinct and in his church. He is truly an amazing example of the best from Texas 14.

I could not be prouder representing Constable Bates, as he not only represents Jefferson County, but the entire United States. With this accomplishment behind him, I am very excited to see what Constable Bates' future will hold for him and our community.

Please join me in recognizing the extraordinary service of Constable Christopher Bates, Sr. We are extremely proud of him.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CISCOMANI). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1630

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. OBERNOLTE) at 4 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

PROTECTING HUNTING HERITAGE AND EDUCATION ACT

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5110) to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to clarify that the prohibition on the use of Federal education funds for certain weapons does not apply to the use of such weapons for training in archery, hunting, or other shooting sports, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5110

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 "Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act".

SEC. 2. CLARIFICATION OF PROHIBITION ON USE OF FEDERAL EDUCATION FUNDS FOR CERTAIN WEAPONS AND RELATED TRAINING.

Section 8526(7) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7906(7)) is amended by inserting "except that this paragraph shall not apply to the use of funds under

this Act for activities carried out under programs authorized by this Act that are otherwise permissible under such programs and that provide students with educational instruction or educational enrichment activities, such as archery, hunting, other shooting sports, or culinary arts" before the period at the end.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 5110, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in strong support of the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act, H.R. 5110.

Last year, Congress passed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. While most Republicans weren't in favor of its provisions, the few that eventually voted for the bill voted with the assumption that the Biden administration would not try to misconstrue the language to end the vital hunter and archery classes in our K-12 schools.

Now, due to the overly antigun Department of Education, the law is being used to pressure schools rather than enhance their security. Republican negotiators feel frustrated by the Department's actions. Democrats feel let down by the Department. Above all, the American people feel wronged by the Department and scared that at a Federal level it would take such actions.

This is because the Department has taken the funding ban for the provision of or training in the use of a dangerous weapon and misinterpreted it as a funding ban on archery, shooting, and hunter safety programs—some even speculate culinary programs.

How do I know that this anger is widespread? Look no further than the commentary from Democrats over the past few weeks. Without explicitly naming names, Democrats have called the administration overly ambitious, simply mistaken, and with a blatant disregard for the law. Too many people on the other side of the aisle are looking for any pretext to prevent American citizens from using firearms, even if the purpose is to increase safety.

Archery and hunting safety programs are not dangerous. They instill core values in schoolchildren—values like responsibility, patience, and discipline. In fact, our society could use more of these values and more of these programs.

Moreover, education programs such as hunting and archery foster a sense

of connection and belonging among classmates. They are a win-win for our schools and communities. In Wisconsin alone, we have 272 schools offering archery programs, 37 of which are located in my district.

What we have here is yet another example of Federal bureaucrats who are out of touch with the American people. I know my constituents back home support these programs, and so do I. Therefore, I urge passage of H.R. 5110, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I supported the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act when it came to the House last year, and I am glad it was indeed a bipartisan bill. It was passed in response to the horrific shootings that occurred in Uvalde, Texas, and in Buffalo, New York. However, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act was negotiated in a bipartisan manner in the Senate and then it came over to the House where we voted on it with no changes and sent it to the President for his signature.

In attempting to make clear that Title IV funds provided under the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act through the ESEA could not be used to arm teachers or school staff, Senate negotiators used language stating that no funds could be used to provide to any person a dangerous weapon or training in the use of a dangerous weapon.

Now, the term "dangerous weapon" is broadly defined. So in using this language, Senate negotiators inadvertently, I believe, precluded the use of funds by students for certain activities in school and extracurricular programs that were previously permitted prior to the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.

The gentleman from Wisconsin has made the claim that it is the Department of Education that is misinterpreting the law. They, in fact, are following the law to the very letter. If we want to place some scrutiny, it should be on the Senate, which I believe drafted this language imprecisely which resulted in the need for this technical fix.

H.R. 5110 is an attempt to fix that language to permit the use of such items for students in school and extracurricular activities, and I am glad that we were able to work in a bipartisan manner once again to agree on the language that we are voting on today.

As this issue has come to light, many people have targeted the Department of Education as the problem, stating that the Department has misinterpreted congressional intent in applying the law. That is absolutely incorrect. The Department has been following the law as written and passed by Congress and signed by the President. Of course, we all remember that the President takes an oath to faithfully execute the laws of our country.

Today's legislation makes clear that we are not trying to preclude the use of items by students in the pursuit of edu-

cational and extracurricular activities, and the list in the example list in the legislative text is not exhaustive.

That said, the language would preclude ESEA funding from being used to arm teachers or school staff or train teachers or school staff in the use of dangerous weapons remains intact.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 5110, the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act and urge my colleagues to do the same. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the Biden Department of Education shares a distinct and familiar trait with every government agency in Washington right now: It has a habit of making crackpot decisions.

One such decision made by the Department recently was to block funding for hunting and archery education under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, ESEA.

Nobody at the Department of Education can truly believe Congress sought to block this funding, yet they refuse to interpret the law consistent with congressional intent.

The idea that schools should offer valuable educational enrichment activities like teaching hunting, archery, and culinary skills have never been a partisan issue.

Mr. Speaker, that same magnitude of support should be on display when the House passes the bipartisan Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act.

This legislation clarifies that the prohibition on the use of ESEA funds for certain weapons does not apply to learning in activities like archery, hunting, other shooting sports, or culinary arts.

It is a simple bill that would safeguard learning opportunities for millions of American students every year, especially those who live in rural areas across our country.

Hunting and archery programs teach America's schoolchildren self-esteem, responsibility, and, ultimately, how to use these recreational tools safely. The National Archery in Schools Program has served over 18 million students since 2002.

Mr. Speaker, there is no logical reason why anyone should oppose this legislation because there is no logical argument to be made in doing so.

It is just that simple.

I am proud to support the bipartisan Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act. I look forward to its swift passage in the House.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I just remind the chairwoman, the gentlewoman from North Carolina, that it was Congress that sent language in the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act which proscribed the ability for these activities to occur in our schools, and to characterize faithfully executing the laws of our country as "crackpot" I think is quite off base.

The President and his administration support this technical fix that is being sought, and I support this technical fix. Congress needs to take care that we send language that reflects our intent.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOYLE).

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from California for yielding time.

I rise in strong support of the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act, which passed unanimously out of the Education and Workforce Committee by a 42-0 vote. This is how Congress is supposed to work.

The bill would ensure that archery, hunter safety, culinary, and related outdoor education programs will continue to receive Federal funding through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, or ESEA.

For decades, schools across the country in districts like mine have provided archery and hunter safety education classes with funding provided by the ESEA.

These programs get kids off of their phones, out from behind the TV, into the outdoors. They learn focus, physical agility, and a respect for the outdoors. In many districts like mine, people hunt for food.

Again, we want to promote gun safety, and, again, hunter training.

Unfortunately, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, an important gun violence prevention law that Congress passed last year, contained language that mistakenly cut off the Federal funding from these programs. It was no one's intent.

The Federal funding prohibition was not the original intent of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. I was proud to lead a bipartisan letter along with Representative MIKE THOMPSON from California urging support for continued Federal funding for these programs.

The Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act will clarify that Federal funding for these programs will continue.

I thank Representative MARK GREEN, Chairwoman VIRGINIA FOXX, and Ranking Member BOBBY SCOTT for their bipartisan work on this issue that matters so much in districts like mine.

I call on the Senate to swiftly pass this legislation and ensure our young people can continue to have access to these vital programs.

Our rural communities can't wait any longer.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the author of this bill, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GREEN).

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairwoman FOXX for the opportunity to speak about my vital piece of legislation.

I rise today as an avid hunter and fisherman and as someone who wants to see these timeless traditions and skills passed down to the next generation.

My bill, the Hunting Heritage and Education Act, will prohibit the Department of Education from withholding Federal funds from school archery programs, hunting safety courses, and culinary classes.

The Biden administration's misinterpretation of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act unfairly targeted archery and shooting sports programs in K-12 schools. It didn't address fencing programs.

Democrats and Republicans agree, the Biden administration missed the target here in Congress by a long shot. In fact, the bill came out of committee unanimously. Under the Department of Education's current interpretation of the law, other school activities like fencing and the culinary arts would also be at risk eventually. This would be unacceptable.

□ 1645

For my family and those in my district, hunting and fishing are more than just hobbies. They are a way of life. The early mornings and long hours that I have spent hunting and fishing, first with my father and now with my son and son-in-law, are extremely important to me. I cherish these memories, and I know many families across the country feel the same way. I will tell you this: You can really get to know someone after spending a few hours in a duck blind with them.

Hunters and fishers are also the best conservationists. As Psalms 24:1 says: The Earth is the Lord's and all it contains, the world and those who live in it.

I believe we are all called to steward God's creation, and this is a part of what we teach our children when we take them hunting.

The truth is, being out in nature is good for kids. Education policies oriented toward K-12 schools should place a larger focus on getting kids out from behind screens and into the great outdoors. Our Nation is blessed with beautiful lands and waters, and we need more kids to put down the controller and take up the rod or a bow.

Despite the administration's flawed ruling, many are. Across the country, thousands of students participate in shooting sports and archery. In fact, 9,000 schools belong to the National Archery in the Schools Program, and many of these students go on to receive college scholarships. It would be cruel to take these opportunities away from these students.

I am glad to lead this charge, and I thank all those who are behind me, such as 24 State attorneys general, including my own attorney general from Tennessee, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports, the Boone and Crockett Club, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, the National Wildlife Federation, and the bipartisan members of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Let's get this done.

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

Mr. Speaker, I will just point out again that the last speaker made the claim that it was a faulty interpretation by this administration. I would argue we sent a bill to the President that had a technical error. Let's place the onus of responsibility on a situation in which we had the choice of returning the bill back to the Senate with a technical correction, risking a potential derailment of a landmark bill.

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act represents a significant step forward in terms of gun safety in our country. I will remind my colleagues that this was in the wake of the Uvalde shootings in Texas and the Buffalo shootings. The American people were demanding action from this Congress.

I think the decision was made to not return the bill to the Senate with a technical fix but to send it to the President. The Senate, in my estimation, could have done a better job of making sure this language was clearer, but the administration has been enforcing the law according to the legislative text that we sent them.

I will take a moment to talk about how significant this bill has been for our kids. The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act included authorization for a lot of funding to address the mental health crisis that our students are facing across the country. This is also a bipartisan concern.

I will let this body know that in my own district, I have seen the schools respond in a magnificent way. One school district has directly hired clinical social workers. Instead of having to refer students out to nonexistent therapists in the community, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act is enabling us to expand this model where school districts directly hire clinical social workers. In fact, this one school district that I am talking about has a clinical social worker assigned to every school. This has made access to mental health much easier. The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act has made this happen. I will speak more on this as we continue the discussion.

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5110, the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act, which would correct the Biden Department of Education's misguided interpretation of Federal law to now prohibit the use of funding for school-based hunting and archery programs. The Department's effort is not only facing bipartisan backlash but also blatantly skirts congressional intent.

H.R. 5110 is an important step toward ensuring American schools have the resources and funding necessary to continue teaching students important safety skills as they engage in these outdoor activities.

Many of my constituents in rural Georgia, including me and many of my family, are passionate about hunting, and we should be encouraging our Nation's youth to get outside more, not cutting off funds for programs that help achieve that goal.

One of my greatest memories is my son going to hunter safety school and spending time in the woods together. That is the greatest bond, I believe, between a father and son.

Members on both sides of the aisle believe students should be able to receive safe, responsible hunting and archery education.

I am proud to stand with the next generation of sportsmen and -women.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 5110, the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOOD).

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation to protect our students' access to hunting, archery, and similar programs across the country.

Virginians are passionate about these outdoor sports, and school programs are a wonderful way to cultivate that passion while teaching aspiring outdoorsmen how to safely exercise their Second Amendment rights.

That our action is necessary today to fight back against the radical, activist Department of Education is a testament to how much the Biden administration hates our constitutional rights and wants to use every means possible to restrict those rights and impose gun control on law-abiding citizens.

Currently, the leftist Department of Education interprets the law to restrict funding for hunting and archery programs in the schools. Congress never intended this, and we shouldn't even have to clarify it to the agenda-driven, unaccountable bureaucrats in the Biden administration.

Nevertheless, today's bill provides that clarification and ensures that Federal dollars can continue to go to schools with hunting and archery programs.

The genesis of this problem comes from a law that I opposed last Congress, the so-called Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which was actually a gun-grabbing effort by the left that prevents States and districts from hardening schools to protect their students, teachers, and staff.

We should do more to repeal and reverse the harmful impacts this legislation has had on our schools. If we per-

mit teachers to be armed and trained, it will discourage the threat and reduce the potential impact of bad guys with guns attacking our schools.

Instead of blocking funding for defensive training, we should support training teachers and staff to use the Second Amendment to protect our children.

I believe our schools will be safer if we prosecute criminals, support our law enforcement, including SROs, and support teachers and staff who want to be trained and permitted to concealed carry in schools.

Federal investment and resources can play a key role, but Congress must also reduce and eliminate Federal legal barriers so that States and communities can protect their own students in the most effective way possible.

Mr. Speaker, I support the legislation today because it is a step in the right direction, but we should go further and also permit teachers to be trained to defend their students in schools. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 5110.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. OWENS).

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act.

The Department of Education's decision to block funding for hunting and archery education under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act eliminates valuable opportunities for students to participate in safe and responsible firearm handling, recreational shooting sports, and outdoor recreational activities.

School programs such as hunting and archery have enjoyed longstanding bipartisan support, and for good reason. The National Archery in the Schools Program has served over 18 million students since 2002. Forty percent of these students claim to be more engaged in the classroom, and a remarkable 91 percent pursue, or express their desire to pursue, other outdoor activities.

Hunting and archery programs provide more than dexterity and mental skills. They foster character development, a sense of responsibility, and a profound connection with the natural beauty of our Nation.

In Utah, hundreds of thousands of Utahns spend quality time with their family, friends, and neighbors during the hunting season. Additionally, these sports provide 13,000 jobs and generate \$550 million for the Beehive State's economy annually.

There is a bipartisan consensus that students should be able to receive safe, responsible hunting and archery education.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues across the aisle to support H.R. 5110, bipartisan legislation to stand behind student hunters and archers, and ensure these programs are preserved for future generations of Americans to use these recreational tools safely.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim my time.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, today, I speak in support of the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act. This bill would amend the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act so that it explicitly states that school programs that train students "in archery, hunting, or other shooting sports" are eligible for Federal funding.

Currently, the Department of Education, under the Biden administration, has misinterpreted the phrase "training in the use of a dangerous weapon" so that classes for archery or hunting safety are being deemed as a violation of Federal law. This simply makes no sense.

If we use the Department of Education's wrongheaded and broad way of interpreting the definition of a "weapon," then culinary classes might be next on the exclusion list since knives are used in those classes.

This bill would correct the Department of Education's misguided interpretation under the current statute by clarifying that archery and hunting courses are not teaching the training and the use of dangerous weapons and schools that choose to teach such courses cannot be stripped of their Federal funding.

I have been involved in classes that teach hunting and archery through organizations like the Boy Scouts, and I know firsthand that they teach and reinforce skills like responsibility, self-reliance, preparation, and attention to detail. They build self-esteem in young men and women and also reinforce the ideas of conservation and stewardship of our natural resources and instill a love and appreciation for the world that God created.

These classes also teach safety and responsibility relating to rifles and bows and arrows. All of these are skills and characteristics that we want in our children. Why misinterpret statutes to prevent classes that reinforce these skills and characteristics in our youth?

I proudly support the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act and urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of its passage to return local control to our school districts and to make right what is now currently wrong.

□ 1700

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

Mr. Speaker, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, I believe, passed, as the title would suggest, with bipartisan support. It was a significant step forward, although, in my estimation, not

enough in terms of addressing the gun violence issue that we have in our country.

We have seen since the Uvalde shooting and the Buffalo shooting many more mass shootings occur in our country, and I believe the American people want to see more done.

Instead of just thoughts and prayers, we did pass the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which came with many provisions that address gun violence in our schools. The most significant element of the bill, in my estimation, is the broad and deep support for expanding access to mental health care for our young people. This is truly a great achievement.

I am very pleased that we are addressing the technical error that Congress made in drafting this language that it sent to the President. I am glad that we are correcting that today. I will point out that the President and his administration support this technical fix.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote for H.R. 5110, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, overturning the funding ban on hunting and archery programs is a no-brainer. I was glad, as a member of the Committee on Education, to see that when this bill passed, it came out of committee unanimously 42-0. That is because the value of these programs is universally recognized. They are certainly not unsafe. In fact, the best thing we could do would be to expand them, offer more of them, and teach more children how to handle recreational tools appropriately.

Furthermore, just like when the effort was made by the Governor of New Mexico, there is a bipartisan consensus that the people who were trying to restrict ownership or restrict acquainting themselves with firearms were shot down on a bipartisan basis.

Because of this administration's actions, however, many schools were proactively nixing hunting and archery programs to comply with the Department's wrongheaded and heavy-handed reading of the law. That is already going too far.

Congress should respond quickly with swift action and pass the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5110, 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. GROTHMAN. 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 pro-

ceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING AND MODIFYING CERTAIN AUTHORITIES AND REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2795) to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend and modify certain authorities and requirements relating to the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2795

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

SECTION 1. TWO-YEAR EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY CLARIFICATION OF LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTRACTOR MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS TO PERFORM MEDICAL DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS UNDER PILOT PROGRAM FOR USE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS FOR DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS.

Section 2002(a)(4) of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-315; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended by striking "three years" and inserting "five years".

SEC. 2. TWO-YEAR EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN RELIEF FOR RECIPIENTS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE WHO ARE AFFECTED BY CLOSURE OR DISAPPROVAL OF AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.

Section 3699(c)(2)(C) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "September 30, 2023" and inserting "September 30, 2025".

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 8117(g) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "2023" and inserting "2028".

SEC. 4. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HOUSING LOAN FEES.

The loan fee table in section 3729(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "November 14, 2031" each place it appears and inserting "November 15, 2031".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on S. 2795.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2795, a bill that extends VA's expiring authorities.

The Veterans' Affairs Committee works on an extender bill every year. This year, it was introduced by my friends, Senators TESTER and MORAN.

The 2023 extender bill does three things.

It would extend VA's participation in the National Disaster Medical System for 5 years. VA has a mission to protect veterans and staff and support public health during disasters or emergencies.

Second, the bill would also allow medical professionals who are contracted to perform veterans' disability exams to continue practicing across State lines. Now, VA depends on the contractors to perform most of the disability exams, and the contractors depend on this authority. This bill would continue the authority for 2 more years.

Finally, the bill would continue to protect student veterans if their school closed or gets disapproved under the GI Bill. It would also allow the Secretary to restore the entitlement to education benefits for 2 more years.

I support this legislation because it gives VA important tools to take care of all of our veterans. Without extending these authorities, serious impacts to operations might mean VA's ability to protect Americans during disasters would be limited, veterans' claims for disability compensation would grind to a halt, and student veterans would be left out in the cold if they attended a college that closed due to fraud or mismanagement. We can't let that happen.

I once again thank Senators TESTER and MORAN for working on this legislation in the Senate, and I also thank Dr. MURPHY for his work to lead and champion the legislation here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support S. 2795, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for S. 2795.

Before I speak on the bill, I would like to note that September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. I remind everyone that help is available any time of day or night. If you are a veteran in crisis, or if you are concerned about a veteran, confidential help is available by calling 988 and selecting 1, or you can text 838255. You are not alone.

The House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs have worked together in a bipartisan manner on S. 2795, which extends expiring authorities for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Senate passed this bill by unanimous consent, and I hope my colleagues will support it. This bill must be signed into law before Sunday so that important programs at VA do not lapse.

It is a bit ironic that we all recognize the need to pass this bill before Sunday because of how important VA programs are and that we work to extend them the same week that we are facing a