

their service. If every aviator receives specialized cancer screenings based on their specific exposure risks, countless lives would be saved.

To put this study's profound impact into perspective, picture this. A melanoma caught early, treated, and cured sends a mom back to her family. Prostate cancer found before it spreads allows a doctor ample time to set up a proper and more likely successful treatment plan. A testicular tumor found and removed in a routine screening designed for pilots, versus in an emergency room situation, gives the dad a chance to eat around the table with his family for years to come.

This is what the ACES Act makes possible. As an Air Force fighter pilot myself for 20-plus years, I fought alongside the best the Nation has to offer. I have also stood in hospital rooms watching far too many of my brothers and sisters fight their toughest battles not in the air but in hospital rooms against cancer.

Today, I am honored to be joined by a group of extraordinary heroes from our Air Force and Navy, Americans who have raised their hands in support of our Nation and volunteered to serve as pilots. These patriots, who defended our skies, are now fighting for their lives. The ACES Act is for them.

It is for the families of those fighting, who spend countless hours at the hospitals and treatment centers and surrender everything to care for their loved ones and keep hope alive.

It is for those who we have already lost, whose names we will always remember, and who I will always remember in my heart.

It is for my friend, Colonel Andy "Pablo" Shurtleff, an F-22 fighter pilot, a brother in arms, who at this very moment is fighting for his life against cancer. In March, Colonel Shurtleff testified before the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, sharing how a promising career was cut short after a sudden diagnosis. He explained that an earlier understanding of what causes cancer among pilots could have led to an earlier diagnosis for him, one that could have very well been instrumental in his treatment.

The ACES Act has the support of over 20 veteran organizations, cancer advocacy groups, and medical experts because they recognize what is at stake.

This isn't a partisan issue. It is about fulfilling a promise that our country made to those who were willing to serve. It is a promise that when someone serves our Nation, we will serve them in return.

Every day we wait means more aviators receiving life-altering diagnoses without understanding why, more families devastated by uncertainties, and more veterans fighting for the care they deserve. It is time to acknowledge the true cost of aviation service.

The ACES Act is not just a bill. It is a lifeline for those who have already

given so much for our freedom. It is a moral obligation. It is a message to every pilot who has ever put on that flight suit to protect our skies that we see them and hear them and that we are here to also do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, when I signed up to run for Congress, this issue was on my heart. When I signed up as a member of the Air Force, I didn't know that this was a potential issue. There are groups out there like the River Rats, led by so many amazing pilots, men and women who were ready to give their lives, who are now trying to do the right thing. Mr. Vince "Aztec" Alcazar is one of those people who has really led on this issue.

I know that my colleague from Michigan, the ranking member, and I know lots of people who were in a situation and are in that situation now, and the ACES Act is that lifeline.

Mr. Speaker, once we pass this on the House floor today, I urge my colleagues in the Senate to do the right thing and to act this week. Let's send H.R. 530 to the President's desk this week and have it signed into law. Let's do something that many Americans think isn't possible, and that is act with speed inside the U.S. Congress. Let's keep our mark up and do the right thing and send this to the Senate, get it passed, and get it to the President's desk.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Mr. BOST, and the majority leader, Mr. STEVE SCALISE, for acting with speed, acting aggressively, and keeping the mark up. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. PFLUGER for bringing this bill to the floor, for his service to our country before coming to Congress, and for acting on behalf of all of our aviators who have taken off the uniform and are now fighting a different battle.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is important for everyone who has ever climbed into or out of a cockpit in our United States military to keep us free. It will benefit every veteran. I am excited for the veterans in Louisville, Kentucky, where we have a lot of former aviators as the home of UPS' world hub. This will help everyone, including those people in Louisville, Kentucky.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill that is not only happening quickly but, I will also note, is happening with bipartisan support. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BERGMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 530, 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. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### VETERAN FRAUD

##### REIMBURSEMENT ACT OF 2025

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1912) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the repayment by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of benefits misused by a fiduciary, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1912

*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 "Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act of 2025".

##### SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENT TO REPAYMENT BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF CERTAIN MISUSED BENEFITS.

Section 6107 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

##### "§ 6107. Reissuance of benefits

"(a) REISSUANCE OF MISUSED BENEFITS.—(1) In any case in which a fiduciary misuses all or part of an individual's benefit paid to such fiduciary, the Secretary shall pay to the beneficiary or the beneficiary's successor fiduciary an amount equal to the amount of such benefit so misused.

"(2) In any case in which the Secretary reissues a benefit payment (in whole or in part) under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall make a good faith effort to obtain recoupment from the fiduciary to whom the payment was originally made.

"(3) In any case in which the Secretary obtains recoupment from a fiduciary who has misused benefits, the Secretary shall promptly remit payment of the recouped amounts to the beneficiary or the beneficiary's successor fiduciary, as the case may be, to the extent that such amounts have not been paid under paragraph (1).

"(b) REISSUANCE OF AMOUNTS IN THE CASE OF A DECEASED BENEFICIARY.—(1) If a beneficiary described in subsection (a)(1) predeceases a payment under such subsection, the Secretary shall pay such amount, subject to paragraph (2), to an individual or entity in accordance with section 5121 of this title.

"(2) The Secretary may not make a payment under this subsection to a fiduciary who misused benefits of the beneficiary.

"(c) LIMITATION ON TOTAL AMOUNT PAID.—The total of the amounts paid to a beneficiary or the beneficiary's successor fiduciary under this section may not exceed the total benefit amount misused by the fiduciary with respect to that beneficiary.

"(d) OVERSIGHT OF NEGLIGENCE.—(1) The Secretary shall establish methods and timing with respect to determining whether an instance of misuse by a fiduciary, of all or part of an individual's benefit paid to such fiduciary, is the result of negligence by the Secretary.

"(2) The Secretary may not withhold the reissuing of a benefit payment under subsection (a)(1) by reason of a pending determination under paragraph (1).

“(3) The Secretary is not required to make a determination under paragraph (1) for each instance of misuse by a fiduciary, of all or part of an individual’s benefit paid to such fiduciary.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BERGMAN) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. MCGARVEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1912.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1912 introduced by my colleague from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY). My prayers are with him and his family as he once again battles cancer.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the leadership teams, especially Leader SCALISE and his staff, for agreeing to move this bill forward in his absence.

Representative CONNOLLY’s bill would ensure that the VA’s fiduciary program is improved so that our Nation’s most vulnerable veterans receive the benefits that they have earned. Let me say that again: our most vulnerable veterans.

The VA appoints fiduciaries for veterans who are unable to manage their VA financial benefits. These fiduciaries are required to use a veteran’s VA benefits for the veteran’s care and welfare. The VA periodically reviews fiduciary activities to ensure that fiduciaries are not misusing a veteran’s VA benefits.

When a fiduciary misuses a veteran’s benefit, current law does not allow the veteran to be made financially whole until after the VA determines whether the misuse was the result of VA negligence.

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These determinations of negligence amount to bureaucratic red tape that have caused long delays before veterans could recoup their misused benefits. Some veterans have passed away before their misused benefits are returned.

We must ensure that the VA’s fiduciary program is streamlined. This bill would get rid of red tape preventing victims of misuse from promptly recouping their VA benefits. It would prohibit the VA from withholding repayment of misused benefits while the VA is still working on a negligence determination.

It would also require the VA to implement methods to ensure that negligence determinations are made in a timely manner. Veterans deserve to have access to their benefits without

bureaucratic hurdles and unnecessary delays.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 1912, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 1912, the Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act of 2025, authored by my colleague, Representative CONNOLLY. He cannot be here today as he bravely battles cancer, and our thoughts and our prayers are with him.

I echo the comments of Representative BERGMAN. Veterans in the fiduciary program are some of the most vulnerable in the VA’s care. Because they are often elderly or mentally ill, they are at greater risk for financial abuse and theft of benefits than the population at large. Unfortunately, despite the VA’s best efforts at vetting proposed fiduciaries, bad actors do arise from time to time. When that happens, theft or misuse of benefits can financially devastate veterans.

On top of the financial harm, the strain of being taken advantage of can further eat away at the veteran’s physical and mental health. We must empower the VA to more quickly return stolen or misused benefits to veterans who are exploited by their fiduciary. This bill would do just that.

It passed the House last Congress, and I encourage my colleagues to support it again.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation and send our colleague, Mr. CONNOLLY, our best wishes and prayers.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I also ask my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 1912, the Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act of 2025.

Before I yield back, I do want to express my deepest appreciation and admiration for the sponsor of this bill, Representative CONNOLLY.

Representative CONNOLLY has been a faithful and passionate servant of the American people for decades, both through his time as a congressional staffer and then as a Representative of his beloved State of Virginia.

Unfortunately, he cannot be with us today. Anybody who knows Representative CONNOLLY knows he is a bulldog, he is a fighter, and he is tenacious. He is facing some serious health challenges right now.

Mr. Speaker, I know you will join me and Representative BERGMAN and everyone else in wishing him the absolute best as he is in this fight. I know he has got it, and we are with him.

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

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1912, the Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act, and to underscore the urgent need for this bipartisan and bicameral legislation.

As a Nation, we have a solemn obligation to ensure that the men and women who have served in our Armed Forces and their families receive the benefits they have rightfully earned through their sacrifice and unwavering dedication. Unfortunately, an unintended consequence of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 has hindered this mission. That law introduced a requirement for an internal negligence determination by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) before defrauded veterans in the Veterans Affairs (VA) fiduciary program could be reimbursed. While well-intentioned as a mechanism for improving oversight, this procedural step has caused unacceptable delays, at times exceeding a year, in making victims of fraud financially whole.

A July 21, 2021, report from the VA Office of Inspector General, titled “VBA’s Fiduciary Program Needs to Improve the Timeliness of Determinations and Reimbursement of Misused Funds,” brought national attention to this problem. It found that defrauded veterans were forced to endure long wait times before receiving reimbursements, with some tragically passing away before they could be made financially whole. This is especially troubling since approximately 50 percent of veterans in the fiduciary program are pensioners and part of a financially vulnerable population.

H.R. 1912, the Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act, removes the negligence determination requirement as a prerequisite for reimbursement. Instead, it authorizes VBA to conduct a statistically valid analysis of fiduciary misuse cases to determine the rate and nature of negligence after reimbursement has occurred. This shift transforms a bureaucratic barrier into a quality assurance mechanism, enhancing oversight while prioritizing timely relief for veterans. This legislation was developed in close collaboration with the VBA and received strong bipartisan support during the 118th Congress, when it passed the House of Representatives with overwhelming bipartisan support, 413–0. I thank Representative CISCOMANI for partnering with me in introducing this important measure, and I am grateful to Subcommittee Chairman LUTRELL, Ranking Member MCGARVEY, Full Committee Chairman BOST, and Ranking Member TAKANO for their commitment to advancing it.

I am proud to represent a district home to nearly 50,000 veterans, including those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, to Vietnam veterans, and even a few remaining World War II heroes. We owe them more than gratitude; we owe them action. H.R. 1912 will ensure Veterans receive their reimbursement on a timely basis. It ensures that we do not let oversight mechanisms cause harm to those they are intended to protect.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation and reaffirming our commitment to the dignity and well-being of our veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BERGMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1912.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

### STOP FORCED ORGAN HARVESTING ACT OF 2025

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1503) to combat forced organ harvesting and trafficking in persons for purposes of the removal of organs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1503

*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 "Stop Forced Organ Harvesting Act of 2025".

#### SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It shall be the policy of the United States—

(1) to combat international trafficking in persons for purposes of the removal of organs;

(2) to promote the establishment of voluntary organ donation systems with effective enforcement mechanisms in bilateral diplomatic meetings and in international health forums;

(3) to promote the dignity and security of human life in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted on December 10, 1948; and

(4) to hold accountable persons implicated, including members of the Chinese Communist Party, in forced organ harvesting and trafficking in persons for purposes of the removal of organs.

#### SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term "appropriate committees of Congress" means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(2) FORCED ORGAN HARVESTING.—The term "forced organ harvesting" means the removal of one or more organs from a person by means of coercion, abduction, deception, fraud, or abuse of power or a position of vulnerability.

(3) ORGAN.—The term "organ" has the meaning given the term "human organ" in section 301(c)(1) of the National Organ Transplant Act (42 U.S.C. 274e(c)(1)).

(4) TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS FOR PURPOSES OF THE REMOVAL OF ORGANS.—The term "trafficking in persons for purposes of the removal of organs" means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a person for the purpose of removing one or more of such person's organs, by means of—

(A) coercion;

(B) abduction;

(C) deception;

(D) fraud;

(E) abuse of power or a position of vulnerability; or

(F) transfer of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over a person described in the matter preceding subparagraph (A).

#### SEC. 4. AUTHORITY TO DENY OR REVOKE PASSPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State may refuse to issue a passport to any individual who has been convicted of an offense under section 301 of the National Organ Transplant Act (42 U.S.C. 274e) and is subject to imprisonment or parole or other supervised release as the result of such conviction if such individual, in the commission of such an offense, used a passport or crossed an international border.

(b) REVOCATION.—The Secretary of State may revoke a passport previously issued to any individual described in subsection (a).

#### SEC. 5. REPORTS ON FORCED ORGAN HARVESTING AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS FOR PURPOSES OF THE REMOVAL OF ORGANS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 116 (22 U.S.C. 2151n), by adding at the end the following:

"(h) FORCED ORGAN HARVESTING AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS FOR PURPOSES OF THE REMOVAL OF ORGANS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The report required by subsection (d) shall include an assessment of forced organ harvesting and trafficking in persons for purposes of the removal of organs in each foreign country.

"(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

"(A) FORCED ORGAN HARVESTING.—The term 'forced organ harvesting' means the removal of one or more organs from a person by means of coercion, abduction, deception, fraud, or abuse of power or a position of vulnerability.

"(B) ORGAN.—The term 'organ' has the meaning given the term 'human organ' in section 301(c)(1) of the National Organ Transplant Act (42 U.S.C. 274e(c)(1)).

"(C) TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS FOR PURPOSES OF THE REMOVAL OF ORGANS.—The term 'trafficking in persons for purposes of the removal of organs' means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a person for the purpose of removing one or more of such person's organs, by means of—

"(i) coercion;

"(ii) abduction;

"(iii) deception;

"(iv) fraud;

"(v) abuse of power or a position of vulnerability; or

"(vi) transfer of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over a person described in the matter preceding clause (i)."; and

(2) in section 502B (22 U.S.C. 2304)—

(A) by redesignating the second subsection (i) (relating to child marriage status) as subsection (j); and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(k) FORCED ORGAN HARVESTING AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS FOR PURPOSES OF THE REMOVAL OF ORGANS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The report required by subsection (b) shall include an assessment of forced organ harvesting and trafficking in persons for purposes of the removal of organs in each foreign country.

"(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the terms 'forced organ harvesting', 'organ', and 'trafficking in persons for purposes of the removal of organs' have the meanings given those terms in section 116(h)(2)."

#### SEC. 6. IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO FORCED ORGAN HARVESTING OR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS FOR PURPOSES OF THE REMOVAL OF ORGANS.

(a) LIST REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a list of each

person that the President determines funds, sponsors, or otherwise facilitates forced organ harvesting or trafficking in persons for purposes of the removal of organs.

(b) IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS.—The President shall impose the following sanctions with respect to a person on the list required by subsection (a):

(1) PROPERTY BLOCKING.—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) (except that the requirements of section 202 of such Act (50 U.S.C. 1701) shall not apply) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of the person if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(2) ALIENS INADMISSIBLE FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—

(A) VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—In the case of an individual, that individual is—

(i) inadmissible to the United States;

(ii) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

(iii) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(B) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The visa or other entry documentation of the individual shall be revoked, regardless of when such visa or other entry documentation is or was issued.

(ii) IMMEDIATE EFFECT.—A revocation under clause (i) shall—

(I) take effect immediately; and

(II) automatically cancel any other valid visa or entry documentation that is in the individual's possession.

(c) EXCEPTIONS.—

(1) EXCEPTION RELATING TO IMPORTATION OF GOODS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The authorities and requirements to impose sanctions under subsection (b)(1) shall not include the authority or a requirement to impose sanctions on the importation of goods.

(B) GOOD DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term "good" means any article, natural or manmade substance, material, supply or manufactured product, including inspection and test equipment, and excluding technical data.

(2) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.—Subsection (b)(2) shall not apply to the admission of an individual if the admission of the individual is necessary to comply with United States obligations under the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, under the Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and entered into force March 19, 1967, or under other applicable international agreements or treaties.

(3) EXCEPTION RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.—Sanctions under this section may not be imposed with respect to transactions or the facilitation of transactions for—

(A) the sale of agricultural commodities, food, or medicine;

(B) the provision of vital humanitarian assistance;

(C) financial transactions relating to vital humanitarian assistance or for vital humanitarian purposes; or

(D) transporting goods or services that are necessary to carry out operations relating to vital humanitarian assistance.