

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN), my good friend and the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WILLIAMS, my good friend from Texas, as well, for yielding.

The Small Business Innovation Research, SBIR, and Small Business Technology Transfer, STTR, programs are the Federal Government's largest source of funding for small businesses focused on early-stage technology development and commercialization.

They offer small businesses an opportunity to participate in Federal research and development, facilitating the transition of federally funded R&D into innovative products and services. For this reason, these programs are often referred to as America's seed fund, as they invest in research and emerging technology ideas that may be too risky for private sector funding.

These SBIR and STTR programs are funded from set-asides of the extramural research budgets at Federal agencies, providing billions of dollars in awards every year. This substantial investment by taxpayers necessitates diligent oversight by Congress to ensure that these programs are operating efficiently and are protected from theft and abuse by our adversaries, such as the Chinese Communist Party.

The reauthorization Congress passed in 2022 for these programs addressed some vulnerabilities, but more work needs to be done. Both the Small Business Committee and the Science, Space, and Technology Committees are dedicated to addressing these issues and ensuring that taxpayer funds support American small businesses rather than being funneled to foreign adversaries.

While we continue our work, it is critical that we do not allow this vital program to expire. Therefore, we have introduced this 1-year extension of SBIR and STTR programs and encourage all Members to vote "yes" on this bill.

I look very much forward to working with Chairman WILLIAMS, Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ, Chairwoman ERNST, Ranking Member MARKEY, and Ranking Member LOFGREN to get a full reauthorization completed and through Congress as soon as possible.

□ 1510

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by reminding everyone that this is a bipartisan program that has never seen a lapse in its over 40-year history. The House is taking the responsible step of extending this program for a year to give us time to negotiate a longer-term reauthorization.

I appreciate the partnership of Chairman WILLIAMS and of my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Chairman BABIN and Rank-

ing Member LOFGREN, for keeping this vital source of capital for our Nation's most promising innovators alive. I look forward to continuing discussions in the coming weeks and months to reach a bipartisan agreement.

Allowing this program to lapse is simply not an option. I encourage all of my colleagues to support this common-sense measure.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and I urge my colleagues to support this common-sense legislation to continue uplifting small business innovation across America.

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

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 5100, a bill that I cosponsored along with the Chair of the Science Committee, Representative BABIN, and the Chair and Ranking Member of the Small Business Committee, Representatives WILLIAMS and VELÁZQUEZ. Like my colleagues, I am a strong supporter of the SBIR and STTR programs and it is my priority to see these programs continue without disruption.

For more than 40 years, and Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR), and later its companion program the Small Business Technology Transfer Program (STTR), have been contributing to U.S. leadership in technological innovation through support for small business research and development.

My home state of California has long been one of the Nation's leading states for science and technology. Because of our rich and diverse culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, our small companies—across sectors—have successfully competed for SBIR/STTR funds since the programs' inception. In 2022, California companies won a total of \$887 million in SBIR/STTR awards. I celebrate the success of California's small businesses. But more importantly, I celebrate the return on investment (ROI) that benefits the entire Nation. While estimates vary depending on the scope and methodology of each study, the studies I have seen report a ROI of at least 10:1. That is a remarkable win for the taxpayer for a relatively small investment.

While the Small Business Administration administers the overall program, it is the science agencies themselves that solicit and fund SBIR/STTR award proposals. As the Ranking Member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, I am familiar with the diversity of our Federal scientific enterprise and the vast differences in missions and needs across our science agencies, including the Department of Defense (DOD). So, it is no surprise to me that over the lifetime of the SBIR/STTR programs, each agency has evolved the particulars of their individual programs to align with their specific needs. That also applies to how they approach risk assessment in their due diligence programs. While clear, standard definitions are an important goal that I share, an agency like NSF is rightfully going to assess and mitigate risk differently than an agency like DOD.

It is with that context in mind that I have serious concerns about the INNOVATE Act as currently proposed by the Chairs of the House

and Senate Small Business Committees. Even DOD itself has flagged significant concerns. I do support a long-term comprehensive reauthorization of the program, and I am committed to taking a serious look at where the program has challenges and needs good governance updates. I am also committed to discussing the opportunities to continue to strengthen the outcomes of the program, including by doing more to attract new entrants across the Nation. I have instructed my staff accordingly and they have been at the table for more than a month negotiating in good faith with staff from the other committees. However, we remain far apart on certain key issues and simply need more time to work through them. At the moment, we don't even have agreement on the fundamentals. What I do not accept is a repeat of the 2022 process, in which one corner out of six effectively dictated the process and rammed through a bill that narrowly reflected only their priorities and completely omitted Science Committee priorities, among others.

That is why I am encouraging all of my colleagues, in the House and the Senate, to support a clean one-year reauthorization of the SBIR/STTR programs. We must be allowed time to engage in the kind of thoughtful deliberation and debate that the public and the stakeholders expect from us before we enact monumental changes to a program that has been an undisputed success for more than 40 years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5100.

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.

#### MIRACLE ON ICE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 452) to award 3 Congressional Gold Medals to the members of the 1980 U.S. Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team, in recognition of their extraordinary achievement at the 1980 Winter Olympics where, being comprised of amateur collegiate players, they defeated the dominant Soviet hockey team in the historic "Miracle on Ice", revitalizing American morale at the height of the Cold War, inspiring generations and transforming the sport of hockey in the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

*This Act may be cited as the "Miracle on Ice Congressional Gold Medal Act".*

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

*Congress finds the following:*

(1) *The United States Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team competed at the 1980 Winter*

Olympics, officially the XIII Olympic Winter Games and known as the 1980 Lake Placid games, from February 13 to 24, 1980, in Lake Placid, New York.

(2) Team USA, comprised of collegiate players, defeated the defending Olympic champion the Soviet Union 4–3 on February 22, 1980, in the final round of the 1980 Winter Olympics men's ice hockey tournament.

(3) The 1980 United States Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team roster included—

- (A) Bill Baker (Grand Rapids, Minnesota);
- (B) Neal Broten (Roseau, Minnesota);
- (C) Dave Christian (Warroad, Minnesota);
- (D) Steve Christoff (Richfield, Minnesota);
- (E) Jim Craig (North Easton, Massachusetts);
- (F) Mike Eruzione (Winthrop, Massachusetts);
- (G) John Harrington (Virginia, Minnesota);
- (H) Steve Janaszak (Saint Paul, Minnesota);
- (I) Mark Johnson (Madison, Wisconsin);
- (J) Rob McClanahan (Saint Paul, Minnesota);
- (K) Ken Morrow (Flint, Michigan);
- (L) Jack O'Callahan (Charlestown, Massachusetts);
- (M) Mark Pavelich (Eveleth, Minnesota);
- (N) Mike Ramsey (Minneapolis, Minnesota);
- (O) Buzz Schneider (Grand Rapids, Minnesota);
- (P) Dave Silk (Scituate, Massachusetts);
- (Q) Eric Strobel (Rochester, Minnesota);
- (R) Bob Suter (Madison, Wisconsin);
- (S) Mark Wells (St. Clair Shores, Michigan);

and

(T) Phil Verchota (Duluth, Minnesota).

(4) The "Miracle on Ice" United States and Soviet Union final round game aired on tape delay on Feb 22, 1980, from Lake Placid and drew 34,200,000 average viewers. The match is remembered as a "miracle" as collegiate ice hockey players defied expectations in defeating a Soviet team that won 4 consecutive gold medals dating back to 1964.

(5) Team USA defeated Finland 4–2 in its final game to win the gold medal, its first gold medal since 1960 in men's ice hockey.

(6) Herb Brooks, the last player cut from the 1960 United States Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team that won gold at Squaw Valley, guided the 1980 team to its historic gold medal. Known as a motivator, Brooks molded a team built around hard work, belief in oneself, and belief in teammates. He reminded his team when they played the Soviets, "you were born to be hockey players, everyone one of you . . . and you were meant to be here".

(7) The tournament occurred at a time when the United States was struggling with rampant stagflation, high gas prices, hostages held in Iran, and increased tensions with the Soviet Union whose invasion of Afghanistan led to the boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics.

(8) The Miracle on Ice was a turning point for ice hockey in the United States. The game was named the greatest sports moment of the 20th century by Sports Illustrated.

(9) The historic win brought ice hockey to the front-page of newspapers everywhere, and forever opened the door to the National Hockey League for players born in the United States. The impact of the event was far-reaching and is still being felt today.

(10) Since 1980, interest in the United States in the sport of ice hockey has increased exponentially. Registrations with USA Hockey have increased by nearly 400 percent since 1980 from 136,000 to over 564,000, and the number of National Hockey League players from the United States has increased from 72 in 1980 to 245 in 2024.

### SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDALS.

(a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the award, on behalf of Congress, of 3 gold medals of appropriate design to the members of the 1980 United States Olympic

Men's Ice Hockey Team, in recognition of their extraordinary achievement at the XIII Olympic Winter Games where, being comprised of amateur collegiate players, they defeated the dominant Soviet hockey team in the historic "Miracle on Ice", revitalizing morale in the United States at the height of the Cold War, inspiring generations, and transforming the sport of ice hockey in the United States.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall strike gold medals with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Secretary.

(c) DISPOSITION OF MEDALS.—Following the award of the gold medals under subsection (a)—

(1) one gold medal shall be given to the Lake Placid Olympic Center in Lake Placid, New York, where it shall be displayed and made available for research, as appropriate;

(2) one gold medal shall be given to the United States Hockey Hall of Fame Museum in Eveleth, Minnesota, where it shall be displayed and made available for research, as appropriate; and

(3) one gold medal shall be given to the United States Olympic & Paralympic Museum in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where it shall be displayed and made available for research, as appropriate.

### SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medals struck under section 3, at a price sufficient to cover the costs thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

### SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

(a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—Medals struck under this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

(b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

### SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under this Act.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 452, a bill that awards three Congressional Gold Medals to the members of the 1980 U.S. Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by thanking Congressman STAUBER and

the numerous original sponsors for getting this important bill to the floor today.

"Great moments are born from great opportunity." With those words, Coach Herb Brooks rallied the young, underdog U.S. hockey team during a dark chapter of the Cold War, a time when Americans faced nuclear threats, economic uncertainty, and a crisis of confidence.

The Soviet Union's hockey team had dominated for decades, beating the U.S. in their last 12 matchups, including a crushing 10–3 exhibition win just 3 weeks earlier. No one expected the Americans to win.

However, on February 22, 1980, in Lake Placid, Team USA shocked the world, defeating the Soviets in a stunning upset.

It wasn't just a hockey game. It was a symbolic victory for democracy, resilience, and national pride.

Just days later, they claimed Olympic gold for the United States.

These 20 young men reminded a shaken Nation that its greatest moments weren't in the past. They were still within reach.

Mr. Speaker, the players of the 1980 U.S. Olympic Ice Hockey Team are deserving of these Congressional Gold Medals as the highest recognition of national appreciation for their determination, courage, and patriotism.

My hope is that what this team achieved on that ice in 1980 will continue to inspire Americans today and for generations yet to come.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill. I even remember where I was at that very moment.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of concurring in the Senate amendment and passing H.R. 452, the Miracle on Ice Congressional Gold Medal Act, sponsored by our friend, PETE STAUBER.

This bill was considered on the floor of this House, and I was pleased to manage it on the Democratic side, back on April 28. We sent an excellent bill over to the Senate, and for the first time ever, the Senate actually improved a House bill. Now, it is appropriate for us to concur in their amendment, pass the bill, and send it to the President.

Today, we vote to honor the legacy of the 1980 U.S. Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team and their victory that inspired a country at the height of the Cold War.

This legislation awards three Congressional Gold Medals. Each of these gold medals will be displayed at different locations for community members and visitors to commemorate for generations to come. These locations are the Olympic Center in Lake Placid, New York; the Hockey Hall of Fame Museum in Eveleth, Minnesota; and the Olympic & Paralympic Museum in Colorado Springs.

The victory we are recognizing today took place on February 22, 1980, when

the U.S. hockey team heroically defeated the Soviet Union 4-3 at the Lake Placid Winter Olympic Games.

The talented yet untested U.S. team was initially deemed the underdog. Many of them were young college players and had only played together for a few months.

Leading up to the game, the U.S. players took part in a 7-month training program designed to confront a Soviet team considered to be the best conditioned hockey team in the world. However, through steadfast determination and grit, the U.S. team won.

Even decades later, when our country is facing political division and economic difficulties, I hope these events can serve as a reminder that we can overcome great challenges.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the sponsor of this bill and urge my colleagues to support the passage of this measure.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, normally, when you come up to talk about a bill, you raise the podium here and put your papers down. Mr. Speaker, when you talk about the 1980 Olympic game, I don't need any notes. I don't need any recollection.

"Eleven seconds. You've got 10 seconds. The countdown is going on right now! Morrow, up to Silk. Five seconds left in the game. Do you believe in miracles? Yes!"

Friday, February 22, 1980, the game started at 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, 4 p.m. Central Standard Time, where I was a bantam hockey player, playing in the Pine Valley Ice Shelter. We had one of our parents come out of the locker room, "We beat the Russians. We beat the Russians," because it was on tape delay.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud for this body to pass this. As my colleague, Mr. SHERMAN, said, it is also coming from the Senate. It came from the Senate.

The fact of the matter is, as Chairman WILLIAMS says, it was more than a hockey game. It was the height of the Cold War. The United States needed that lift, and those American heroes gave us that lift.

Those 12 Minnesotans gave us that lift. Coach Herb Brooks from the University of Minnesota gave us that lift. All of those players standing on that gold medal platform on Sunday, February 24, all of them on that small platform, gave America the lift.

A couple of weeks ago, I had dinner with some of the members of the gold medal team. Captain Mike Eruzione said this to me: Pete, that hockey game gave me life. Had we not won, I was going to be either a firefighter, police officer, or go into the military, but that game changed my life. I made a lot of money. This Congressional Gold Medal will be the cherry on top for our team.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their unwavering support to get this across the finish line. It was 40-plus years since they did that, and 3 weeks, 2½ weeks before these games, the Soviets dominated them at Madison Square Garden.

□ 1520

Mr. Speaker, named after Coach Herb Brooks, we call them Herbies. Blue line back, red line back, far blue line back, and far goal line back are Herbies.

Who do you play for? Who do you play for? Team USA. That name on the front of the jersey meant more than the name on the back—USA.

Dare I say, Mr. Speaker, we in Congress have to do that same thing. Who do we play for? Who do we play for? The United States of America.

I thank my friend and colleague from upstate New York, Representative ELISE STEFANIK, because she was originally going to carry this bill. Mr. Speaker, she let me carry it.

After a conversation with her, I said: ELISE, Minnesota is the State of Hockey. Herb Brooks comes from the State of Hockey. There were 12 Minnesotans. There was Duluth hometown hero Phil Verchota. There was Mark Pavelich, John Harrington, Buzz Schneider, and Bill Baker. The list goes on and on from our great State of Minnesota.

ELISE STEFANIK said: Pete, you have made a great statement. Carry that bill.

Representative STEFANIK has no idea what it means to me to be able to deliver this bill with my colleagues across the House floor. That game meant more to this country than those heroes realized. Yes, it was just a hockey game, but it was a hockey game that we needed to win at that moment at that time for this great Nation.

Remember, Mike Eruzione scored with 10 minutes left. The Soviets were just pressuring us. What did Coach Herb Brooks say up and down the ice? He said: "Play your game. Play your game."

They were the best conditioned. They were a team. Nobody was going to win that game other than the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, hockey is a great game. I know that my good friend and colleague, Chairman WILLIAMS, thinks, probably rightfully so, that baseball is America's pastime. For anyone who comes from Minnesota, hockey is America's pastime. We banter back and forth. I actually think he is right, but give me some grace.

To my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, to KEVIN CRAMER and CHUCK SCHUMER, who delivered this across the aisle in the Senate, I think and believe that we in America, especially with the events that have happened recently, that name on the front of our jersey means more than the name on the back. On the front of our jersey, it says: "USA."

Those college kids on that Friday had no idea of the impact they were

going to have across this great Nation. Those men went on to do great things. Some went on to win Stanley Cup championships, such as Kenny Morrow; my hero, Neal Broten, from Roseau, Minnesota; my hero, Mark Pavelich, from Eveleth, Minnesota; and my other hero, Phil Verchota, from my hometown of Duluth. It was integrity, honesty, hard work, dedication, and the will to win.

Mr. Speaker, the name on the front of our jersey, USA, means more than the name on the back. I am thrilled to be able to vote on this piece of legislation. These Olympic heroes deserve this because, as Captain Eruzione says, it will put the cherry on top of their accomplishment. It is the highest honor we can give.

As was alluded to earlier, the Olympic Center in Lake Placid is going to have a Congressional Gold Medal. The United States Olympic & Paralympic Museum in Colorado Springs will have a Congressional Gold Medal. Yes, the United States Hockey Hall of Fame Museum in Eveleth, Minnesota, will have a Congressional Gold Medal.

Mr. Speaker, I am excited about this opportunity. Hockey is a great game. This changed the history of our country. We can never forget what it meant to us.

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

Mr. Speaker, I have never heard a speech on the floor of this House spoken with such enthusiasm. As a Los Angeles Dodgers fan, I do have to disagree. America's pastime remains baseball. We will see that at 10:10 eastern time, when the Dodgers defeat the Philadelphia Phillies tonight.

This legislation honors the members of the 1980 U.S. Men's Olympic Hockey Team, whose hard-fought work and commitment reignited a country at the height of the Cold War. In recognizing this victory, I hope their legacy will continue to inspire us.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to reiterate the importance of the 1980 United States Olympic Hockey Team uniting during such a challenging and turbulent period in American history. Their unforgettable victory solidified the Nation's legacy of excellence both on the ice and on the global stage. We owe these men a debt of gratitude for transforming and shaping the landscape of American hockey over the past four decades.

I thank Congressman STAUBER for his leadership and his speech. It was very good. I thank all of my colleagues in advance for supporting this measure.

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 Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the

rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 452.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### WATER RESOURCES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REVIEW ACT

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3427) to require the Comptroller General of the United States to review all clean water-related technical assistance authorities of the Environmental Protection Agency, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3427

*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 "Water Resources Technical Assistance Review Act".

#### SEC. 2. GAO REPORT ON CLEAN WATER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall initiate a comprehensive review of all covered technical assistance.

(b) *REQUIREMENTS.*—The Comptroller General shall include in the review required under subsection (a) the following:

(1) A description of all covered technical assistance available to States, Tribes, local governments, and non-governmental organizations, including—

(A) the regions and populations that are served through the provision of technical assistance; and

(B) a summary of the activities and actions carried out through covered technical assistance during the 5-year period preceding this Act.

(2) A comprehensive review of how the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, through the Water Technical Assistance initiative (known as "WaterTA initiative"), identifies, selects, and partners with technical assistance providers to support communities, including—

(A) a description of the criteria, evaluation process, and contracting mechanisms used for selecting such providers;

(B) a description of the extent of coordination with State, Tribal, and regional partners in the selection and deployment of such providers;

(C) a description of how such providers are matched to meet the needs of local communities, including any pre-engagement scoping activities or community consultations;

(D) a description of how such providers identify communities in need of technical assistance, including economically distressed communities, and conduct outreach to such communities;

(E) a description of the scope and types of assistance delivered through such initiative; and

(F) a list of communities that received technical assistance support through such initiative, including the type and cost of assistance received by each such community and a summary of the outcomes associated with the provision of such assistance.

(3) An analysis of any duplication of covered technical assistance available through multiple programs of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(4) An evaluation of how the provision of covered technical assistance builds capacity in com-

munities to access other water infrastructure programs carried out by the Administrator.

(5) An assessment of the needs of economically distressed communities eligible to receive assistance under a clean water infrastructure program carried out by the Administrator that are not addressed through covered technical assistance.

(6) An evaluation of how the Administrator carries out covered technical assistance in coordination with other Federal agencies providing technical assistance related to water infrastructure.

(7) An evaluation of how covered technical assistance supports communities in understanding, identifying, and implementing alternative and cost-effective technologies and features of treatment works that achieve long-term savings and improved outcomes in addressing water quality challenges.

(c) *REPORT.*—Upon the completion of the review conducted under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate a report containing—

(1) the findings of such review; and

(2) any recommendations to improve covered technical assistance.

(d) *PLAN FOR COMPLIANCE.*—Not later than 90 days after the Comptroller General submits the report required under subsection (c), and annually thereafter for a period of 5 years, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate a plan detailing any actions the Administrator has taken to comply with the recommendations contained in such a report.

(e) *COVERED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DEFINED.*—In this section, the term "covered technical assistance" means a technical assistance authority, initiative, or program of the Environmental Protection Agency that is related to clean water infrastructure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TAYLOR) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. FIGURES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

□ 1530

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material in the RECORD on H.R. 3427.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, my bill, H.R. 3427, the Water Resources Technical Assistance Review Act, would instruct the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, to conduct a study reviewing the EPA's technical assistance programs.

Access to clean and safe water should not be determined by where you live, Mr. Speaker. During my time in Congress, I have heard from elected officials across southern Ohio about the difficulties they face navigating the Federal grant process due to budgetary constraints, insufficient time, and lack

of technical expertise. This bill would change that by helping Appalachian regions get connected to resources they need to join the modern economy.

The EPA established technical assistance programs to connect rural communities like those in my district and across the United States with experts to help them navigate the Federal funding process to obtain water infrastructure.

Unfortunately, some of these technical assistance programs have failed to provide adequate assistance, hindering communities from obtaining critical water infrastructure funding.

My bill would direct the GAO to conduct a comprehensive study reviewing how the EPA identifies, selects, and partners with technical assistance providers, and provide recommendations on how the EPA can improve these technical assistance programs.

Once concluded, the EPA must submit a plan to Congress on how it intends to reform its technical assistance programs, helping connect communities with necessary resources to build and repair critical water infrastructure.

I am proud to lead legislation that helps alleviate the struggles that rural communities face in obtaining the infrastructure needed to survive. When water infrastructure ages well past its intended lifespan, Congress should support and advocate for programs that help rural communities, not leave them behind.

I thank my friend and colleague, Representative FIGURES, for joining me in this effort, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this legislation to help communities across the United States receive the assistance they need to obtain water infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3427, as amended, a bill which I am co-leading with my colleague from Ohio (Mr. TAYLOR). I thank Congressman TAYLOR for his leadership on this issue and for recognizing the importance of this issue.

This bill directs the Government Accountability Office to review the technical assistance programs created to help underserved, rural, and Tribal communities obtain critical investment for their water infrastructure needs.

In March, the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment heard testimony from witnesses across the country on how these programs are critical to economically disadvantaged communities and rural communities.

Without the seed money and discretion provided by EPA, many underserved, rural, and Tribal communities simply do not have the staff, the resources, or the capacity to even apply for Federal assistance when it is available.