

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 H.R. 3951, introduced by my colleague Representative CISCOMANI from Arizona.

This bill would extend the license portability authority for contracted medical professionals conducting compensation and pension examinations for veterans until 2031. These exams are a vitally important part of going through the VA benefits process.

Veterans living in rural or underserved areas often need to travel far distances for their exams. Veterans in my district know this hurdle firsthand and the impact it can have on dragging out the timeline for them to receive their disability benefits.

Congress created the authority to expand the net for qualified, contracted medical professionals. By ensuring more contracted medical professionals can perform these exams, veterans would have greater access to their benefits closer to home.

Under current law, license portability only applies to physician assistants, nurse practitioners, audiologists, and psychologists. This bill would expand that authority to include even more providers who are eligible for employment at the VA to perform medical disability examinations. This is a necessary expansion to the VA's exam programs to get even more qualified people serving veterans.

I thank Representative CISCOMANI for his leadership on this bill and his efforts to increase access to disability benefits for our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3951, 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 in support of H.R. 3951, the Rural Veterans' Improved Access to Benefits Act of 2025, as amended.

There are few things we on both sides of the aisle agree on completely, and I am happy to report this bill highlights one of them.

Veterans in rural areas deserve the same access to care that someone living near a VA facility in a large city does. Rural populations are particularly vulnerable because of unreasonable travel distances for appointments, especially specialists.

For some veterans, this can be a reason to delay or forgo routine exams or care, later resulting in poorer health outcomes. We hear many stories of veterans who have appointments scheduled hours away, requiring them to secure transportation, which can often be difficult. We have also heard incredibly frustrating stories of these same appointments being canceled or rescheduled at the last minute.

What does that mean for our veterans and their families? It can mean

rescheduling childcare, leave, work, transportation, as well as other appointments they may have grouped together for ease and convenience. It also means that any follow-up appointments begin the cumbersome cycle all over again.

We should not tolerate rural veterans being treated as secondary purely because of their location. They should have the same access to care that other veterans have in more densely populated areas.

The Rural Veterans' Improved Access to Benefits Act attempts to rectify part of this problem by expanding license portability, allowing practitioners to perform exams for veterans across State lines.

At a time when medical professionals in many specializations are particularly difficult to access at the VA, it is vital that we ease access to these practitioners where possible.

This bill mandates a report regarding the number of exams completed through this license portability agreement. This data will surely prove beneficial in highlighting communities with greater needs for care.

We will continue to work to ensure all veterans get access to the care they need, whether it be through legislative levers like this or continued efforts of outreach and advocacy.

I am thankful to all of those who worked on this effort to ensure that no one is left behind. I support this bill and urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. CISCOMANI), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 3951, the Rural Veterans' Improved Access to Benefits Act of 2025.

This bipartisan bill aims to ensure rural veterans have access to quality and timely physician examinations so that they are able to receive the care they are entitled to, regardless of where they live.

This legislation does this by permanently allowing VA providers to perform cross-State disability exams and expanding the pool of providers who can perform medical disability examinations for the VA to include all licensed healthcare professionals.

These changes will help to address the shortage of qualified examiners in rural areas, specifically thereby reducing wait times and increasing the timely release of benefits to our veterans.

I have witnessed firsthand the challenges rural veterans in Arizona's Sixth Congressional District face in getting their medical exams completed in a timely manner.

This bill takes an essential first step toward eliminating these regional healthcare disparities and ensures that all veterans receive the quality care they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues to vote in support of H.R. 3951.

We owe it to our servicemen and -women to make this commitment to timely healthcare access.

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

Mr. Speaker, once again, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 3951, the Rural Veterans' Improved Access to Benefits Act of 2025, as amended.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3951, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MODERNIZING ALL VETERANS AND SURVIVORS CLAIMS PROCESSING ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3854) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit a plan to expand the use of certain automation tools in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3854

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 "Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act".

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ANNUAL REPORT ON CAUSES OF DEATH AMONG VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 534. Annual report on causes of death among veterans

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate an annual report that contains data and information on causes of death among veterans.

"(b) ELEMENTS.—Such report shall include—

"(1) for each veteran that died during the period covered by the report an identification of—

"(A) whether such veteran had a service-connected disability rated as total;

"(B) the primary cause of death;

"(C) the secondary cause of death, if applicable; and

"(D) the manner of death;

"(2) for each primary cause of death identified pursuant to paragraph (1), a statement of the total number of veterans that died from such primary cause of death during the period covered by the report; and

"(3) for each manner of death identified pursuant to paragraph (1), a statement of the

total number of veterans that died in such manner during the period covered by the report.

“(c) SUNSET.—This section shall terminate on the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of the Justice for America’s Veterans and Survivors Act of 2025.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 5 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 533 the following new item:

“534. Annual report on causes of death among veterans”.

SEC. 3. PLAN FOR USE OF AUTOMATION TOOLS TO PROCESS CLAIMS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives the plan of the Secretary to make available, to the maximum extent practicable, an automation tool described in subsection (b) to elements of the Department of Veterans Affairs for the purpose of processing claims under laws administered by the Secretary.

(b) AUTOMATION TOOL DESCRIBED.—An automation tool described in this subsection is a technology developed for the Compensation Service of the Veterans Benefits Administration that—

(1) automates the retrieval of the service record or health records of a veteran;

(2) compiles evidence relevant to the determination of a claim for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary;

(3) provides automated decision support relevant to such a determination;

(4) automates information sharing between Federal agencies; and

(5) assists in generating correspondence regarding such a claim.

(c) ANALYSIS.—In developing the plan required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall conduct an analysis of each of the following:

(1) The feasibility and benefits of the use of an automation tool described in subsection (b) by elements of the Department for the purpose of processing claims under laws administered by the Secretary.

(2) Any modification to an existing automation tool that could render such tool usable for such purpose by such an element.

(3) Any requirement of any such element pertaining to such purpose that cannot be addressed by using an automation tool.

(4) The extent to which the technology offices of such elements may need to collaborate with the technology office responsible for developing an automation tool in the course of the development and use of the tool by the element for such purpose.

(5) A timeline for modifying and implementing any automation tool for use by such elements for such purpose.

(d) PRIORITY.—In providing an automation tool described in subsection (b) to elements of the Department pursuant to the plan required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall give priority to the following elements:

(1) The Pension and Fiduciary Service of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(2) The Education Service of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(3) Program offices of the Veterans Benefits Administration, as determined by the Secretary.

(4) The Debt Management Center.

(5) The Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

SEC. 4. OTHER REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO TECHNOLOGY AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) AUTOMATIC NOTICES REGARDING BENEFITS FOR CERTAIN CHILDREN OF VETERANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement policies, processes, and technological capabilities, including in the National Work Queue (or successor system), to ensure that, in the case of any covered situation, a claims processors is made aware of, and assigned to address, such covered situation.

(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) The term “covered situation” means—

(i) any increase in the amount of dependency compensation paid to a beneficiary for a child under the laws administered by the Secretary; and

(ii) any educational assistance paid to the child of a veteran under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(B) The term “child” has the meaning given such term in section 101(4)(A)(iii) of title 38, United States Code.

(b) CORRECT LABELING OF DOCUMENTS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a plan to ensure that documents in the Veterans Benefits Management System (or any successor system) are correctly labeled when such documents are uploaded, including when such documents are labeled using automation tools.

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 H.R. 3854, as amended.

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 H.R. 3854, as amended, sponsored by Representative VALADAO.

This bill would require the VA to review existing claims, automation tools, and submit a plan to Congress on improving, modifying, or creating new tools to support claims processors.

□ 1700

These improvements would, in return, help the VA automatically retrieve veterans’ records, compile evidence, automate Federal Government data sharing, and generate notice letters to veterans. These improvements are common sense and would lead to more efficient and accurate decisions on benefit claims.

This bill would require the VA to detail how it would provide these improvements to other benefit programs in the Veterans Benefits Administration.

This bill also includes Representative EDWARDS’ bill, the Justice for American Veterans and Survivors Act of 2025. Importantly, this provision would require the VA to publish an annual re-

port for the next 5 years on the cause and manner of death among veterans rated 100 percent, our totally disabled veteran community.

The VA currently supports over 506,000 surviving spouses. However, the VA does not track the cause and manner of death among recently deceased totally disabled veterans. Data like this is critical to ensuring that the VA programs for surviving family members meet their needs.

The report would also require the VA to publish the total number of prevalent causes and manners of death among these veterans to better identify trends.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their work to ensure that the VA continues to develop the tools it needs to effectively deliver benefits. I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 3854, as amended, 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 in support of H.R. 3854, the Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act, as amended.

We are living in an era of remarkable technological advancement. It seems every day that there is a new story about how artificial intelligence is shaping data visualization or modeling. In fact, there are AI models that are helping to detect diseases before traditional detection periods.

As the world around us continues to advance in this way, we cannot handcuff the Department of Veterans Affairs and bar them from utilizing this remarkable technology, but neither can we let them proceed unfettered without considering all the implications of its use.

H.R. 3854 directs the VA to plan for the use of automation tools to aid in retrieving service records, medical evidence, and claims decision support, and to generate correspondence to the veteran. It requires the VA to share this report with Congress so that we may provide the proper oversight of this burgeoning technology.

This bill also provides an analytical structure to assess the feasibility and extent of collaboration required between offices utilizing artificial intelligence.

Lastly, it seeks to modernize and expedite the processing of benefits for certain children of veterans, a uniquely vulnerable community.

Beyond just addressing the use of emerging AI technology at the VA, H.R. 3854, as amended, also seeks to bolster the VA’s data collection. Currently, the VA does not collect cause-of-death data on veterans. This is problematic, and it creates a challenge when assessing trends in veteran deaths.

The collection of cause-of-death data would allow the VA to begin to build datasets that can be tracked and assessed, a promising thing in this era of rapid technological advancement.

It is not a stretch to say that this data can one day be used to anticipate and prevent potentially catastrophic diagnoses in veteran populations with similar markers. I, for one, look forward to a day when we are preventing deaths from occupational exposures instead of merely tracking them. This bill begins to tackle that.

This isn't a magic wand to fix and modernize all of VA, but it is a start. I am confident that with modernization efforts like this legislation, as well as my colleagues' efforts in other areas, we can make a concerted effort to give our veterans the best care and experience they deserve.

There is one very large caveat in this effort to modernize the VA and its systems that I would be remiss not to mention, which is any push to increase the use of automation, artificial intelligence, and big data at the VA must not simultaneously remove the humanity from the system. AI is no substitute for a well-trained workforce, especially one that is as mission-driven and dedicated as the one we have at the VA.

Even as chaos unfolds around them, I know that VA employees are trying hard to continue to deliver for veterans. We should not lose sight of that. Even with the promise of evolving technologies, we know that the human element is still the most important when delivering world-class care and service to veterans. It is what veterans want, and it is what serves them best.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), my good friend.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge support for my bill, the Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act.

Our veterans put their lives on the line to defend this country. When they come home, they shouldn't have to fight another battle just to get the benefits that they deserve.

Unfortunately, outdated systems at the VA are causing unnecessary delays that create real hardships for both veterans and their families.

To speed up disability claims, the VA has used automation tools, like AI, to draft letters and gather documents. That same technology has not been applied to other types of claims, such as pensions or survivor benefits. This has led to a growing backlog and, in some cases, missed benefits altogether.

My bill takes steps to fix this. It requires the VA to expand the use of automation tools, ensure that documents are properly labeled in the system, and improve coordination between offices. It also directs the VA to use the tools for pensions and survivors' benefits, so families aren't left behind.

By improving coordination across the VA and other Federal agencies, we can reduce overpayments and prevent families from being hit with unexpected debt notices.

This is a commonsense bill that would help to ensure that our veterans and survivors receive the benefits that they deserve in a timely and efficient manner.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I also thank Chairman BOST and his staff at the Committee on Veterans' Affairs for their work on this very important issue.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MORRISON), my good friend who serves on our Health Subcommittee and our Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee.

Ms. MORRISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3854, the Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act.

The bill before us includes the provisions of the Justice for America's Veterans and Survivors Act, which I co-led with the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS). Our bipartisan bill will improve the VA's data collection efforts on the prevailing causes of death among veterans.

As a physician myself, I can tell you firsthand that thorough and accurate data is critical to delivering the best possible care for patients. I believe it is incumbent upon us as lawmakers to take the same approach with policymaking, especially when it comes to crafting legislation to help care for our veterans.

The information provided under this report will help us to better understand the most serious threats facing our veterans, whether it be suicide, toxic exposure, or other life-threatening conditions.

This reporting will also include important information on veterans with service-connected disability, which will help to ensure that surviving family members receive the benefits that they are entitled to in a timely fashion.

This commonsense legislation will provide the information that we need to ensure that our veterans are getting the best possible care, which is a goal that we all share.

Mr. Speaker, I will end by thanking the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS) for his partnership and the chair and ranking member for their support. I also thank the bill's sponsor, the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO).

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this legislation.

□ 1710

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. VALADAO from California for his leadership on Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act. This important legislation streamlines the VA claims process, helping veterans and their families receive the benefits that they have earned and deserve.

I am especially grateful to Mr. VALADAO for his collaboration in including my bill, the Justice for America's Veterans and Survivors Act, in this package.

My legislation improves how the Department of Veterans Affairs collects and reports data on the causes of death among veterans with a particular emphasis on accurately identifying when suicide is a primary or contributing factor.

The mental health crisis among America's veterans has reached an alarming level. Suicide is now the second leading cause of death for veterans under the age of 45.

Despite ongoing efforts, the Department of Veterans Affairs struggles to accurately track and report veteran suicides. This not only hinders the development of effective policies but deprives survivors and families of the support that they have earned and deserve.

Currently, the VA relies on county-level reporting that fails to identify veteran status in nearly one in five cases. Additionally, many self-harm deaths such as drug overdoses are excluded from suicide data.

The Justice for America's Veterans and Survivors Act fixes that issue by requiring the VA to publish an annual report on causes of death among veterans and it clarifies when suicide is a primary or a secondary cause, including in cases of self-harm related deaths.

Proper cause-of-death reporting ensures families have access to the benefits and resources that they are entitled to, and understanding the full scope of the veteran suicide crisis is essential to creating effective policies to save lives.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on this legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues, once again, to vote "yes" on H.R. 3854, Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act, as amended.

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3854, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EDITH NOURSE ROGERS STEM SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2034) to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the requirements of the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2034

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 “Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act”.

SEC. 2. MODIFICATIONS TO EDITH NOURSE ROGERS STEM SCHOLARSHIP.

Section 3320 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking paragraph (2);

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively; and

(C) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated, in subparagraph (A)(ii)—

(i) by striking “60” and inserting “45”; and

(ii) by striking “90” and inserting “67.5”;

(2) in subsection (c)(1)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as subparagraphs (C) and (D), respectively; and

(B) by inserting before subparagraph (C), as so redesignated, the following new subparagraphs:

“(A) Individuals who have used the most number of months of the educational assistance to which they are entitled under this chapter.

“(B) Individuals who are using their entitlement under this chapter to pursue a program of post-secondary education and who have declared a major in a field referred to in subsection (b)(3)(A)(i).”; and

(3) in subsection (d), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) An individual who receives a benefit under this section may only use such benefit after the individual has used all of the educational assistance to which the individual is entitled under this chapter.”.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF PENSION.

Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “November 30, 2031” and inserting “March 31, 2033”.

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 H.R. 2034, as amended.

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 H.R. 2034, as amended, offered by my colleague, Representative NIKKI BUDZINSKI of Illinois.

This bill would make needed improvements to the Edith Nourse Rogers

STEM Scholarship education benefits program.

Currently, the program is underused because of bureaucratic red tape that limits who is eligible for the scholarship. This mistake made by previous Congresses has prevented the STEM scholarship from helping those who are most in need.

While I believe more information is necessary to fully improve the program, this bill is a step in the right direction. I thank our colleague, NIKKI BUDZINSKI, for her support of this legislation. Additionally, I thank my friend and fellow Representative, ABRAHAM HAMADEH of Arizona, for cosponsoring this legislation.

Representative HAMADEH's advocacy on this bill has been pivotal to getting it on the House floor today to cut through the red tape and improve education benefit access.

Finally, I thank The American Legion and Paralyzed Veterans of America for their support of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 2034, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 2034, the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act, as amended.

Edith Nourse Rogers was a trailblazer for veteran benefits, and the program we are amending today that bears her name was created to support the next generation of veteran trailblazers. She was instrumental in the creation of the original GI Bill and advocated for a greater role for women in the Armed Forces.

Congress created the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship in 2017 as part of the Forever GI Bill. However, since creation, we have learned of cases where improvements to the program would encourage more veterans to pursue dual degrees, degrees in STEM education, and degrees in healthcare.

Representative BUDZINSKI's legislation would improve the program to better fit student veteran needs by making two fundamental changes to the program to increase access.

First, the legislation allows veterans to apply for the scholarship while they are still finishing their undergraduate degrees. That means students won't have to delay their education for no reason or hit an arbitrary completed credit hour requirement if they are accepted into the program. Veterans can seamlessly progress to their next degree.

Second, the legislation removes the requirement that a student exhaust all credit hours on their GI Bill benefits, which makes enrollment easier for STEM-seeking students.

The scholarship is a wonderful tool, but these requirements, originally well-intended, have made the scholarship onerous to use and limited enrollment far below projections.

H.R. 2034 fixes those issues and clears the way for more trailblazers like Congresswoman Edith Nourse. I thank Representative BUDZINSKI for introducing this important bill, and I urge my colleagues in the House and the Senate, as well, to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. BUDZINSKI), my good friend and the author of the bill, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization.

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act.

With the start of the new school year, the time is now to pass this bipartisan legislation that will help student veterans who are training for high-demand STEM fields.

I thank my colleague on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Congressman HAMADEH, for his collaboration and partnership on this bill. I also thank our veterans for their service and sacrifice.

Madam Speaker, this bill removes barriers for student veterans seeking a STEM education by modifying eligibility requirements for the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship.

This scholarship has proven crucial to getting more veterans involved in STEM fields, but feedback from veterans in a 2022 GAO report has shown that current eligibility requirements are barriers for many of our student veterans.

The Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act would address these barriers by lowering the minimum number of credit hours required. It would also allow student veterans to apply for the scholarship before their post-9/11 GI Bill benefits run out.

This would allow for a smooth transition of funding for their education. They have so greatly served us. It is time for us to serve them.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

□ 1720

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I have no more speakers at this time. I am ready to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 2034, the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2034, as amended.