I refer my Republican colleagues to the Supreme Court's decision in 2020 regarding the appointments to the Puerto Rico financial control board, which Congress established pursuant to its plenary authority over Puerto Rico. The court held the appointments clause of the Constitution does not ''restrict the appointment of local officers that Congress vests with primarily local duties'' pursuant to the territorial or District clauses of the Constitution. Local D.C. judges are local officers that Congress vests with primarily local duties pursuant to the District clause.

The longstanding judicial vacancy crisis on the local D.C. courts is not due to any failure of the Judicial Nomination Commission. The commission always meets its 60-day statutory deadline to submit a list of names for a vacancy to the President. The crisis exists because the President and, to a larger extent, the Senate, regardless of the party in power, do not prioritize local D.C. judges. For example, there has been a vacancy on D.C.'s highest local court since 2013.

Congress should give authority to the over 700,000 D.C. residents to select their local judges in any manner they choose. D.C. residents, the majority of whom are Black and Brown, are capable and worthy of governing themselves.

Since Republicans do not trust D.C. residents with self-government, they should at least address the longstanding vacancy crisis in the local D.C. courts, which is harming public safety and access to justice. A simple solution is to make an appointment to the local D.C. courts effective 30 days after the President makes a nomination, unless Congress enacts a disapproval resolution during that period. That is essentially the same process used for congressional review of legislation enacted by D.C.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the D.C. Judicial Nominations Reform Act and to grant D.C. statehood instead. Free D.C.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 additional minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman coming forth, as she does represent the District of Columbia, but I think in the argument it is important to note that these are not just local judges that we are talking about. They don't handle any matter that is related to a ticket or parking ticket, local matters. In fact, they deal with serious matters, and that is why it comes to the attention of the United States Senate and the President of the United States.

This bill does not remove any sitting judges on either the D.C. Superior Court or the D.C. Court of Appeals, but, in fact, we believe it is important. As the gentlewoman noted, since 2013 we still have people who have been hanging out and not approved.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to go through this, because I really did not do the due diligence to know why there are people here who have not been approved. They are still pending.

What I would tell you, Mr. Speaker, is that we have lots of time since 2013 where Republicans and Democrats who were in charge in the United States Senate could have moved these nominations forward, and they chose not to.

□ 1230

I am simply standing and saying that I believe that today this bill needs to be passed because Washington, D.C., and the sitting courts do need additional judges. They need competent people who would be prepared to move forward.

If there is one President who would nominate and get this done, it would be Donald Trump. Donald Trump deeply believes in the success of Washington, D.C. He believes Washington, D.C., should be a place that is safe and has good judges. This will be an opportunity for us not only to understand a different way to handle this but a way that we can look back and say we have made Washington, D.C., just a little bit better because the Republican Party cares deeply about Washington, its success, and, mostly, the safety of the people who live here.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the young chairman for allowing me to bring this bill together.

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

Mr. Speaker, I just will clarify for the gentleman from Texas that these are not Federal circuit judges. They have the same jurisdiction as State and local judges. That is what actually the bill presented says. These are local judges. They are not circuit judges. They are not Federal judges.

Let's be clear what this is about. This is about allowing Donald Trump to select local judges for D.C. and bypass a commission system that is currently in place where the President still has an ability to select from a panel of different judges. There is no State in the United States, in our country, that allows the President to directly select local judges. This is an outrageous attempt to take away power from 700,000 residents and to hurt our independent judiciary system here in the District.

This bill is not about safety. It is not about the Constitution. It has nothing to do with Federal Circuit court judges. It is a power grab for Donald Trump to self-select judges.

Finally, as I close, I remind all our friends that all of these D.C. bills in front of us are about Donald Trump trying to play Mayor of Washington, D.C. If he wants to be mayor, he should resign from President and run for mayor himself.

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

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

Another day on the House floor where the Republicans try to address the D.C. crime crisis with serious, substantive solutions and another day where the Democrats try to act like there is no crime problem in Washington, D.C., and reverberate the symptoms of their Trump derangement syndrome.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Sessions legislation which corrects an inappropriate limitation on Presidential authority to appoint judges in the District of Columbia.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 707, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GARCIA of California. 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 question will be postponed.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA POLICING PROTECTION ACT

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 707, I call up the bill (H.R. 5143) to establish standards for law enforcement officers in the District of Columbia to engage in vehicular pursuits of suspects, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOOLENAAR). Pursuant to House Resolution 707, the amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 119–11 is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 5143

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 ''District of Columbia Policing Protection Act of 2025''.

SEC. 2. VEHICULAR PURSUITS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

(a) AMENDMENT.—The Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 (D.C. Law 24–345) is amended—

(1) in subtitle S of title I—

*(A) in the heading, by striking ''**LIMITATIONS ON THE**'';*

(B) in section 127(a) (sec. 5–365.01(a), D.C. Official Code)—

(i) by striking paragraphs (1) through (5);

(ii) in paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: '', except

that such term does not include a sworn federal law enforcement officer of a covered federal law enforcement agency as defined in section 11712(d) of the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 (sec. 5–133.17(d), D.C. Official Code).'';

(iii) by redesignating paragraphs (6) and (7) as paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively;

(iv) by striking paragraphs (8) through (11); and

(v) by redesignating paragraph (12) as paragraph (3); and

(C) in section 128 (sec. 5–365.02, D.C. Official Code), by striking subsections (a), (b), and (c) and inserting the following:''If a law enforcement officer encounters a suspect fleeing in a motor vehicle, the officer may engage in a vehicular pursuit of the suspect unless the officer, or a higher-ranking official with supervisory authority over the officer, reasonably believes that—

''(1) vehicular pursuit would—

''(A) entail an unacceptable risk of harm to a person other than the suspect; or

''(B) be futile; or

''(2) the suspect can be apprehended more effectively or expeditiously by a means other than vehicular pursuit.''; and

(2) in the table of contents, by striking the item relating to subtitle S of title I and inserting the following:

''SUBTITLE S. USE OF VEHICULAR PURSUITS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ..... 33''.

(b) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE REPORT ON PURSUITALERT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall—

(1) evaluate the costs and benefits of the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia adopting PursuitAlert or another similar technology capable of alerting members of the public to the presence of a police pursuit in their immediate vicinity; and

(2) publish a report on the evaluation conducted under paragraph (1) and submit the report to—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GARCÍA) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COMER. 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 the measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support H.R. 5143, the District of Columbia Policing Protection Act of 2025. This bill repeals subtitle S of the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 and replaces it with policies empowering police to pursue a suspect fleeing in a vehicle.

The 2022 act imposes burdensome restrictions on police pursuit of criminal suspects. This has resulted in less justice for victims of crime in Washington, D.C., and more opportunities for criminals, who would otherwise be apprehended, to continue harming D.C. and surrounding communities.

This bill replaces subtitle S with policies that allow for vehicular pursuit of a suspect fleeing in a motor vehicle if the officer or supervisor deems it necessary, the most effective means of apprehension, and without unreasonable risk to bystanders.

I thank Representative CLAY HIGGINS for his leadership on this critical local policing reform legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support his bill.

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

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose this bill, which would overrule rules implemented by D.C.'s elected leaders on when Metropolitan Police officers should pursue a fleeing car.

Our debate here is a perfect example of why D.C. needs self-rule. We should be clear. High-speed chases are deadly. They often end in needless deaths, injuries, and devastating property damage.

Over 3,000 people died in police car chases in the U.S. between 2017 and 2022. Half of those deaths were innocent bystanders not involved in the chase. I will repeat. Half of the people who have died in police car chases were innocent bystanders. That should alarm every single one of us.

Across the country, Republican-led States have recognized the dangers of high-speed cases. States like Texas, Florida, and Tennessee have all implemented tighter standards to limit pursuits of violent criminals or imminent threats. They know the risks are too high for people who are innocent or could get caught up in one of these car crashes. That is the best practice, and D.C. is following the same path.

But my Republican colleagues want to interfere. They want to lower the standards to allow for more chases and more innocent people getting hurt.

I will remind us that this District is dense. Sidewalks oftentimes are small. Streets are tight. There are a lot of folks who live here. We should not have a one-size-fits-all policy for D.C. We should allow the people of D.C. to decide when a car chase is appropriate.

Congress should not require D.C. police to use tactics that the community does not want. D.C. residents should be empowered to decide when to authorize their police to use dangerous tactics.

Under current D.C. law, pursuits are allowed if a fleeing suspect has committed a violent crime, for example, or poses an imminent threat to public safety and if the pursuit can be done in a way that minimizes the risk to innocent people.

□ 1240

We should not lower these standards, and certainly not with zero community input and no consultation with the D.C. Council, Mayor, or other folks who are actually trying to manage this city.

There are many tools, we know, that police officers can use to track suspects and make arrests. We should let the Council, the Mayor, and the police work together with the D.C. police to balance public safety, pedestrian safety, and proportionality. If D.C. residents don't like it, they can vote their elected officials out of office.

Today, Congress is again injecting itself as some sort of super city council to write laws for Washington, D.C. As a former mayor of 8 years, I worked with over 700 amazing men and women of a police department who were heroic in the work that they did. I know that, in conversations with our chief, our police officers, and our community, these decisions are best left to our communities to write the laws of when these police chases should actually go into effect.

While I appreciate the author and my friend, this bill, I believe, is unnecessary. It undermines home rule, and it will make D.C. less safe.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the sponsor of the bill, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS).

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee for recognizing me and allowing me to speak in support of H.R. 5143, the District of Columbia Policing Protection Act.

As a matter of background, Mr. Speaker, in January 2023, the D.C. Council enacted the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022, the CPJRA Act, D.C. Law 24–345, among numerous other police-related policy matters, most of which we advised against in the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. We met with D.C. officials, including in hearings, and we advised against what they intended to do.

Mr. Speaker, included in those police-related policy matters in the act that they, indeed, passed in 2022 was subtitle S of the CPJRA, which imposed a host of restrictions on police pursuit of criminal suspects.

In doing so, the D.C. Council essentially made it illegal for police to pursue and apprehend criminals if they were fleeing in a vehicle by imposing a complex matrix of 14 factors that police officers have to consider for whether or not they would pursue a fleeing vehicle.

I speak from my own experience as a police officer. I have been, very likely, the only one involved in this debate for several years who has actually engaged in high-speed chases. I tried to add it up the other day, but I probably have engaged in a couple of hundred serious high-speed pursuits in the course of my career. I worked night shift for a long time, 9 years straight, 12-hour shifts. Night shift is when this stuff usually happens.

I am not talking about when someone doesn't stop right away. That is not a high-speed pursuit. Having to drive 100 miles an hour to catch up with somebody that you are pulling over is not a high-speed pursuit.

A high-speed pursuit is when they are running. This is something where the officer has to make very fast decisions, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we consider the totality of circumstances of where we are: Is that a suspect vehicle? Does it match a definition of something that has been put out through dispatch of a vehicle that we are looking for? Has it potentially been involved in a crime that requires police interaction in an effort to enforce and address that crime that took place?

There are a number of factors that a police officer has to figure, but it has to be an option that you can pursue that car.

What D.C. has done, one of the factors, Mr. Speaker, is if anyone in the suspect motor vehicle was afforded an opportunity to comply with an order to surrender any suspected dangerous weapons.

What the hell? There is no way a police officer can know that. There are too many factors, which basically means D.C. has made it illegal for police to pursue a vehicle.

That is what we are correcting here. We are restoring the discretion of the professional law enforcement officer to make a decision in a fraction of a second or two based upon his policies and training and the totality of circumstances of whether or not he needs to pursue that vehicle.

This is what my bill restores. The legislation repeals subtitle S of the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 and replaces it with policies empowering police to make vehicular pursuit of a suspect fleeing in a motor vehicle if the officer or supervisor deems it necessary, that it is the most effective means of apprehension, and if it is without unreasonable risk to bystanders.

Let me say, in all of my vehicle pursuits, there have been a few crashes, but nobody has died. The only crash that I have ever been involved in during those pursuits was when I purposefully crashed the fleeing vehicle, which was the guy who had committed an armed robbery at a local hardware store, had pistol-whipped the manager of that store, made it to his car, and fired at officers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time yielded and the indulgence of the chairman. I urge strong support of H.R. 5143. It restores legitimate discretion to the police officers who actually work the streets of D.C.

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS) also for his service in law enforcement. I know that he is trying to help and trying to move public safety forward. I know that is his intention, but I just want to clarify a few things.

It has been mentioned that this committee or this bill has somehow been heard by a committee. We have not held a hearing on these bills. To clarify, our hearing on D.C. is actually tomorrow. There has been no coordination with the Mayor or the D.C. Council. They oppose this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I will clarify. It has been mentioned a few times when we have debated this bill that there are somehow 14 criteria that officers have to consider before engaging in a pursuit.

The law is very clear. The suspect must have ''committed or attempted to commit a crime of violence, or poses an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury,'' and the pursuit is ''necessary to protect another person'' from ''serious bodily injury''; and not likely to cause injury to others; and ''all other options have been exhausted or do not reasonably lend themselves to the circumstances.'' That is actually what the law says.

I just wanted to note that. I am not sure what those 14 criteria are.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose this undemocratic and paternalistic bill, which amends D.C. law. The over 700,000 D.C. residents, the majority of whom are Black and Brown, are capable and worthy of governing themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters opposing this bill from D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, the entire D.C. Council, and D.C. Attorney General Brian Schwalb.

SEPTEMBER 10, 2025.

Hon. JAMES CORNER,
Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.
Hon. ROBERT GARCIA,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN COMER AND RANKING MEMBER GARCIA: As Mayor and Chief Executive Officer of the District of Columbia, I am proud of the work we have accomplished to invest in our people, strengthen our neighborhoods, and drive down crime. Building on this progress, my Administration established the Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center to coordinate public safety and beautification efforts as the presidential emergency declaration ends. This structure ensures that DC will remain proactive—bringing together local and federal partners to sustain momentum on reducing crime and improving quality of life for every resident.

We have worked collaboratively with this Committee on shared priorities, including public safety, the federal Return to Work, implementing a DC budget Fiscal Year 2025 fix (which is still pending in the House) and revitalizing the RFK campus; but I write now to ask you to reject 13 of the DC bills before you today that encroach on DC's Home Rule:

Bills like H.R. 5183, the District of Columbia Home Rule Improvement Act, make the District less efficient, competitive, and responsive to the needs of a highly complex unique local government that serves local, county and state functions. Bogging down legislative and executive action only adds costs and uncertainty, making it more difficult to handle the economic headwinds and growth opportunities ahead.

Bills like H.R. 5214, the District of Columbia Cash Bail Reform Act, make DC less safe. Replacing our very effective pre-trial detention regime, which focuses on charged violent offenses and repeat violent offenders, not just on cash bail. I credit recent changes to our laws related to pre-trial detention for helping to drive down violent crime in the last two years.

And the bills to abolish the Judicial Nominations Commission and to convert the elected DC Attorney General to a Presidentially appointed legal officer for the District are both less democratic and untenable for District operations. The Judicial Nomination Commission, with seven members appointed by the Mayor, DC Council, President, US District Court for DC, and the DC Bar, works. As recently as last month, President Trump nominated three federal judicial nominees who were selected from the Commission's candidate pool—a process that demonstrates the value of maintaining local input. DC residents also voted to elect an Attorney General who represents the public interest. Changes to these charter agencies would significantly undercut the already thin ties to autonomy that limited home rule provides.

Finally, I urge you not to up end our three-part education funding SOAR Act. I have long supported the program to expand opportunity for DC students. However, my support has always been contingent on parity among all three education sectors—public, private, and charter—and this approach is working. We will not support changes that tip the scales away from this core principle of fairness for DC families. As the fastest improving urban school system, DC has become a model for urban education. We outpace the national average on all tested subject areas. We boast free, full-day Pre-K access serving more than 13,200 young learners—an investment which supports our children and our workforce. DC ranked top of the nation in parental satisfaction regarding school choice. Mayoral control, council oversight, and deep, targeted investments in our students, teachers, and buildings made these remarkable achievements possible.

I look forward to continuing a productive partnership with the Committee—one that respects the will of DC residents and honors the principles of home rule. Together, we can build on our successes while protecting the autonomy that, as history reflects, has made our city stronger.

Sincerely,

MURIEL BOWSER,
Mayor.

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, DC, September 8, 2025.

Hon. JAMES COMER,
Chair, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT GARCIA,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN COMER AND RANKING MEMBER GARCIA: The Council of the District of Columbia is aware that the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is planning to mark up more than a dozen proposed measures that would severely and negatively impact the operations, public safety, and autonomy of the District of Columbia. We ask that you oppose these measures in full, save one, H.R. 2693, District of Columbia Electronic Transmittal of Legislation Act. While we have not seen the final text of this legislation, the public summary of H.R. 2693 is consistent with the long held request by the District of Columbia to allow the ability to electronically transfer legislative acts to Congress, rather than only allowing physical copies be transferred. The challenge and barriers created by this current requirement were clearly exposed during both the recent COVID pandemic restrictions as well as the Capitol campus restrictions following the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol.

The other 13 measures that have been shared with us would do direct and serious harm to the District of Columbia and we urge you to reject these measures completely. These bills represent an unprecedented attack on the autonomy and home rule of our local government and the more than 700,000 Americans that call it home. The breadth of these bills is remarkable, and if passed, would result in an erosion of accountability and public safety for the District of Columbia. They range from eliminating and replacing our elected and accountable Attorney General for the District of Columbia with a President's hand-picked and unaccountable associate requiring no confirmation by the U.S. Senate and no local ties, to a full repeal of multiple local DC laws that have been in place for many years, if not decades, that are tested, proven, and effective components of our public safety infrastructure and ecosystem. The effect of these Congressional repeals would put our legal and Court system into chaos and directly undermine successful tools that focus on serious accountability and effective rehabilitation when a crime occurs. As always, when revisions or amendments to DC laws are necessary, those changes should only take place within our local legislature which has the best capacity to provide effective oversight and accountable actions for the residents of the District of Columbia.

We respectfully request that all members of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and all members of Congress, reject these harmful measures whether in committee mark up or before the full House of Representatives. Given the breadth of the multiple measures before you, we also request an opportunity to provide a more in-depth discussion of each bill before the Committee's mark-up, especially in light that the Committee will not hold public hearings on these measures.

Sincerely,

Chairman Phil Mendelson; Councilmember Anita Bonds, At-Large; Councilmember Robert White, Jr., At-Large; Councilmember Brooke Pinto, Ward 2; Councilmember Janeese Lewis George, Ward 4; Councilmember Charles Allen, Ward 6; Councilmember Trayon White, Sr, Ward 8; Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie, At-Large; Councilmember Christina Henderson, At-Large; Councilmember Brianne Nadeau, Ward 1; Councilmember Matthew Frumin, Ward 3; Councilmember Zachary Parker, Ward 5; Councilmember Wendell Felder, Ward 7.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,
Washington, DC, September 9, 2025.

Hon. JAMES COMER,
Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT GARCIA,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN COMER AND RANKING MEMBER GARCIA: The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is scheduled to markup fourteen bills tomorrow related to the operations of the District of Columbia. With the exception of H.R. 2693, the District of Columbia Electronic Transmittal Act, I write in strong opposition to these bills. They address inherently local issues and laws that were passed after careful consideration by the District's elected representatives, who are directly accountable to District residents. Members of this very Committee have long advocated for the principles of federalism on which this nation was founded. They have consistently condemned federal overreach and fought forcefully and convincingly for the uniquely American values of local control, freedom, and self-governance. These principles should apply to the more than 700,000 people who call Washington, DC home, just as they do for your constituents across the country.

I specifically want to call attention to the significant incursion on local self-governance reflected in two bills, the District of Columbia Attorney General Appointment Reform Act and the District of Columbia Judicial Nominations Reform Act. Both laws would displace the ability of District residents to have a voice in the selection of local leaders who wield significant power over local judicial matters: the judges on our local courts and the Attorney General for the District. The judges on the DC Court of Appeals and DC Superior Court rule on inherently local matters such as criminal prosecutions, landlord-tenant cases, probate proceedings, civil cases, and divorce proceedings, all of which have profoundly important impact on our community. For more than 50 years, the Judicial Nomination Commission (JNC) has successfully allowed DC residents to have a voice in judicial appointments, while also granting the President and Senate a role in confirming our judges. I urge the Committee not to overturn that well-established process.

The DC Attorney General, as the District's chief law officer, is also responsible for local legal issues, namely, protecting the District and its residents in a wide range of matters, such as enforcing child support laws, handling abuse and neglect proceedings in the child welfare system, enforcing our housing code, and defending District agencies and officers when they are sued. In no other place in the United States are such local issues determined by a federally appointed person with no local accountability. The proposed legislation would be especially undemocratic in light of the fact that, in 2010, an overwhelming majority of District voters (76 percent) exercised their right to amend the District Charter to make the DC Attorney General an independent, elected office, rather than a position appointed by and subordinate to the Mayor. With that vote, District residents clearly expressed their desire that the Attorney General should be independent and accountable to them. The pending bill would displace that choice in favor of installing an Attorney General accountable not to District residents, but to the President. Given that the U.S. Attorney for the District is already appointed by the President, if passed, this bill would concentrate all criminal and civil litigation authority in the President, divesting the District and its residents of any local control over these essential functions.

No one knows or cares more about keeping DC safe than DC residents who work, live and raise their families here. Our democratically elected officials work closely with local law enforcement, policy experts, and community leadership to pass laws that are in the best interests of all Washingtonians. Substituting the will of DC voters with the whim of federal politicians is undemocratic and un-American.

I urge you to reject these measures and uphold the values Congress sought to advance more than 50 years ago when it passed the District of Columbia Home Rule Act: that District residents should enjoy the ''powers of local self-government'' that all other Americans enjoy. See DC Code §1–201.02.

Respectfully submitted,

BRIAN L. SCHWALB,
Attorney General for the District of Columbia.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, the D.C. local legislature, the Council, has 13 members. If D.C. residents do not like how members vote, residents can vote them out of office or pass a ballot measure. That is called democracy.

Congress has 535 voting Members. None are elected by D.C. residents. If D.C. residents do not like how Members vote on local D.C. matters, residents cannot vote them out of office or pass a ballot measure. This is the antithesis of democracy.

The substance of this bill is irrelevant since there is never justification for Congress to legislate on local D.C. matters. Nevertheless, I will discuss it.

□ 1250

Vehicular pursuits by police officers are inherently dangerous not just for officers and suspects but for bystanders, too, and often there are other options to detain a suspect. D.C. permits vehicular pursuits, but it imposes limitations on them. According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, vehicular pursuit policies must ''balance the risks, take all of the factors into consideration, and reach a decision that is best suited to their jurisdictions.'' Unlike D.C., 2 percent of local police departments prohibit vehicular pursuits altogether. The sponsor of this bill, who is from Louisiana, thinks he knows better than D.C. how to strike the proper balance in D.C.

I will read for my Republican colleagues part of the signing statement your fellow Republican, President Richard Nixon, issued on the D.C. Home Rule Act: ''One of the major goals of this administration is to place responsibility for local functions under local control and to provide local governments with the authority and resources they need to serve their communities effectively. The measure I sign today represents a significant step

in achieving this goal in the city of Washington. It will give the people of the District of Columbia the right to elect their own city officials and to govern themselves in local affairs. As the Nation approaches the 200th anniversary of its founding, it is particularly appropriate to assure those persons who live in our Capital City rights and privileges which have long been enjoyed by most of their countrymen.''

D.C. residents have all the obligations of American citizenship, including paying Federal taxes, serving on juries, and registering with the Selective Service, yet Congress denies them full local self-government and voting representation in Congress. The only solution to this undemocratic treatment is to grant D.C. statehood.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter explaining why the D.C. statehood bill is constitutional from leading constitutional scholars, including Larry Tribe.

MAY 22, 2021.

Re Washington, D.C. Admission Act, H.R. 51 and S. 51 (the ''D.C. Admission Act'').

Hon. NANCY P. PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. KEVIN O. MCCARTHY,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS: As scholars of the United States Constitution, we write to correct claims that the D.C. Admission Act is vulnerable to a constitutional challenge in the courts. For the reasons set forth below, there is no constitutional barrier to the State of Washington, Douglass Commonwealth (the ''Commonwealth'') entering the Union through a congressional joint resolution, pursuant to the Constitution's Admissions Clause, just like the 37 other states that have been admitted since the Constitution was adopted. Furthermore, Congress's exercise of its express constitutional authority to decide to admit a new state is a classic political question, which courts are highly unlikely to interfere with, let alone attempt to bar.

The D.C. Admission Act. The House passed the Act, as H.R. 51, on April 22, 2021, and as of this writing, the substantively identical companion bill (S. 51) is under consideration by the Senate. The Act provides for the issuance of a congressional joint resolution declaring the admittance as a State of most of the territory currently comprising the District of Columbia, while the seat of government (defined as the ''Capital'') will fall outside of the boundaries of the new State and remain under federal jurisdiction. The Act also repeals the provision of federal law that establishes the current mechanism for District residents to participate in presidential elections, pursuant to Congress's authority under the Twenty-Third Amendment; and provides for expedited consideration of the repeal of that Amendment.

The Admissions Clause grants Congress constitutional authority to admit the Commonwealth into the Union. The starting point for a constitutional analysis of the Act is the Constitution's Admissions Clause (Art. IV, Sect. 3), which provides that ''New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union.'' The Clause ''vests in Congress the essential and discretionary authority to admit new states into the Union by whatever means it considers appropriate as long as such means are framed within its vested powers.'' Every State admitted into the Union since the Constitution was adopted has been admitted by congressional action pursuant to this Clause; no State has been admitted pursuant to a constitutional amendment.

The Supreme Court has broadly construed Congress's assigned power to admit new states and has never interfered with Congress's admission of a state, even when potentially legitimate constitutional objections existed. For example, in 1863, Congress admitted into the Union West Virginia, which had been part of the State of Virginia, in potential violation of a provision of the Admissions Clause that bars the formation of a new State out of a portion of the territory of another State without the consent of the ceding State. The Supreme Court, however, did not bar West Virginia's admission; to the contrary, it later tacitly approved of it.

Some critics of the D.C. Admission Act have suggested that Maryland's consent might be required under the foregoing provision of the Admissions Clause. This objection mistakenly presupposes that Maryland retains a reversionary interest in the territory currently composing the District of Columbia, which Maryland ceded to the federal government when the District was established in 1791. In fact, Maryland expressly relinquished all sovereign authority over the territory at issue when the federal government accepted it. The express terms of the cession state that the territory was ''for ever ceded and relinquished to the congress and government of the United States, in full and absolute right, and exclusive jurisdiction . . . .'' As Viet D. Dinh, who served as an Assistant Attorney General during the presidency of George W. Bush, has explained, because Maryland's cession of the territory now constituting the District was full and complete, it severed D.C. residents' now far distant ''political link with'' Maryland. The current District is not part of Maryland, and Maryland has no claim on any portion of the District's territory. There is accordingly no basis to require Maryland's consent for the establishment of the new State.

The Constitution's District Clause poses no barrier to admitting the Commonwealth into the Union. The Constitution's District Clause grants Congress power to ''exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States.'' Based on this Clause, Congress established the current District of Columbia, which (as explained) was taken from territory ceded by Maryland, as well as Virginia.

The D.C. Admission Act complies with the District Clause because it provides that the Capital—which is defined in the Act to include (among other things) the White House, the Capitol Building, the United States Supreme Court Building, and the Federal executive, legislative, and judicial office buildings located adjacent to the Mall—will not become part of the new State and will remain under the sovereignty of the federal government.

Some critics have argued that the District Clause somehow mandates that the District of Columbia permanently retain all of its current territory, and that its size may neither be increased or reduced by Congress. The plain language of the District Clause says no such thing; it does not mandate that the District be any size or shape, except it limits the maximum size of the federal enclave to ten square miles.

Historical practice confirms that Congress can change the size of the District. In 1791, Congress altered the District's southern boundary to encompass portions of what are now Alexandria, Virginia and Anacostia. Then, in 1846, Congress retroceded Alexandria and its environs back to Virginia. As a result, the territory composing the District was reduced by a third.

At the time of the 1846 retrocession, the House's Committee on the District of Columbia considered, and rejected, the very argument that critics of the D.C. Admission Act are raising today, reasoning that the ''true construction of [the District Clause] would seem to be solely that Congress retain and exercise exclusive jurisdiction'' over territory comprising the ''seat of government.'' The language of the District Clause, the legislators observed, places no mandate on the size, or even the location, of that seat of government, other than preventing the government from ''hold[ing] more than ten miles for this purpose.'' The House's judgment was correct in 1846, and remains so today.

The Twenty-Third Amendment does not prevent Congress from granting the Commonwealth statehood. Opponents of statehood have suggested that the Twenty-Third Amendment bars Congress from exercising its constitutionally enumerated authority to grant statehood to the Commonwealth. In fact, the Amendment poses no barrier to the admission of the Commonwealth into the Union through an act of Congress, in accordance with the plain language of the Admissions Clause, just as Congress has done in connection with the admission of several other States, including most recently Alaska and Hawaii.

Section 1 of the Twenty-Third Amendment, which was ratified in 1961, provides:

The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct: A number of electors of President and Vice President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice President, to be electors appointed by a State.

By its plain terms, the Amendment poses no barrier to Congress's admission of the Commonwealth into the Union. Indeed, it is entirely silent on the matter.

The only question raised by the existence of the Twenty-Third Amendment is a practical, not a constitutional one: How best to address the Twenty-Third Amendment's provision for the assignment of presidential electors to what will become a vestigial seat of government, with virtually no residents? The Act satisfactorily addresses this question by providing for the repeal of the provision of federal law that establishes the current mechanism for District residents to participate in presidential elections, pursuant to Congress's authority under the Twenty-Third Amendment, as well as by commencing the process for repealing the Amendment itself.

Initially, the Act provides for an expedited process for repeal of the Twenty-Third Amendment, a process that should move forward to ratification swiftly and successfully once the Commonwealth is admitted as a State. None of the other 50 States has reason to seek to retain three electors for a largely unoccupied seat of government.

But the Act also addresses the possibility that the Twenty-Third Amendment is not

promptly repealed by mandating the immediate repeal of the provision of federal law that provides the current mechanism for District residents to participate in federal elections.

In 1961, following the adoption of the Twenty-Third Amendment, Congress exercised its enforcement authority by enacting legislation (codified at 3 U.S.C. §21), providing that the District residents may select presidential electors; the votes of the electors are currently awarded to the ticket prevailing in the District's presidential election.

The existing statutes fall within the broad authority granted to Congress by the Twenty-Third Amendment to define the terms of, and effectuate, the District's participation in presidential elections. The Amendment allows for the appointment of a number of Electors ''in such manner as the Congress may direct.'' The Amendment also allows Congress to select the number of Electors the District may receive, subject only to a maximum: The District may participate in the presidential Electoral College through the appointment of no more electors than those of the smallest State, i.e., three. And section 2 of the Amendment grants Congress the power to ''enforce'' the provision ''by appropriate legislation,'' as it did in 1961.

But once Congress acts again, pursuant to its express grant of constitutional authority, and repeals the legislation that creates the existing procedure for District residents to select presidential electors, that will remove the legislative provision providing for the District's participation in presidential elections. Without such a provision, there is no mechanism for identifying the Capital area's electors or allocating their votes.

Some scholars have questioned whether that approach is satisfactory. They contend that the Twenty-Third Amendment is self-enforcing, and effectively mandates the appointment of electors on behalf of the District of Columbia, regardless of whether such appointment is called for under a federal statute. Some of us disagree; indeed, the very existence of Section 2 of the Amendment makes clear that enabling legislation is required to effectuate the District's participation in the presidential election process. And Congress's 1961 enforcement legislation supports this interpretation.

Even if this self-enforcement argument were to be accepted, however, Congress could easily address it by replacing the current law mandating that the Capital area's electors vote in accordance with the outcome of the popular vote in the District with a new legislative mandate that the Capital area's electors vote in other ways. For example, Congress could require District electors to vote in favor of the presidential ticket that receives the most Electoral College votes (of the remaining 538 electors). Or, alternatively, Congress could require that District electors vote for the winner of the national popular vote winner.

A recent Supreme Court decision confirms that a legislative directive to the Capital area's electors would be enforceable. The Twenty-Third Amendment provides that the District ''shall appoint'' electors ''in such manner as Congress may direct''; this language is a direct parallel to the Constitution's grant of broad authority to each of the States to appoint and instruct their respective electors. In its recent decision in Chiafalo v. Washington, the Supreme Court held that electors do not have discretion to decide how to cast their Electoral College votes, but rather are legally bound to follow the instructions given by their respective states.

As Columbia Law School Professors Jessica Bulman-Pozen and Olatunde Johnson have observed, it follows from the Court's holding in Chiafalo that Congress could legally bind any electors to vote in accordance with the overall vote of the Electoral College or the national popular vote, just as the existing enabling statute currently binds them to vote in the Electoral College in accordance with the outcome of the popular vote in the District.

In sum, none of the critics' constitutional objections to the D.C. Admission Act are meritorious; and the contention that a constitutional amendment is required to admit the Commonwealth into the Union is incorrect. The D.C. Admission Act calls for a proper exercise of Congress' express authority under the Constitution to admit new states, a power that it has exercised 37 other times since the Constitution was adopted.

Courts are unlikely to second-guess Congress's exercise of its constitutional authority to admit the Commonwealth into the Union. Apart from the fact that the legal objections to admission of the Commonwealth as a State are without merit, it is also unlikely that the courts will ever consider those objections. As Mr. Dinh has observed, the decision whether to admit a state into the Union is a paradigmatic political question that the Constitution expressly and exclusively assigns to Congress. The Supreme Court has long, and strenuously, avoided adjudicating disputes respecting matters that the Constitution makes the sole responsibility of the coordinate, elected branches.

The remaining objections to Statehood do not concern applicable constitutional law, but rather matters of policy.

For example, some have argued that the District should not be admitted to the Union because it is a single city and have instead proposed that most of the District's territory be retrocessioned to Maryland. There is, however, no constitutional barrier to a large, diverse city, with a population comparable to that of several existing States, joining the Union. Furthermore, the Maryland retrocession proposal is subject to many of the same supposed constitutional objections raised by those who object to statehood for the District. For example, retroceding the District to Maryland would decrease the size of the remaining federal enclave, which objectors to District Statehood have claimed is constitutionally impermissible. A forced merger of the District and Maryland would also do nothing to address the purported constitutional objection to leaving the residual seat of government with three potential electors, pursuant to the terms of the Twenty-Third Amendment, prior to the Amendment's repeal.

Opponents also argue that Congress should not grant the District statehood because it will lead to a lawsuit. But any court challenge will be without merit, and indeed likely will be dismissed as presenting a political question. We respectfully submit that Congress should not avoid exercising its express constitutional authority to admit the Commonwealth into the Union because of meritless threats of litigation.

Sincerely yours,

Caroline Fredrickson, Georgetown University Law Center; Erwin Chemerinsky, University of California, Berkeley School of Law; Stephen I. Vladeck, University of Texas Law School; Franita Tolson, University of Southern California, Gould School of Law; Jessica Bulman-Pozen, Columbia Law School; Leah Litman, University of Michigan Law School; Laurence H. Tribe, Harvard Law School; Paul Smith, Georgetown University Law Center; Geoffrey R. Stone, University of Chicago Law School; Peter Edelman, Georgetown University Law Center; Kermit Roosevelt, University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School; Eric Segall, Georgia State College of Law; Trevor Potter, Campaign Legal Center.

Gregory P. Downs, University of California, Davis; Larry Sabato, University of Virginia; Aziz Huq, University of Chicago Law School; Jennifer Hochschild, Harvard University; Neil S. Siegel, Duke University School of Law; Beau Breslin, Skidmore College; David C. Vladeck, Georgetown University Law Center; Sanford Levinson, University of Texas at Austin School of Law; Ira C. Lupu, George Washington University Law School; Peter M. Shane, Ohio State University Moritz College of Law; Ira P. Robbins, American University Washington College of Law; Michael Greenberger, University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law; David Pozen, Columbia Law School.

Mark Tushnet, Harvard Law School; Michael C. Dorf, Cornell Law School; Miguel Schor, Drake University School of Law; David S. Schwartz, University of Wisconsin Law School; Caroline Mala Corbin, University of Miami School of Law; Jonathan Askin, Brooklyn Law School; Aziz Rana, Cornell Law School; John Mikhail, Georgetown University Law Center; Richard Ford, Stanford Law School; Richard Primus, University of Michigan Law School; Joseph Fishkin, University of Texas Law School; Kate Masur, Northwestern University; Chris Edelson, American University.

Ms. NORTON. The D.C. statehood bill, H.R. 51, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act, grants D.C. residents full local self-government and voting representation in Congress. H.R. 51 reduces the size of the Federal District from 68 square miles to 2 square miles, consisting of the White House, the Capitol, the Supreme Court, The National Mall and remaining under the control of Congress.

The new State consists of the residential and commercial areas of D.C. The new State has a larger population than two States, pays more Federal taxes per capita than any State, and pays more total Federal taxes than 21 States.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to vote ''no'' on the D.C. Policing Protection Act, keep their hands off D.C. and free D.C.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from Representative MIN that clarifies that he meant to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 5143 in committee.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 15, 2025.

Chairman JAMES COMER,
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN COMER: I am writing to respectfully clarify my intent regarding a vote I cast during the House Oversight and Government Reform full committee markup held on September 10, 2025. Because of miscommunication during the evening vote series, my recorded vote on H.R. 5143, the *District of Columbia Policing Protection Act*, does not reflect my intended position.

For the record, I meant to vote ''Aye'' on the final passage H.R. 5143, which repeals restrictions on the circumstances under which law enforcement officers in the District of Columbia may engage in vehicular pursuits. I ask that this letter be included in the committee's official record to reflect my intent.

Thank you for your understanding.

Sincerely,

DAVE MIN,
Member of Congress.

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

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. MCIVER).

Mrs. MCIVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with deep concern for our Nation's Capital, also known as chocolate city.

The four Republican bills on the floor this week are a direct attack on the people of this city, particularly the Black and Brown communities who have called D.C. home for generations.

These are residents who have built thriving small businesses, who have received an education from the D.C. school system, residents who have raised families and who call themselves proud Washingtonians since birth.

This bill, H.R. 5143, would impose the President's twisted vision of justice on D.C., overriding the autonomy of this city and hurting the people who live here.

Enabling deadly vehicle pursuits of suspects in the city, as a former councilwoman and a council president of the largest city in New Jersey, I know firsthand that this is dangerous. That is on top of the other bills that we are debating this week that seek to strip D.C. of its autonomy, force more juveniles into the justice system, expand the President's gross overreach, and make things worse.

The bills proposed by my Republican colleagues will worsen the already rampant injustices we see in the criminal justice system, make law enforcement more dangerous, and steal the futures of many of our youth.

These bills all send the same statement to Washingtonians: The administration does not believe you have the same right to dignity as other parts of this Nation.

If Congress truly wants to make our Nation's Capital as safe as it can be, we would listen to the residents of D.C. and their elected leaders who have lived experiences of what this community needs. The dog whistles used to justify these bills are not true. The D.C. Government has long taken a proactive approach to reducing crime in the District and today is experiencing a three-decade low in crime.

D.C. has done this in part by having a police force that looks like the very people it is sworn to protect, lives in the community it serves, and caters to the unique needs of D.C. residents.

The Speaker pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New Jersey.

Mrs. MCIVER. H.R. 5143 discourages basic public safety, pushes lies about crime in the Black and Brown communities, and puts everyone in harm's way and at risk.

That is why it is no surprise of who the sponsor is of this very dangerous and wicked bill. This bill is dangerous, once again, and a complete disaster to this community.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS).

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, let me just diplomatically address a couple of the accusations here regarding the nature of my bill.

The gentlewoman acknowledged that there is danger involved, yes. Yes, enforcing the law is dangerous. This is why the professional law enforcement officers across the country, including here in D.C., are incredibly well vetted and trained and equipped to make decisions in a matter of seconds or less to pursue criminals and to enforce the law.

It is dangerous work. It is dangerous for the officer. It can result in injury or death for the criminal. It can result in injury or death for innocent Americans, but let us never forget that the interaction was initiated by the criminal. Mr. Speaker, enforcing the law is dangerous work.

What is more dangerous, Mr. Speaker, is failure to enforce the law. What is more dangerous for every community, including our Nation's Capital, for which this body has a responsibility to stand, is failure to give discretion for enforcement of law to the very law enforcement professionals that you have trained and equipped and placed on the streets. To not allow those professionals to make decisions and enforce a law, that is incredibly dangerous.

My bill stands on the side of the citizenry of D.C. in an effort to enforce the law by fully empowering the police officers of D.C. to engage criminal conduct and enforce the law.

□ 1300

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. IVEY).

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding, and I rise in strong opposition to the gentleman's bill.

I appreciate my colleague from Louisiana. We have had a chance to serve together on committees. I know he has a strong respect for law enforcement, so I am not saying his heart is in the wrong place, but I am saying this bill is wrong. I say that from personal experience.

He is right, I was never in an active car pursuit, but I was a prosecutor here in Washington, D.C., and for 8 years in Prince George's County, which is the eastern border of Washington, D.C., so I have seen the results of some of these high-speed chases.

The bill that is drafted, that he has proposed, actually takes away a reasonable balance that was drawn by the people here of the District of Columbia, as is their right for a democracy.

Also, one of the things we need to keep in mind, and my colleague addressed this kind of briefly but, frankly, skipped over it, what happens when that chase leads to the death of innocent civilians?

When the gentleman said he had been in 100 car chases, a chill went through my body, I have to say, because I have seen the results, the deadly consequences of some of these car chases. When you have to go talk to that family and tell them why their loved ones died, you don't want to have to say that it was over something minor like a stolen car.

The balance that the city struck was that it should be for an imminent violent offense, high-level felony, something like that that you really understand why they would have engaged in the pursuit. This bill would take that away and expand it open so that you could have high-speed chases taking place with respect to misdemeanors.

This isn't a hypothetical for me. When I was the State's attorney in Prince George's County, we actually had one of these. We had several, but I will just pick one for purposes of time. A police officer saw a stolen motorcycle zip down the beltway and decided to pursue it. Stealing a motorcycle is a misdemeanor and speeding is a misdemeanor, but he decided to pursue it anyway.

Mind you, this is during rush hour, so he had to pursue on the border of the road, and speeds got up to over 100 miles an hour on the beltway in rush hour. Of course, it is hard for a car to catch a motorcycle, especially when it can weave in and out of traffic.

He didn't make the apprehension, but what he did do as he was speeding along on the side of the road at 100-plus miles an hour was come across debris on the road, and he tried to swerve to avoid it. When he did that, the car jumped over the Jersey barrier between the two lanes and took him into the opposite lane of oncoming traffic.

The car jumped over, hit the top of a car coming the opposite direction, and killed two men on their way to a concert. They had nothing to do with any kind of high-speed chase. They didn't have anything to do with any kind of criminal activity. These were people who were good folks, actually just visiting in the area—one was from Buffalo—who died because of a high-speed chase over a minor misdemeanor. That doesn't make any sense. It is not like that only happens in Prince George's County.

Here in Washington, D.C., we had a similar kind of case. It was back in 2016. It led up to a deadly chase on East Capitol and Benning Road. The chases the gentleman was talking about, maybe those were rural areas, but those are high-traffic areas even in the nighttime. Sometimes these pursuits take place during the day.

This led to the death of an innocent man. This was over a stolen car. Think about what you would say to that family when you are explaining to them that their father, brother, or son lost his life over a stolen car.

Then the other part that influences me—again, I represent Prince George's

County now—but sometimes when they start high-speed chases in D.C., they go into Prince George's County, Montgomery County, or Northern Virginia, and we lost someone during a high-speed chase on the Baltimore-Washington Parkway; another stolen car case.

When we make these decisions about when a chase is permitted or should be permitted or not, we need to keep in mind that there can be deadly consequences from when this happens, and it frequently occurs. It is not like this is unusual. The Washington Post just did a piece about the Park Police. There have been 10 of these instances in recent weeks.

I have a couple last points. One is liability. The Federal Government is going to put this burden on the city.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. IVEY. When that liability arises from a car chase ending in death that didn't make any sense to a jury, the city could be on the hook for millions of dollars. I guarantee they are not going to step in and have the Federal Government cover that for them. When we think about these things, we need to keep all of those things in mind.

The last point I will make, a variation on the home rule argument. D.C. is not a rural jurisdiction. In fact, its roads aren't even as straightforward as Manhattan. We have got diagonal roads that cut across, we have circles, and we have very dangerous intersections. I wish my colleagues knew how tricky it can be out there. A high-speed chase in the middle of the District of Columbia, even during the middle of the day is almost, by definition, dangerous almost under any circumstances, so you better have a really good reason to engage in a pursuit like that.

That is not the balance that is drawn by this bill. That is not the balance that was drawn by the people of the District of Columbia. It should be the balance, and they should make the call because when the deaths happen, my colleagues won't be anywhere to be found.

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

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

I strongly oppose this bill. D.C.'s elected leaders have set clear, commonsense limits on high-speed chases and limits that save lives. I just remind folks that States like Texas, Florida, and Tennessee recognize the danger and restrict pursuits to violent crimes or imminent deaths, and D.C. follows that same practice.

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense legislation to allow police officers in the District of Columbia to pursue and apprehend criminals to keep residents and visitors in the District safe. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 707, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GARCIA of California. 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 question will be postponed.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1631

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DESJARLAIS) at 4 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5371, CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS AND EXTENSIONS ACT, 2026; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 719, HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF CHARLES ''CHARLIE'' JAMES KIRK; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 722 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 722

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 5371) making continuing appropriations and extensions for fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 719) honoring the life and legacy of Charles ''Charlie'' James Kirk. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform or their respective designees.

SEC. 3. Sections 9, 10, and 11 of House Resolution 707, agreed to September 16, 2025, are each amended by striking ''March 31, 2026'' and inserting ''January 31, 2026''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Indiana is recognized for 1 hour.

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, last night, the Rules Committee met and produced a rule, House Resolution 722, providing for the House's consideration of two pieces of legislation.

First, the rule provides for H. Res. 719, Honoring the life and legacy of Charles ''Charlie'' James Kirk, to be considered under a closed rule. It provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Second, the rule provides for H.R. 5371, the Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2026. H.R. 5371 would be considered under a closed rule, and it also provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their designees, and provides for one motion to recommit.

Finally, the rule tolls the day counts until January 31, 2026, regarding joint resolutions terminating the national emergencies declared by the President on February 1, 2025; April 2, 2025; and July 30, 2025.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this rule and in support of the underlying legislation, beginning with H. Res. 719, honoring Charlie Kirk.

It is really quite unbelievable that we are here today honoring the life of Charlie Kirk, taken from us far too soon. This is the kind of tribute you would give after a lifetime of service, not usually at the young age of just 31, but Charlie Kirk made a lifetime's worth of impact in his short 31 years on this Earth, and we are grateful for it.