

drafted, may have unintended consequences. Veterans deserve the widest possible array of educational opportunities, but not at the cost of diminished quality, oversight, or value.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1730

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the concerns of the minority, and I would like to dispel some misinformation provided by the ranking member.

H.R. 1458 would expand the way in which the GI Bill benefits can be used by veterans, but it would not remove any of the guardrails in place to keep out bad actors. In fact, the bill would require regular and additional interaction between students and instructors, which would add an additional meaningful guardrail for veteran providers.

In the most recent VA "Annual Benefits Report," only 3.5 percent of veterans pursued vocational or technical education, even though skilled trades are among the fastest growing career opportunities in the United States.

This bill would help tackle the current workforce shortage in skills and trades in the U.S. while maintaining the oversight that VA has over bad actors. Now the GI Bill already has limits on tuition payments approval and quality standards to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse in the program.

Often, veterans may need to attend school or training online or hybrid, not due to performance but due to the necessity of taking care of their families or loved ones. This bill would respond to those realities, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to get the bill signed into law.

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

Mr. CISCOMANI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1458, the VETS Opportunity Act of 2025, a bill I introduced to modernize veterans' education benefits and align them with today's workforce needs.

As I represent nearly 80,000 veterans in southern Arizona, I know firsthand when servicemembers transition to civilian life, they bring discipline, leadership, and a strong work ethic, but too often the system limits how they can use the benefits that they earned. This bill changes that by modernizing the GI Bill and expanding access to high-quality certificates and technical training programs, possibly offered in a hybrid format, that lead directly to good-paying jobs in high-demand fields.

Not every veteran wants or needs a traditional 4-year degree. Many want fast, skills-based training that connects them to careers in the trades, healthcare, technology, and other critical fields. This bill recognizes reality, and it gives veterans the flexibility to choose the path that works best for them and their families.

Furthermore, this legislation includes clear protections to ensure the program operates efficiently and that veterans' benefits are used responsibly as well. Programs like this one must be accredited, approved by the VA, and provide regular and substantive interaction between instructors and students.

The VETS Opportunity Act is about modernizing our VA benefits and programs to empower veterans, strengthen the workforce, and honor the promise this country made to those who served. By strengthening education benefits, we empower veterans, build a stronger workforce, and drive a stronger economy.

This bill turns service into opportunity and commitment into careers. That is what our veterans deserve, and that is what our communities need.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1458 and vote "yes."

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, before I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina, I do want to point out that the chairman was referring to hybrid programs. Our concern is not about the hybrid programs, but independent study, and that independent study loophole for for-profit, private educational providers may allow for some abuse and targeting of veterans in unintended ways. I do hope that our colleagues in the Senate will give this a second look and possibly return this legislation for final passage here.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. DAVIS), my good friend.

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman BOST and Ranking Member TAKANO for their leadership.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1458, the VETS Opportunity Act of 2025. As a proud United States Air Force veteran and voice for over 56,000 veterans and their families in North Carolina's First Congressional District, it was an honor to join and work with the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. CISCOMANI) in introducing this bipartisan legislation.

For too many veterans, the transition from military service to civilian life comes with uncertainty about how to build a new career and support their families. By expanding in-person and hybrid training options for skilled trade programs, we are bridging skills gaps across the country, empowering our veterans, and contributing to our local economies.

Madam Speaker, I believe it is time to equip eastern North Carolina's veterans and beyond with the training and skills they so need. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I again express my qualified support for H.R. 1458, the VETS Opportunity Act of 2025, as amended. I can't express that enough.

I urge my colleagues to work with the Senate to improve this bill and ensure that it is veterans who benefit from this legislation and not bad actors.

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

Mr. BOST. Madam 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. 1458, 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.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Small Business:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 2, 2026.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

SPEAKER JOHNSON: It has been an honor to serve on the House Small Business Committee for the 119th Congress.

With this letter, I respectfully resign from the House Small Business Committee.

While I am stepping away from my formal membership on the House Small Business Committee, I will never stop being a champion for the Small Businesses of South and Central New Jersey.

Most sincerely,
HERB CONAWAY, JR.,
Congressman.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF INDIVIDUAL TO NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 29 U.S.C. 780, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, of the following individual on the part of the House to the National Council on Disability:

Mr. Brian Patchett, Bossier City, Louisiana

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MOORE of North Carolina) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

Motions to suspend the rules and pass:

- H.R. 980; and,
- H.R. 3123.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

VETERANS READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2025

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 980) to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements to the provision of on-campus educational and vocational counseling by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 402, nays 2, not voting 27, as follows:

[Roll No. 49]
YEAS—402

Adams	Brecheen	Conaway
Aderholt	Bresnahan	Correa
Aguilar	Brown	Costa
Alford	Brownley	Courtney
Allen	Budzinski	Craig
Amo	Bynum	Crane
Amodעי (NV)	Calvert	Crank
Ansari	Cammack	Crawford
Arrington	Carbajal	Crenshaw
Auchincloss	Carey	Crockett
Babin	Carson	Crow
Bacon	Carter (GA)	Cuellar
Balderson	Carter (LA)	Davidson (KS)
Balint	Carter (TX)	Davidson
Barr	Casar	Davis (IL)
Barrett	Case	Davis (NC)
Baumgartner	Casten	Dean (PA)
Bean (FL)	Castor (FL)	DeGette
Beatty	Castro (TX)	DeLauro
Begich	Cherfilus	DelBene
Bentz	McCormick	Deluzio
Bera	Chu	DeSaulnier
Bergman	Ciscomani	DesJarlais
Beyer	Cisneros	Dexter
Bice	Clark (MA)	Diaz-Balart
Biggs (AZ)	Clarke (NY)	Dingell
Biggs (SC)	Cleaver	Doggett
Billirakis	Cline	Donalds
Bishop	Clyburn	Downing
Boebert	Clyde	Edwards
Bonamici	Cole	Elfreth
Bost	Collins	Ellzey
Boyle (PA)	Comer	Emmer

Escobar	Kennedy (UT)	Pou
Espallat	Kiggans (VA)	Pressley
Estes	Kiley (CA)	Quigley
Evans (CO)	Kim	Ramirez
Evans (PA)	Knott	Randall
Ezell	Krishnamoorthi	Raskin
Fallon	Kustoff	Reschenthaler
Fedorchak	LaHood	Riley (NY)
Fields	LaLota	Rivas
Figures	Larsen (WA)	Rogers (AL)
Fine	Larson (CT)	Rogers (KY)
Finstad	Latimer	Rose
Fischbach	Latta	Ross
Fitzgerald	Lawler	Rouzer
Fitzpatrick	Lee (FL)	Roy
Fleischmann	Lee (NV)	Ruiz
Flood	Lee (PA)	Rulli
Fong	Leger Fernandez	Rutherford
Foster	Letlow	Ryan
Foushee	Levin	Salazar
Fox	Liccardo	Salinas
Frankel, Lois	Lieu	Sanchez
Franklin, Scott	Lofgren	Scalise
Friedman	Loudermilk	Scanlon
Frost	Lucas	Schakowsky
Fry	Luttrell	Schmidt
Fulcher	Lynch	Schneider
Garamendi	Mace	Scholten
Garbarino	Mackenzie	Schrier
Garcia (CA)	Magaziner	Schweikert
Garcia (IL)	Malliotakis	Scott (VA)
Garcia (TX)	Maloy	Scott, Austin
Gill (TX)	Mann	Scott, David
Gillen	Mannion	Sessions
Gimenez	Mast	Sewell
Golden (ME)	Matsui	Sherman
Goldman (NY)	McBath	Shreve
Goldman (TX)	McBride	Simon
Gomez	McCaul	Simpson
Gonzales, Tony	McClain	Smith (MO)
Gooden	McClain Delaney	Smith (NE)
Goodlander	McClellan	Smith (NJ)
Gosar	McClintock	Smith (WA)
Gottheimer	McCollum	Smucker
Graves	McCormick	Sorensen
Gray	McDonald Rivet	Soto
Green, Al (TX)	McGarvey	Spartz
Griffith	McGovern	Stansbury
Grothman	McGuire	Stanton
Guest	McIver	Stauber
Guthrie	Meeks	Stefanik
Hageman	Menendez	Steil
Hamadeh (AZ)	Messmer	Steube
Harder (CA)	Meuser	Stevens
Haridopolos	Mfume	Strickland
Harrigan	Miller (IL)	Strong
Harris (MD)	Miller (OH)	Subramanyam
Harris (NC)	Miller-Meeks	Suozi
Harshbarger	Mills	Swalwell
Hayes	Min	Sykes
Hern (OK)	Moolenaar	Takano
Higgins (LA)	Moore (AL)	Taylor
Hill (AR)	Moore (NC)	Tenney
Himes	Moore (UT)	Thanedar
Hinson	Moore (WI)	Thompson (CA)
Horsford	Moore (WV)	Thompson (MS)
Houchin	Moran	Thompson (PA)
Houlihan	Morelle	Timmons
Hoyer	Morrison	Titus
Hoyle (OR)	Moskowitz	Tlaib
Hudson	Moulton	Tokuda
Huffman	Mrvan	Tonko
Huizenga	Mullin	Torres (CA)
Hunt	Murphy	Trahan
Hurd (CO)	Neal	Tran
Issa	Neguse	Turner (OH)
Ivey	Nehls	Underwood
Jack	Newhouse	Valadao
Jackson (IL)	Norcross	Van Drew
Jackson (TX)	Norman	Van Dуйne
Jacobs	Obernalte	Van Epps
James	Ocasio-Cortez	Van Orden
Jayapal	Ogles	Vargas
Jeffries	Olshewski	Vasquez
Johnson (GA)	Onder	Veasey
Johnson (LA)	Owens	Velázquez
Johnson (SD)	Pallone	Vindman
Johnson (TX)	Palmer	Wagner
Jordan	Panetta	Walberg
Joyce (OH)	Pappas	Walkinshaw
Joyce (PA)	Patronis	Wasserman
Kamlager-Dove	Pelosi	Schultz
Kaptur	Perez	Waters
Kean	Perry	Watson Coleman
Keating	Peters	Weber (TX)
Kelly (IL)	Petterson	Webster (FL)
Kelly (MS)	Pfleger	Westerman
Kelly (PA)	Pingree	Whitesides
Kennedy (NY)	Pocan	Wied

Williams (GA)	Wilson (SC)	Yakym
Williams (TX)	Wittman	Zinke
Wilson (FL)	Womack	

NAYS—2

Fletcher	Self
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NOT VOTING—27

Baird	Dunn (FL)	McDowell
Barragan	Feenstra	Meng
Bell	Gonzalez, V.	Miller (WV)
Buchanan	Grijalva	Nadler
Burchett	Khanna	Nunn (IA)
Burlison	Landsman	Omar
Cloud	Langworthy	Stutzman
Cohen	Luna	Tiffany
De La Cruz	Massie	Torres (NY)

□ 1857

Mr. MOULTON changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE CLERK,

Washington, DC, February 2, 2026.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a letter received from Ms. Christina Adkins, Director of Elections, with the Texas Office of the Secretary of State indicating that, according to the unofficial results for the Special General Election held on January 31, 2026, the Honorable Christian Dashaun Menefee was elected Representative to Congress for the Eighteenth Congressional District of Texas.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,
Clerk.

THE STATE OF TEXAS,
JANE NELSON, SECRETARY OF STATE,
February 2, 2026.

Hon. KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,
Clerk, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. MCCUMBER: This is to advise you that the unofficial results of the Special Runoff Election held on Saturday, January 31, 2026 for Representative in Congress from the Eighteenth Congressional District of Texas, show that Christian Dashaun Menefee received 16,174 or 68.38% of the total number of votes cast for that office.

It would appear from these unofficial results that Christian Dashaun Menefee was elected as Representative in Congress from the Eighteenth Congressional District of Texas.

To the best of our knowledge and belief at this time, there is no contest to this election.

As soon as the official results are certified to this office by the county involved, an official Certificate of Election will be prepared for transmittal as required by law.

Sincerely,
CHRISTINA ADKINS,
Director of Elections.