

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to speak for consideration of H.R. 3679, the Small Business Artificial Intelligence Advancement Act.

America has seen great innovation in its 250 years, from the lightbulb to the internet and now artificial intelligence. The benefits of AI must be made available for more than big corporations. They must reach every facet of our economy.

Small businesses are the backbone of the United States economy, representing nearly 43 percent of the U.S. GDP and employing 46 percent of the workforce. These are our neighbors, our friends, and our families. They are the heart of Main Street USA.

As AI and industries advance, we must ensure that they are not left behind. Too often, small businesses lack the technical know-how or financial resources to adopt AI, which is putting them at a growing disadvantage.

That is why I introduced H.R. 3679. This bipartisan legislation directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology to develop resources to voluntarily educate small businesses on best practices when integrating AI into their businesses.

Through this legislation, we will level the playing field. We will ensure small businesses have the ability to modernize and remain competitive against their larger counterparts. Main Street is what keeps the American spirit alive. With this bill, we will ensure that Main Street is safe for generations to come.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues, Mr. COLLINS and Ms. STEVENS, for their work on this bill. I think we are all in agreement that small businesses should be able to take advantage of the immense potential of AI as well as be able to understand the risks and cybersecurity pitfalls that may come out of it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 3679, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the time to use artificial intelligence in business is now, and we must do everything we can to support small business efforts to harness the power of this technology. The National Institute of Standards and Technology can greatly help American small businesses understand and adopt AI to strengthen American businesses and our economy. H.R. 3679 will eliminate roadblocks to and increase implementation of AI.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan 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 Texas (Mr. BABIN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3679, 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.

INFORMATION QUALITY ASSURANCE ACT OF 2025

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6329) to ensure that Federal agencies rely on the best reasonably available scientific, technical, demographic, economic, and statistical information and evidence to develop, issue or inform the public of the nature and bases of Federal agency rules and guidance, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6329

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 "Information Quality Assurance Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. INFORMATION QUALITY ASSURANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 3522 INFORMATION QUALITY ASSURANCE.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Information Quality Assurance Act of 2025, the Director shall—

"(1) update the guidelines issued under the Information Quality Act—

"(A) to provide policy and procedural guidance to the heads of Federal agencies for better ensuring and maximizing the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of influential information or evidence—

"(i) used by the heads of Federal agencies to develop or issue rules and guidance made available to the public; or

"(ii) disseminated to the public to inform the public about the nature and bases of such rules and guidance; and

"(B) in a manner consistent with—

"(i) this chapter; and

"(ii) the amendments made by the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–435; 132 Stat. 5529); and

"(2) make the guidelines updated under paragraph (1) available on the website of the Office of Management and Budget.

"(b) CONTENT OF GUIDELINES.—Not later than 1 year after the Director updates the guidelines under subsection (a), the head of each Federal agency to which the guidelines apply shall—

"(1) update any guidelines issued by the head of the Federal agency under the Information Quality Act to ensure that, in the case of influential information or evidence, the best reasonably available information and evidence that is fit-for-purpose is relied on in developing, issuing, or informing the public about the rules and guidance of the Federal agency;

"(2) publish the guidelines updated by the head of the Federal agency under paragraph (1) on the website of the Federal agency;

"(3) ensure the administrative mechanisms established under subparagraph (B) of subsection (b)(2) of the Information Quality Act

are made available, as applicable, with respect to seeking and obtaining the correction of any influential information or evidence disseminated by agencies that the Federal agency uses to develop or issue a rule or guidance made available to the public, or to inform the public of the nature and basis of any rule or guidance of the Federal agency, that does not comply with the guidelines issued under paragraph (1); and

"(4) include in the report required under subparagraph (C) of subsection (b)(2) of the Information Quality Act the information described under that subparagraph with respect to any complaints received by the Federal agency related to the accuracy of influential information or evidence the Federal agency uses to develop, issue, or inform the public of the nature and bases of rules or guidance.

"(c) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE.—

"(1) AVAILABILITY.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Director shall issue guidance, which may be included in the guidelines updated under subsection (a), that directs the head of the Federal agency to make available, except as provided under paragraph (2), in the docket for the rulemaking of any rule of the Federal agency, or in the public administrative record for any guidance—

"(i) the critical factual material upon which the head of the Federal agency relied as part of the rulemaking or guidance development process; and

"(ii) a citation to any other source used to inform the rulemaking or guidance development process, including a citation to any public comment that is referenced in a final rulemaking action.

"(B) PROCESS.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under clause (ii), the guidance required under subparagraph (A) shall direct an agency to make available the information that must be made available under that subparagraph as soon as reasonably possible before, but at a minimum at, the time that the Federal agency promulgates a rule or issues guidance.

"(ii) NOTICE AND COMMENT.—If a Federal agency engages in notice and comment rulemaking under section 553 of title 5 or provides for public notice and an opportunity to comment on proposed guidance, the guidance required under subparagraph (A) shall direct the Federal agency to provide notice and an opportunity to comment on the critical factual material upon which the head of the Federal agency relied.

"(C) REVISIONS.—If the critical factual material under subparagraph (A)(i) is revised in a manner that may materially affect the rulemaking or guidance after the public is given notice and an opportunity to comment pursuant to subparagraph (B)(ii), but before the rule or guidance is published, the head of the Federal agency shall make the revision available in the docket for the rulemaking or in the applicable administrative record for the guidance in a timely manner.

"(2) IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENT EXCEPTIONS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The guidance under paragraph (1) shall direct the head of the Federal agency—

"(i) to implement paragraph (1) consistent with this chapter, sections 552 and 552a of title 5, and any rights under titles 17 and 35;

"(ii) to implement paragraph (1) to the maximum extent feasible, considering costs to the Federal Government; and

"(iii) in implementing paragraph (1), to not make available in the docket for the rulemaking of any rule of the Federal agency, or in the public administrative record for any guidance, as applicable, information that is

prohibited from being disclosed to the public under any statute.

“(B) EXPLANATION TO BE INCLUDED IN DOCKET OR ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD.—If the head of the Federal agency does not make critical factual material available under paragraph (1), subject to subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the head of the Federal agency shall include in the docket for the rulemaking or the public administrative record, if applicable, for the guidance—

“(i) an explanation as to why such information cannot be made publicly available; and

“(ii) a description of any steps being taken to increase access to such information, even if the information cannot be made public.

“(3) FORMAT OF CRITICAL FACTUAL MATERIAL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2) and subparagraph (B), the head of each Federal agency shall make available any critical factual material required to be made available under paragraph (1)(A) as an open Government data asset.

“(B) EXCEPTION.—If an exception under paragraph (2)(A) applies, the head of a Federal agency may—

“(i) maximize public access to the critical factual material to the extent permitted by law;

“(ii) make the critical factual material available by citation or description; and

“(iii) place in the docket for the rulemaking or the administrative record for the guidance a specification of the identity of the entity that holds a legal right to prohibit or limit reproduction, distribution, or public display of the information and the means by which a member of the public may request to obtain a full copy of the information from such holder.

“(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) EVIDENCE.—The term ‘evidence’ has the meaning given that term in section 3561.

“(2) INFLUENTIAL INFORMATION OR EVIDENCE.—The term ‘influential information or evidence’ means information or evidence about which an agency can reasonably determine that reliance on or dissemination of the information will have or does have a clear and substantial impact on important public actions, policies or statements or on important private sector decisions.

“(3) INFORMATION QUALITY ACT.—The term ‘Information Quality Act’ means section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2001 (Public Law 106-554).”

(b) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections for subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding after the item relating to section 3521 the following:

“3522. Information Quality Assurance.”

(c) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated for the purpose of carrying out this Act or the amendments made by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. TIMMONS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SUBRAMANYAM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6329, the Information Quality Assurance Act of 2025.

Historically, thousands of Federal regulations have been imposed each year as an added burden on the American public.

The Code of Federal Regulations, in which these rules are housed, spans 243 volumes that contain over 180,000 single-spaced pages. Agency guidance explaining these regulations to the public likely spans millions more pages.

If we must have rules imposed by Federal regulatory agencies, we should, at the very least, ensure that regulatory agencies rely on the best available information.

Unfortunately, agencies frequently do not rely on the best available information to create their regulations. Year after year, the Federal courts are clogged with litigation brought by regulated parties who point out that Federal agencies have acted based on flawed information.

Over the years, Congress has tried to improve this situation.

In 2000, Congress enacted the Information Quality Act, which charged the Office of Management and Budget and each Federal agency to adopt guidelines to ensure agencies relied on high-quality information.

In 2015, Congress enacted the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act, expanding on the Information Quality Act to further ensure agencies use high-quality information in their program administration.

Still, year after year, disputes arise over whether regulators are basing their decisions on the best-quality information available. Every year, courts strike down agency rules that do not rely on adequate information.

The Information Quality Assurance Act takes several major but straightforward steps to solve that problem. For the first time, it requires that the information which agencies use to form their rules and guidance be the best reasonably available information.

It also includes several additional terms to make sure agencies are finally held to that standard. This legislation will improve the quality of agency decisionmaking, improve the acceptability of new rules and guidance, and avoid the need for many disputes over agencies' use of information to go to court.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill and thank Representative LISA MCCLAIN for her reintroduction of this important legislation.

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

□ 1630

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6329. This is about improving the qual-

ity and transparency of information Federal agencies use to make rules.

The bill would require OMB to update their guidance to ensure agencies use high-quality, reliable information when creating new rules. That means the best scientific, technical, economic, or statistical information available.

Agencies would also have to make public the models, methods, and information sources they use in rulemaking. Anyone in the public can then give feedback on the information agencies use. The bill requires OMB to report any public complaints to Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MCCLAIN).

Mrs. MCCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the Information Quality Assurance Act. This bill is common sense and restores accountability, transparency, and trust in how the Federal Government uses information to make decisions that impact the American people.

Every day, Federal agencies issue regulations that affect our workers, our small businesses, and our local communities. These decisions can carry billions of dollars of economic consequences. Yet, too often, those rules are based on incomplete data, outdated science, or information that hasn't been properly reviewed for accuracy or transparency. That is simply bad governing.

Americans deserve to know that when Washington bureaucrats act, they are using reliable, high-quality information, not assumptions, not political agendas, and not flawed data.

My bill strengthens safeguards to ensure Federal agencies rely on data that meets clear standards for objectivity, integrity, and accountability before new regulations move forward. This bill makes government work better. It ensures decisions are guided by facts, and it protects taxpayers from costly regulatory mistakes.

Businesses, job creators, and families deserve confidence that Federal rules are grounded in reality and not bureaucracy. At its core, this is about trust. It is about trust that government decisions are fair, trust that agencies are transparent, and trust that the American people come before politics.

The Information Quality Assurance Act reinforces a basic principle. Better information leads to better policy, and better policy leads to better outcomes for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that this effort brings accountability back into the rulemaking process, and I urge my colleagues to support this common-sense legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the sponsor of this bill. This bill passed the House

overwhelmingly last Congress, and I again urge my colleagues to support the bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this bill. It is a simple, commonsense measure that is sure to improve the quality of Federal rulemaking for our constituents.

In the 118th Congress, a similar version of this legislation passed the House on an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 377-4. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in support of this important legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. TIMMONS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6329.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, the two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

SKILLS-BASED FEDERAL CONTRACTING ACT OF 2025

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5235) to amend title 41, United States Code, to prohibit minimum educational requirements for proposed contractor personnel in certain contract solicitations, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5235

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 “Skills-Based Federal Contracting Act of 2025”.

SEC. 2. USE OF REQUIREMENTS REGARDING EDUCATION OF CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL.

(a) FLEXIBILITY IN CONTRACTOR EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS.—Chapter 33 of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§313. Flexibility in contractor education requirements

“(a) PROHIBITION.—A solicitation may not set forth any minimum education requirement for proposed contractor personnel in order for a bidder to be eligible for award of a contract unless the contracting officer includes in the solicitation a written justification that explains why the needs of the executive agency cannot be met without any such requirement and clarifies how the requirement ensures the needs are met.

“(b) EXECUTIVE AGENCY DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘executive agency’ has the meaning given that term in section 133 of this title.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 33 of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“3313. Flexibility in contractor education requirements.”.

(c) OMB GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall issue guidance to the heads of executive agencies for implementing the amendment made by subsection (a) that includes the following:

(1) Instructions for contracting officers for the justifications under section 3313(a) of title 41, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), including a requirement that each use of an education requirement be determined, justified, and reviewed.

(2) Instructions for contracting officers that encourages the use of alternatives to education requirements.

(d) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to solicitations issued on or after the date that is 15 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) REPEAL.—Section 813 of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (Public Law 106-398; 114 Stat. 1654A-214), as implemented in subpart 39.104 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation, as in effect on January 3, 2025, is repealed as of the date that the guidance required by subsection (c) becomes effective.

(f) GAO REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress an evaluation of executive agency compliance with section 3313 of title 41, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) EDUCATION.—The term “education” means an associate, baccalaureate, graduate, or professional degree, specified coursework, or other form of educational attainment awarded by a junior or community college, college, or university that is accredited as a collegiate institution by a recognized accrediting agency or approved by the appropriate State education authority under State law (or the appropriate education authority of the District of Columbia) to grant associate or higher degrees.

(2) EDUCATION REQUIREMENT.—The term “education requirement” includes a requirement that can be met either through—

- (A) education alone;
- (B) education or experience; or
- (C) a combination of education and experience.

(3) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term “executive agency” has the meaning given that term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. TIMMONS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SUBRAMANYAM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5235, the Skills-Based Federal Contracting Act, which reins in unnecessary degree requirements in Federal contracting.

The Federal Government relies heavily on contract employees. Many jobs in fields like IT and building construction are available through nondegree pathways such as apprenticeships and boot camps. That is why private-sector employers have pared back degree requirements for hiring in recent years.

Unfortunately, Federal solicitations sometimes include requirements mandating that individuals who perform the work hold certain education credentials. We should not prohibit those with the right technical skills from performing Federal contract work just because they lack a traditional degree.

The companies who employ them, those that offer apprenticeships and engage in skills-based hiring, should be encouraged to compete for government contracts, not be excluded from competition.

This bill helps ensure that Federal contractors are able to hire who they want to hire without additional red tape by prohibiting contract officers from stipulating education and experience requirements in contracts, unless the contracting officer can justify in writing that they are necessary to meet the needs of the agency.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I thank Ms. MACE, the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Government Innovation, for her work on this important reform.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5235. This bill makes it easier for Americans who have valuable skills and experience to be hired as contractors, even if they don't have college degrees. It gets rid of minimum education and experience requirements that don't make sense in some of these Federal contracting solicitations.

That is not to say a college education isn't valuable; but, too often, Federal agencies put unnecessary degree requirements on contractor positions. These unnecessary requirements hurt a lot of people.

More than 77 percent of Americans over 25 don't have a bachelor's degree. Many of those individuals have skills, training, and knowledge to support our agencies and serve the American people. We shouldn't block them from those opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 5235, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE).

Ms. MACE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from South Carolina for