

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, 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

yielding time. Mr. TIMMONS is doing an excellent job managing floor time today.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of our bill, the Skills-Based Federal Contracting Act. The price of admission should not be a 4-year college degree.

At a hearing I held last Congress in the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Government Innovation, a witness from IBM testified that Federal contractors are rarely able to place an individual without a 4-year degree on a technology services contract, regardless of their qualifications. This problem extends beyond technology and service contracts.

Across the Federal Government, many contract solicitations include unnecessary degree requirements, mandating individuals who perform various tasks hold specific education credentials such as 4-year college degrees.

The Federal Government spends hundreds of billions of dollars outsourcing work to millions of contractors to perform the functions of government. This immense purchasing power shapes the entire labor market.

When we embed unnecessary degree requirements into Federal contracting solicitations, we are not just making a hiring decision; we are sending a signal to the entire economy that a college diploma is a prerequisite for economic opportunity.

With less than 40 percent of Americans holding a 4-year college degree, this creates a paper ceiling where talented Americans are excluded from opportunity, regardless of how qualified they may be, simply because they lack a college degree.

The Skills-Based Federal Contracting Act bill would tear through this paper ceiling by prohibiting the Federal Government from including a minimum educational requirement for proposed contractor personnel in a Federal contract solicitation, unless the contracting officer provides a written justification for why the needs of the agency cannot be met without such requirements.

Think about the immense economic value and economic opportunity created in this country by individuals who didn't finish college. These include Mark Zuckerberg, Larry Ellison, and Steve Jobs. Under onerous degree requirements, it would have been nearly impossible for any of these individuals to have been placed on a government contract.

Across the private sector, we have seen companies move to phase out or even eliminate degree requirements, recognizing a college degree does not serve as an effective proxy for competence or skills. It is far past time the Federal Government follows suit.

This bill in no way tells private companies how to hire or who to hire. Rather, it removes unnecessary Federal restrictions on their ability to hire the best qualified Americans who ac-

quired their skills through alternative pathways.

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In some cases, required education credentials are warranted. For example, we expect a doctor to have a medical degree, but only a small fraction of Federal contract work falls into these types of categories.

In the case that it does, this bill would simply require a brief justification in writing from a contracting officer before they exclude over 60 percent of American workers who do not have a 4-year degree from the chance to compete.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the lead Democratic cosponsor of this bill, Representative KRISHNAMOORTHY, for joining me in this effort.

Skills-based hiring has been a rare area of widespread bipartisan and non-partisan support in Congress. The Skills-Based Federal Contracting Act passed out of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on an enormously bipartisan basis by a vote of 44-0.

Together, we can provide all Americans, regardless of whether they studied classic literature in ivory towers, with economic opportunity and the chance to work on behalf of their fellow citizens serving our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support this commonsense, non-partisan bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues and the patrons for their work on this bill. I urge colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 5235, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this bill. I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation, which puts merit back into Federal contracts.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. TIMMONS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5235, 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.

ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS TRANSPARENCY AND OVERSIGHT REFORM ACT

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2503) to require all aircraft to be equipped with Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast In, to improve aviation safety, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2503

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 "Rotorcraft Operations Transparency and Oversight Reform Act" or the "ROTOR Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term "Administrator" means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) ADS-B IN.—The term "ADS-B In" means onboard avionics equipment that receives and processes Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast transmissions that are broadcast in accordance with sections 91.225 and 91.227 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulations), and other aviation advisory information from ground stations, that provides the aircraft with awareness to the location of other aircraft and traffic advisories.

(3) ADS-B OUT.—The term "ADS-B Out"—(A) has the meaning given such term in section 91.227 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) broadcasts information from the aircraft in accordance with sections 91.225 and 91.227 of such title 14 (or any successor regulations).

(4) AFFECTED AIRCRAFT.—The term "affected aircraft" means any aircraft that is required to operate in accordance with section 91.225 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(5) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term "appropriate committees of Congress" means the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

(6) CABINET MEMBER.—The term "Cabinet Member" means an individual who is the head (including an acting head) of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Defense, the Department of Education, the Department of Energy, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Justice, the Department of Labor, the Department of State, the Department of Transportation, the Department of the Treasury, or the Department of Veterans Affairs, or any other individual who occupies a position designated by the President as a Cabinet-level position.

(7) FAA.—The term "FAA" means the Federal Aviation Administration.

(8) NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION; NCR.—The terms "National Capital Region" and "NCR" mean the geographic area located within the boundaries of—

(A) the District of Columbia;

(B) Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties in the State of Maryland;

(C) Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria in the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

(D) all cities and other units of government within the geographic areas described in subparagraphs (A) through (C).

(9) POWERED-LIFT.—The term "powered-lift"—

(A) has the meaning given such term in section 1.1 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation); and

(B) includes vertical-lift flight mode and wing-borne flight mode, as such terms are defined in section 194.103 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation).