

join me in the preservation of our Nation's past.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ELFRETH. Mr. Speaker, again, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is a commonsense bill that helps a local community improve a pivotal Civil War-era military park while reducing the Federal estate.

As we celebrate our Nation's 250th anniversary, this bill will allow Mississippians to take the lead in telling the story of Vicksburg for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4467, 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.

SMALL CEMETERY CONVEYANCE ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4284) to amend the Small Tract Act of 1983 to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to convey, without consideration, certain cemeteries, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H. R. 4284

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 "Small Cemetery Conveyance Act".

SEC. 2. CONVEYANCES OF CERTAIN CEMETERIES.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO SMALL TRACT ACT OF 1983.—The Small Tract Act of 1983 (16 U.S.C. 521c et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 2(a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking "and" at the end;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) to convey, without consideration, certain parcels used, or previously used, as cemeteries in accordance with section 9.;"

(2) in section 3(6), by striking "a cemetery (including a parcel of not more than 1 acre adjacent to the parcel used as a cemetery), a landfill, or" and inserting "a landfill or"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 9. CONVEYANCES OF CERTAIN CEMETERIES.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may convey, without consideration, to a qualified

person any parcel of land used, or previously used, as a cemetery (including a parcel of not more than 1 acre adjacent to the parcel used as a cemetery).

"(b) CONDITION OF CONVEYANCE.—A conveyance under subsection (a) shall be subject to the condition that the property conveyed under that subsection may only be used for the purpose of operating a cemetery.

"(c) REVERSION.—If the Secretary determines that at any time a parcel conveyed under subsection (a) is used for a purpose other than the purpose required under subsection (b), all right, title, and interest in and to the parcel conveyed pursuant to such subsection, including any improvements thereon, shall, at the discretion of the Secretary, revert to the United States.

"(d) WAIVER OF CONVEYANCE COSTS.—

"(1) EXCEPTION AVAILABLE.—The Secretary may waive the application of any requirement under section 4 to a conveyance to a qualified person under this section if the Secretary determines that such a waiver is appropriate based upon the demonstrated need of the qualified person.

"(2) CLARIFICATION OF AUTHORITY.—The waiver authority under paragraph (1) shall be in addition to the authority available to the Secretary pursuant to the last sentence of section 4.

"(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) CEMETERY.—The term 'cemetery' means a natural or prepared physical location (regardless of location below, on, or above the surface of the earth) into which human remains are deposited—

"(A)(i) as part of—

"(I) a death rite or ceremony of a culture; or

"(II) a common burying ground of a community; or

"(ii) that is determined to be a cemetery by an Indian Tribe; and

"(B) that, as determined by the Secretary, is a parcel of land less than or equal to 40 acres.

"(2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term 'Indian Tribe' means the governing body of any individually identified and federally recognized Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, community, affiliated Tribal group, or component reservation included on the most recent list published pursuant to section 104(a) of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131(a)).

"(3) QUALIFIED LAND GRANT-MERCED.—The term 'qualified land grant-merced' means a community land grant issued under the laws or customs of the Government of Spain or Mexico that—

"(A) is recognized under New Mexico Statutes Chapter 49, Articles 1 and 4 (or a successor statute); and

"(B)(i) has a record of historical or traditional use on Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary; or

"(ii) has a patented exterior boundary that is or was previously located on or adjacent to Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary.

"(4) QUALIFIED PERSON.—The term 'qualified person' means, with respect to a cemetery, a State or local government, Indian Tribe, or qualified land grant-merced that has a bona fide interest or historic claim to the cemetery."

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section or an amendment made by this section may be construed to modify, waive, or otherwise affect the application of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. ELFRETH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. 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 H.R. 4284, the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Representative LEGER FERNANDEZ' bill, H.R. 4284, the Small Cemetery Conveyance Act.

Mr. Speaker, all across the West, there are small, historic cemeteries in rural communities that sit on or adjacent to Federal land.

These are places where families and communities have laid their loved ones to rest for generations long before jurisdictional boundaries were drawn on a map. Due to the Federal Government's large footprint all around these large cemeteries, basic access for upkeep, ceremonies, or simply paying respects to loved ones can turn into a bureaucratic mess.

H.R. 4284 is a commonsense fix. It gives the U.S. Forest Service, which administers a significant portion of the lands near or under these cemeteries, clear authority under the Small Tract Act to transfer small cemetery parcels to the people who are best positioned to care for them, the local and Tribal Governments with close connections to those laid to rest.

Rather than going through the lengthy process of requiring an act of Congress to convey each individual parcel on a one-off basis, this bill establishes a legal framework for communities to gain possession of historic cemeteries.

The legislation respects local stewardship and reduces the Federal footprint, all while ensuring safeguards are in place to make sure that these hallowed sites are used as cemeteries in perpetuity.

This bill puts locals in charge of the cemeteries they have maintained for centuries, allowing the Forest Service to focus on their core mission: restoring health and resiliency to our Nation's overgrown, fire-prone Federal lands.

This bill removes red tape from the burdensome process of transferring land in these special cases so that local communities can more easily honor their loved ones and be stewards of the places where their ancestors are at peace.

I support this bipartisan piece of legislation. I thank Representative LEGER FERNANDEZ and Representative HURD for their work together on this bill.

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

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
 COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
 Washington, DC, January 13, 2025.
 Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
 Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
 Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter confirms our mutual understanding regarding H.R. 4284, the "Small Cemetery Conveyance Act." Thank you for collaborating with the Committee on Agriculture on the matters within our jurisdiction.

The Committee on Agriculture will forego any further consideration of this bill. However, by foregoing consideration at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over any subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. The Committee on Agriculture also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees, should it become necessary, and ask that you support such a request.

We would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 4284 and request a copy of our letters on this matter be published in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration.

Sincerely,
 GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,
 Chairman.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
 COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
 Washington, DC, January 13, 2026.
 Hon. GLENN THOMPSON,
 Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,
 Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: I write regarding H.R. 4284, the "Small Cemetery Conveyance Act," which was ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on December 17, 2025.

I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture and appreciate your willingness to forgo further consideration of the bill. I acknowledge that the Committee on Agriculture will not formally consider H.R. 4284 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained therein.

I am pleased to support your request to name members of the Committee on Agriculture to any conference committee to consider such provisions. I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill and will include such letters in the committee report on H.R. 4284. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,
 BRUCE WESTERMAN,
 Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
 COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
 Washington, DC, June 30, 2025.
 Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
 Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
 Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter confirms our mutual understanding regarding H.R. 1665, the "DIGITAL Applications Act." Thank you for collaborating with the Committee on Agriculture on the matters within our jurisdiction.

The Committee on Agriculture will forego any further consideration of this bill. However, by foregoing consideration at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over any subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. The Committee on Agriculture also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees, should it become necessary, and ask that you support such a request.

We would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 1665 and request a copy of our letters on this matter be published in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration.

Sincerely,
 GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,
 Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
 COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
 Washington, DC, July 1, 2025.
 Hon. GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,
 Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,
 Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write regarding our mutual understanding of H.R. 1665, the DIGITAL Applications Act, which was ordered report by the Committee on Natural Resources.

I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture and appreciate your willingness to forgo further consideration of the bill. I acknowledge that the Committee on Agriculture will not formally consider H.R. 1665 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained therein.

I am pleased to support your request to name members of the Committee on Agriculture to any conference committee to consider such provisions. I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,
 BRUCE WESTERMAN,
 Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources.

Ms. ELFRETH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4284, the Small Cemetery Conveyance Act, introduced by the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ).

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4284 amends the Small Tract Act of 1983 to allow States, local governments, federally recognized Tribes, and land-grant mercedes to request small conveyances of cemetery land. As the chairman said, this is an important update that sets out to fix a deeply personal problem for many rural communities, particularly in the West.

Land grant and Tribal communities have existed long before the United States of America or the Forest Service were around. Today, many of these communities find their cemeteries located on Forest Service land, and this bill will enhance access and improve stewardship of these important tracts.

While H.R. 4284 waives the need to pay for or exchange land for these sites, this does not signify a giveaway or sell-off of these public lands. This is, rather, about dignity and respect.

Importantly, this bill requires all conveyed lands to be managed as a cemetery in perpetuity, and this ensures an ongoing public purpose and allows communities to take care of their ancestors for generations to come.

I thank the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HURD) for their efforts to return these important burial sites to their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to vote "yes" on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ELFRETH. Mr. Speaker, again, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is a simple, bipartisan measure that serves the spiritual needs of rural, Tribal, and local communities across the West. It lightens the administrative burden on the Forest Service and reduces the Federal footprint. Above all, it returns the protection and care of local cemeteries to those with the closest connections to them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4284, 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.

DEPLOYING INFRASTRUCTURE WITH GREATER INTERNET TRANSACTIONS AND LEGACY APPLICATIONS ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1665) to require the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture to establish online portals to accept, process, and dispose of certain Form 299s, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1665

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 "Deploying Infrastructure with Greater Internet Transactions and Legacy Applications Act" or the "DIGITAL Applications Act".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF ONLINE PORTALS TO ACCEPT, PROCESS, AND DISPOSE OF CERTAIN FORM 299s.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF ONLINE PORTALS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretaries concerned shall each establish, with respect to the relevant covered department, an online portal for the acceptance, processing, and disposal of a Form 299 for communications use authorizations.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 3 business days after the date on which an online portal has been established by a Secretary pursuant to paragraph (1), that Secretary shall notify the Assistant Secretary of the establishment of such portal.

(b) AVAILABILITY OF ONLINE PORTALS.—The Assistant Secretary shall publish on the website of the National Telecommunications