

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Great is Your faithfulness, O God our Father. New every morning are the mercies You offer unto us. Even as we remember and honor the life of our friend and colleague, David Scott, our souls are saddened by his passing. But this we call to mind, and in this we have hope: that Congressman David Scott, Your son and servant, was one who sought You daily.

The remarkable life he lived which began in the tobacco fields of South Carolina was marked by an exceptional intellect, evident in both his academic accomplishments, his business acumen, his political service in Georgia, and his noteworthy tenure on the Hill, all of which was undergirded by the firm foundation of his faith in You.

Those who knew him well knew that he believed, without doubt, that You were his portion. He walked quietly and faithfully with an inward calm, a peace that passed all understanding, and a faith that looked through death to the hope of a larger life beyond the grave.

Thank You for raising up among us such a stalwart example of how You, O Lord, are good to those whose hope is in You, to the ones who seek You, to those who wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

May we in faith follow David Scott's lead.

In Your eternal name, we pray.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

TRUMP DELIVERS TAX RELIEF

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, led by House Republicans with our leader and Speaker MIKE JOHNSON and President Donald Trump, this year millions of Americans received larger tax cuts.

By signing the Working Families Tax Cuts Act, President Trump has allowed

53 million hardworking Americans to keep more of their own money, creating jobs.

Sadly, every single Democrat in the House voted to oppose the tax relief, promoting taxes to rise by 22 percent on working families. Democrats want Big Government. Republicans promote limited government.

Millions of Americans have already benefited from no tax on tips, no tax on overtime, and no tax on Social Security. Promises made, promises kept.

In conclusion, God bless our troops as the global war on terrorism continues. Trump is reinstating peace through strength, revealing war criminal Putin lies, insulting Trump and mocking Trump as war criminal Putin has subverted the Government of the Republic of Georgia with the Georgian Dream Party collaborating with the Iranian regime as Iranians meet today with war criminal Putin in Moscow to coordinate death to America.

RECOGNIZING PASCAGOULA
POLICE CHIEF TERRY SCOTT, JR.

(Mr. EZELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EZELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an incredible accomplishment by one of our own from the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Pascagoula Police Chief Terry Scott, Jr.

At 60 years old, Terry made history by becoming the oldest heavyweight boxer to win a professional, sanctioned fight, earning a world record in the process. That is an extraordinary achievement and a testament to his grit, discipline, and perseverance.

Success like this doesn't come easy. It takes years of hard work, sacrifice, and an unwavering commitment to your craft. Terry Scott, Jr., has shown what it means to stay focused, push through challenges, and defy expectations.

His story is a reminder that determination has no age limit and that it is never too late to chase and achieve something remarkable.

South Mississippi is proud of Terry, and I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on this historic accomplishment and wishing him continued success.

HONORING UNIVERSITY OF WEST
GEORGIA WOLVES MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mr. JACK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, over the past 3 weeks in college basketball, a national champion was crowned, the transfer portal opened and closed, and the 2025–2026 season officially ended.

I proudly represent the University of West Georgia. I am a passionate supporter of their basketball program, led by Coach Dave Moore, a natural leader,

and his talented staff: Andy Young, Mark Schult, Willie Evans, and Jalen Sasser, and administered by Athletic Director Jason Carmichael and President Dr. Michael Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a few of the West Georgia Wolves who are leaving next season, having exceeded expectations and built a program poised for future success.

Shelton Williams-Dryden was named First Team-All Atlantic Sun, averaging 20.7 points and 9.1 rebounds per game.

Josh Smith was named the Atlantic Sun's Sixth Man of the Year, averaging 16.2 points per game.

Kolten Griffin averaged 7.7 points per game and set a record for the most games played in the history of the program.

Malcolm Noel averaged 8.1 points per game and will graduate after three seasons with the Wolves.

Mr. Speaker, the West Georgia Wolves are a source of great inspiration for many across my district, and I am immensely proud to represent them in Congress.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1459

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EZELL) at 2 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

SHARING OF INFORMATION WITH
RESPECT TO SUSPECTED VIOLATIONS
OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4930) to expand the sharing of information with respect to suspected violations of intellectual property rights in trade, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4930

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHARING OF INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO SUSPECTED VIOLATIONS OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS.

Section 628A of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1628a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “suspects” and inserting “has a reasonable suspicion”;

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “, packing materials, containers,” after “its packaging” the first place it appears;

(ii) by striking “and its packaging and labels” after “images of the merchandise” and inserting “, its packaging, packing materials, containers, and labels”; and

(iii) by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) may provide to the person nonpublic information about the merchandise that was generated by an online marketplace or other similar market platform, express consignment operator, freight forwarder, or any other entity that plays a role in the sale or importation of merchandise, or the facilitation thereof, into the United States that has been provided to, shared with, or obtained by U.S. Customs and Border Protection; and

“(4) in the case of the provision of nonpublic information described in paragraph (3), shall provide to the person notification of the information transmitted, in accordance with such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe.”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) any other party with an interest in the merchandise, as determined appropriate by the Commissioner.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) for his support of this piece of legislation that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER) and I have proposed today for consideration. I will share a few remarks on this, but again, I appreciate the committee and the entire staff for the work that they have done to make this possible.

I am very pleased, Mr. Speaker, that my bill, H.R. 4930, which I am calling the counterfeit notification act, has been slated for floor consideration

today. I introduced this bill with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER) to target the influx of counterfeit goods entering the United States and to equip our Customs and Border Patrol officers to share real-time information with businesses, e-commerce platforms, and logistics companies.

To put things into perspective, in fiscal year 2023, Customs and Border Protection seized more than \$2.7 billion worth of counterfeit goods at the U.S. border. More than 46 percent of seizures originated from China and Hong Kong.

This poses serious national security threats and risks to citizens due to products of poor quality, hazardous material, or unknown production conditions, such as, of course, forced labor.

My bill addresses a key gap in CBP’s ability to spot and halt the flow of counterfeit goods into the U.S. under current law. When CBP suspects a shipment may be counterfeit, they are allowed only to publicize limited information. They are unable to share labels, invoices, or packing slips that identify the products of the country of origin with key stakeholders. This leaves the business community, e-commerce platforms like Etsy and Amazon, and logistics carriers like DHL, UPS, or FedEx in the dark when counterfeit activity is happening right under their nose.

To solve the issue, the counterfeit notification act gives CBP explicit authority to share relevant information with companies, carriers, and platforms when they receive a potentially counterfeit shipment.

This will include shipping labels and tracking numbers, invoices and shipping manifests, outer packaging images, or sender and recipient addresses.

The bill also broadens the range of parties with whom CBP can share information, such as e-commerce sites from which the products in question may be sold. This means that CBP will be able to recognize and flag patterns of behavior, like repeat senders of mass shipments, drop addresses used by organized counterfeiters, or common entry points or air routes for suspected counterfeit goods.

For example, if a counterfeit shipment from China repeatedly enters the U.S. via the Port of Los Angeles using the same fake return address, CBP will be able to share these patterns with carriers like UPS, DHL, and FedEx so they can intercept future parcels before they arrive on American soil.

Mr. Speaker, this is a commonsense bill that will strengthen U.S. national security, kneecap bad actors, and protect the IP of American companies.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the support of my colleagues on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4930, introduced by the Representative from Utah (Mr. MOORE), my

colleague and friend. I join him in praising our staffs, who worked together. It is good to see us working on a commonsense solution.

H.R. 4930, the counterfeit notification act, gives U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents the ability to share information about counterfeit goods with retailers and manufacturers.

The bill clarifies U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s authority to share information about packaging, product specifications, and packing materials when their agents encounter a shipment of suspected counterfeit goods entering the United States.

Sharing this information with retailers, manufacturers, and logistics companies will help them better identify fraudulent shipments and target organized counterfeiting operations.

The bill also allows CBP agents to work directly with the intellectual property owners and with parties involved in the supply chain to better intercept counterfeit goods and track their country of origin.

Protecting intellectual property is essential for sustaining innovation, economic growth, and global competitiveness, especially in my district, which is home to some of the largest companies developing the next generation of medical technologies.

We know that counterfeit products can be dangerous to consumers and present serious safety and public health hazards.

In fiscal year 2024, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection seized more than 32 million counterfeit and pirated items across more than 300 ports of entry, which, all told, were valued in excess of \$5 billion.

In the past 5 years, the number of illicit goods seized by CBP has more than doubled, while the value of those seized goods has grown by more than 400 percent.

The members of the International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition note that the cost of trafficking counterfeit goods is not only measured in dollars but also in the injuries caused by dangerous products, jobs lost to unfair competition, and the threats such products pose to our national security.

Whether we are talking about baby products, fashion goods, pharmaceuticals, or even electronics, this bill presents a commonsense solution to strengthen our country’s ability to detect counterfeit goods and to keep the American people safe.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE), my friend and colleague, for working with me on H.R. 4930. I was proud to see this bill pass out of the Ways and Means Committee last year with a unanimous bipartisan vote.

Mr. Speaker, this bill gives U.S. Customs agents the tools they need to identify counterfeit goods, investigate supply chains, and better protect Americans from dangerous counterfeit products.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE) for his partnership on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 4930, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, our intellectual property rights have secured over two centuries' worth of leadership and innovation. They form the foundation upon which opportunity for entrepreneurship is built and which makes the U.S. economy the envy of the world.

This legislation addresses the current weakness in our IP protections by ensuring those at CBP on the front lines of defending our national interests are better aligned with the businesses and workers that define our economic might.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of our colleagues 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 Utah (Mr. MOORE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4930, 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.

BARCODE AUTOMATION FOR REVENUE COLLECTION TO ORGANIZE DISBURSEMENT AND ENHANCE EFFICIENCY ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6956) to require electronically prepared tax returns to include scannable code when submitted on paper, and to require the use of optical character recognition technology for paper documents received by the Internal Revenue Service, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6956

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 "Barcode Automation for Revenue Collection to Organize Disbursement and Enhance Efficiency Act" or the "BARCODE Efficiency Act".

SEC. 2. SCANNING AND DIGITIZATION OF TAX RETURNS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

(a) RETURNS PREPARED ELECTRONICALLY AND SUBMITTED ON PAPER.—With respect to any Federal tax return which is prepared electronically, but is printed and filed on paper—

(1) such return shall be formatted in a manner that is compatible with the scanning technology referred to in paragraph (2), and

(2) subject to subsection (b)(1)(B), the Internal Revenue Service shall use scanning technology to convert the data included in such return to electronic format.

(b) OPTICAL CHARACTER RECOGNITION SOFTWARE.—With respect to—

(1) any Federal tax return which—

(A) is not prepared electronically and is printed and filed on paper, or

(B) is described in subsection (a)(1) but, for any reason, the data included in such return cannot be accurately converted into electronic format, or

(2) any correspondence which is received by the Internal Revenue Service in a paper form (with the exception of any such correspondence which has been received by the Internal Revenue Service in electronic format), the Internal Revenue Service shall use optical character recognition technology (or any functionally similar technology) to transcribe such return or correspondence.

(c) EXCEPTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) or (b) shall not apply to the extent that the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's delegate determines that the technology described in such subsection is slower or less reliable than—

(A) the process of manually transcribing returns or correspondence received in a paper form, or

(B) any other process that the Internal Revenue Service is using or would otherwise use.

(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Any exception to the application of subsection (a) or (b) pursuant to paragraph (1) shall not take effect unless the Secretary provides a report to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate regarding the determination made under such paragraph within 30 days of such determination.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply to—

(1) any individual income tax return (as defined in section 6011(e)(3)(C) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) received on or after January 1 of the first calendar year beginning more than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act,

(2) any estate tax return (as described in section 6018 of such Code) or gift tax return (as described in section 6019 of such Code) received on or after January 1 of the first calendar year beginning more than 24 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and

(3) any other return or correspondence received on or after January 1 of the first calendar year beginning more than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous material on this bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1510

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6956, the Barcode Automation for Revenue Collection to Organize Disbursement and Enhance Efficiency Act, also known as the BARCODE Efficiency Act, which is a bipartisan piece of legislation introduced by Representatives RUDY YAKYM and BRAD SCHNEIDER.

Many government agencies have had to be dragged kicking and screaming into the 21st century. The IRS is no exception. However, in the case of the BARCODE Efficiency Act, all we are really asking the IRS to do is to adopt technology that has been around for decades.

By requiring the IRS to deploy scanning technology for certain returns and correspondence, this bill will streamline the tax filing process for millions of Americans and go a long way to improving accuracy over the previous method of manually entering data from paper tax returns.

This most recent tax filing season, where Americans saw a historic 11 percent increase in refunds, with the average refund of over \$3,200, has just concluded. Had this legislation been in law already, Americans would have gotten back what they were owed even faster.

As a key leader on the Ways and Means Committee's oversight efforts, Representative YAKYM has been a strong advocate for improving customer service at the IRS and battling to save taxpayers time and money.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6956, the BARCODE Efficiency Act, which I am proud to introduce with my friend and colleague, Representative YAKYM from Indiana.

This bill would help expedite the digital transition at IRS, requiring the IRS to implement scanning technology to speed up paper return processing. In tax year 2023, the IRS reports that around 7 percent of tax returns were filed on paper. Now, 7 percent may sound like a small number, Mr. Speaker, until you realize it represents approximately 10 million paper returns to be opened and processed. That is more than the entire population of New York City, our most populous city. In fact, that is more than the population of all but 10 U.S. States.

This bill will help expedite the process of these 10 million returns by directing the IRS to adopt barcode scanning and optical character recognition, or OCR, technology.

For those wondering why this bill is necessary, you only need to learn about the current intake process for paper returns in the IRS. Millions of Americans still use paper returns, including both returns prepared electronically but printed and filed on paper and any handwritten returns and paper correspondence.

Currently, when a paper return arrives at the IRS, an employee manually transcribes the data into IRS systems line by line by line by line. This process is not only time-consuming, it is costly and often inaccurate. Data entry errors from manual transcription are common and cost the American taxpayers money.

Return processing delays translates directly into refund delays, needlessly