

of such wages and self-employment income in the case of deaths occurring in or after such calendar year).

### SEC. 3. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social Security, shall develop and submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a plan to inform duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministers of a church, members of a religious order, and Christian Science practitioners of their eligibility to revoke any prior election of exemption from Social Security participation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CAREY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CAREY. 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 the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Clergy Act.

First, I thank my colleague Mr. FONG for his partnership on this issue. This is how the legislative process should work: Democrats and Republicans coming together to solve real problems for our constituents.

For nearly 90 years, Social Security has done exactly what it has promised: protected workers, retirees, and people with disabilities; and kept families out of poverty.

Since it works, our responsibility is pretty simple: to make it easier and not harder for Americans to access and benefit from the Social Security program.

Under current law, members of the clergy can opt out of paying Social Security if they choose not to receive benefits. The Clergy Act provides a 2-year window for clergy members to opt back in, to contribute, and to secure the earned benefits that they may have previously foregone.

Clergy serve as pillars of their communities, offering guidance and support in moments that matter the most. This bill ensures that they will have the opportunity to participate fully in a system that has strengthened generations of American families.

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

□ 1700

Mr. CAREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. FONG).

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill H.R. 227, the Clergy Act. This bipartisan legislation, cosponsored by my fellow California Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, would create a one-time re-enrollment window for pastors and other clergy members who have previously opted out of Social Security, many in their youth, to voluntarily opt back in.

For decades, members of the clergy have made the permanent decision of opting out of Social Security. While this choice was made with good intentions, many faith leaders experience significant financial hardship as they approach retirement.

Our local pastors and ministers are the backbone of our communities, providing critical spiritual guidance in the Central Valley, throughout California, and across the Nation. This legislation empowers them to take greater control over their own financial futures.

As lawmakers, we have a fundamental responsibility to strengthen Social Security in its current form while providing a pillar of protection for our seniors, including our faith leaders.

The Clergy Act is a commonsense solution to a nonpartisan problem, which is why I am proud it passed the Ways and Means Committee unanimously on a 40-0 vote.

I commend Congressman MIKE THOMPSON for his leadership and partnership, and I thank Chairman SMITH, Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, again, the House Ways and Means Committee members and staff, and all those who supported this critical legislation.

I urge support for this bill and hope to ensure those who have given so much are not left behind in retirement.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, if we are serious about strengthening Social Security, we can't stop at incremental fixes. We must also protect the program from efforts that would weaken this great program.

We have heard calls for so-called reforms or tough choices. Let's be clear about what that means: cutting benefits, raising retirement age, or moving toward privatization—steps that undermine the guaranteed security Americans rely on.

Democrats reject that approach. We believe Social Security is a promise, not a bargaining chip.

Today, we have an opportunity to do something constructive. The Clergy Act is a practical, bipartisan step that expands access to Social Security and strengthens retirement security for those who serve our communities every day.

We can choose to build on what works, or we can risk it. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. Let's build on what works.

I want to thank Congressman FONG, who has been a great partner in this effort. This is important legislation. It

will help the people that we represent and the people that our colleagues represent across this country.

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

Mr. CAREY. Mr. Speaker, I encourage my 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 Ohio (Mr. CAREY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 227, as amended.

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. CAREY. 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.

### INCREASE IN RETIREMENT AGE OF UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE OFFICERS

Mrs. BICE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8364) to amend title 5, United States Code, to authorize the increase of the retirement age in the United States Capitol Police.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8364

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

#### SECTION 1. INCREASE IN RETIREMENT AGE OF UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE OFFICERS.

(a) CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM.—Section 8335(c) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “becomes 60 years of age” and inserting “attains an age determined by the Board that shall be not less than 57 years of age and not more than 65 years of age”.

(b) FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM.—Section 8425(c) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “becomes 60 years of age” and inserting “attains an age determined by the Board that shall be not less than 57 years of age and not more than 65 years of age”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Mrs. BICE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. MORELLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oklahoma.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BICE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of BRYAN STEIL's legislation, H.R. 8364, which extends the retirement waiver age for officers within the United States Capitol Police.

I would like to thank Ranking Member MORELLE for his collaboration on this very important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, threats against lawmakers are at all-time highs. This weekend's events once again remind us of that reality.

Although we have seen a welcome and much-needed increase in recruitment numbers, we continue to have staffing challenges within the United States Capitol Police.

Together, these challenges have created difficult circumstances for those who work tirelessly to keep visitors, staff, and lawmakers safe.

Under current law, officers are forced to retire at age 57, unless they receive a waiver from the Capitol Police Board. With a waiver, officers can continue to work until the age of 60.

H.R. 8364 will extend that waiver timeline to 65.

Right now, nearly 60 sworn officers are working on a waiver, which is the equivalent of more than two recruitment classes. Without this legislative change, they will all be forced to retire in the next few years.

Under our legislation, the Capitol Police Board will have the authority to grant waivers to sworn officers until they reach the age of 65.

Notably, this is not the first time Congress has done something like this. In 2004 and 2010, Congress temporarily raised the mandatory Federal law enforcement retirement age from 60 to 65 to address staffing shortfalls at the FBI.

Additionally, it is also important to note that our legislation gives the Capitol Police Board the discretion to decide who is still fit for the job.

The men and women of the U.S. Capitol Police do a tremendous job protecting this institution. We shouldn't be forcing officers to retire when we have staffing shortages that can be easily remedied by this one change.

Again, I thank the ranking member and his staff for working closely with us on this important matter, and I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by offering my appreciation and thanks to the gentlewoman from Oklahoma, my friend Mrs. BICE, for her leadership. I extend my appreciation as well to the chair of the Committee on House Administration, BRYAN STEIL, for his authorship and his partnership in advancing this bill.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 8364, a bill that, as Mrs. BICE indicated, would increase the age at which Capitol Police officers may serve from 60

to 65 when granted a retirement age waiver by the Capitol Police Board.

The men and women of the United States Capitol Police have one of the most critical and demanding jobs in the legislative branch. This was once again underscored over the weekend when Capitol Police officers acted to protect Members of this House, including the Speaker and other members of leadership from the latest attempt at political violence—this time at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner.

We are all grateful that everyone who attended the dinner was able to leave safely.

Capitol Police officers secure the Capitol campus, investigate threats, provide protective details, screen visitors, respond to emergencies, investigate crimes, monitor demonstrations, secure major events, and more.

They do this all in an era of dramatically increased threats and strain on the department, and I commend Chief Sullivan and former Chief Manger for their diligent work rebuilding the force from the low point it reached after January 6. I am pleased that the department has since grown to more than 2,300 sworn officers. This is meaningful progress, but there is still much more work to do.

□ 1710

The large cohort of officers who joined the department after the September 11 attacks is now reaching retirement age. That is kind of hard to imagine, but that is the case.

The department cannot afford to lose those experienced, fully capable officers solely because they reach an arbitrary age threshold.

This bill does not change the statutory retirement age of 57, but it does give the Capitol Police Board discretion to allow an officer to continue serving until the age of 65 when doing so is in the public interest.

I want to make sure this is clear to people: Nothing in this bill lessens the board's responsibility to ensure officers granted exemptions remain fit for duty—fully fit and capable of meeting the physical and operational demands of the job.

This is a prudent, targeted step to preserve experience, maintain staffing, and help ensure the department has the workforce it needs.

For those reasons, I support the bill and urge my colleagues to do the same. I thank my colleague and friend Mrs. BICE, as well as Chairman STEIL, for their leadership.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important, prudent, thoughtful measure, and it will add to the safety and protection of the people in the Capitol complex, whether it is Members, staff, or visitors. That is something I know both sides of the aisle deeply appreciate and support.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Mrs. BICE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8364.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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 12 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. WITTMAN) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

- H.R. 7959; and
- H.R. 227.

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.

IRS WHISTLEBLOWER PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT ACT

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. 7959) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make improvements with respect to the treatment of whistleblowers, 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 Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 346, nays 10, not voting 73, as follows:

[Roll No. 138]

YEAS—346

Adams	Amo	Babin
Aguilar	Amodei (NV)	Bacon
Alford	Ansari	Baird
Allen	Arrington	Balderson