

On the heels of Teacher Appreciation Week, the North Carolina General Assembly is finally considering increasing teacher salaries. Our State ranks 46th in the Nation for teacher pay. That is simply unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, educators, like Dr. Walker, give their all to the next generation. They deserve fair pay.

RECOGNIZING MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month. In the Virgin Islands and across this Nation, too many suffer in silence, carrying the weight of depression, anxiety, trauma, and grief, without access to care.

I fought to bring real resources to my home, including \$2.7 million in mental health and wellness funding for health recovery services, wellness programming, emergency shelter, and victim services for St. Thomas and St. John.

For St. Croix, I have secured another \$2 million for community wellness expansion, youth violence intervention, and hurricane recovery for our boys' and girls' centers.

Mental illness is not a weakness, and mental health is not a luxury. Natural disasters, economic strain, and geographic isolation have compounded the mental health crisis in the Virgin Islands, which we cannot afford to ignore.

Mr. Speaker, access to quality mental health care must be treated as a right and not a privilege, and as an imperative to our entire community.

To anyone struggling, you are not alone. Asking for help is an act of courage.

RECOGNIZING MARSHALL PAIGE VALENTINE

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Marshall Paige Valentine is a devoted community, civic, and church leader, whose service and leadership have had a lasting impact across eastern North Carolina and beyond.

She has dedicated decades to mentoring, faith-based service, civic engagement, uplifting individuals, and strengthening communities throughout our region, State, Nation, and the entire world.

She served as the 25th Grand Worthy Matron for the Grand Chapter of North Carolina and the first from Greene County, focusing on charity, loving-kindness, and fellowship. Her legacy is truly remarkable.

Mr. Speaker, she is a shining star from Greene County. It is an honor to recognize such an extraordinary daughter

of eastern North Carolina and a great American.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 18, 2026.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on May 18, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 4530.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KEVIN F. McCUMBER,
Clerk.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1430

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas) at 2 o'clock and 30 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.

AUTHORIZATION TO INCREASE RETIREMENT AGE FOR MEMBER OF THE CAPITOL POLICE

Mr. STEIL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 4530) to amend chapters 83 and 84 of title 5, United States Code, to authorize an increase of the retirement age for members of the Capitol Police.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 4530

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION TO INCREASE RETIREMENT AGE FOR MEMBER OF THE CAPITOL POLICE.

(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, which shall be not less than 57 years of age and not more than 62 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, which shall be not less than 57 years of age and not more than 62 years of age”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STEIL. 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 bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us today was drafted to address staffing shortages with the United States Capitol Police.

Currently, officers are forced to retire at age 57, unless they receive a waiver from the Capitol Police Board. With a waiver, an officer may continue working until they are age 60. S. 4530 extends the waiver timeline.

Under this bill, the Capitol Police Board will have the authority to grant waivers to sworn officers until they turn 62. Right now, nearly 60 sworn officers are working with a waiver.

Unless we pass this statutory change, each of these officers will be forced to retire within the next few years. These forced retirements will only compound the staffing shortage issue that we are facing within the Capitol Police force.

Notably, there is past precedent for this policy change. On two occasions, Congress has temporarily raised the mandatory Federal law enforcement retirement age to 65 to address staffing issues at the FBI. I will also note that this bill gives the Capitol Police Board discretion when deciding who is still fit for the job.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 4530, a bill that would increase the age to which Capitol Police officers may continue to serve from 60 to 62 when granted a retirement age waiver by the Capitol Police Board.

Importantly, this bill does not change the statutory retirement age. Rather, it gives the Capitol Police Board flexibility to allow willing and able officers to remain with the force.

I said it when the House recently passed its version of the legislation,

and I want to reiterate that the officers of the United States Capitol Police have one of the most critical and demanding jobs in the legislative branch.

Last week, we celebrated Police Week here in Washington. At a time when payouts and pardons are being handed to the people who savagely attacked the Capitol Police in this very building just 5 years ago, they need to know we have their backs; not just with words, but with actions.

The force has come a long way since then, and I commend Chief Sullivan and former Chief Manger for working to rebuild the force and grow its ranks. We cannot stand in the way of that progress.

Threats against Members, our families, staff, people who visit here, and threats against our democratic institutions are growing by the day, and they show no signs of relenting, so we must confront this scourge head-on.

We can do that by helping to advance the interests that Capitol Police continue to deal with the challenges they have in terms of recruitment, and we can do it by passing this bill.

I thank Chairman STEIL, my colleague and friend, and all those members of the Committee on House Administration for making sure that we are able to get this passed. I also thank our colleagues in the Senate for giving us the chance to do this a second time, but I very much appreciate it.

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

Mr. STEIL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), the leader of the Republican Conference.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. STEIL), the chairman of the committee and my friend, for yielding. I thank him for the hard work he has put in to first passing an important bill over to the Senate, and now seeing this bill come back to address an important issue, and that is to make sure that we give the Capitol Police Board the flexibility so that we don't have to lose more good officers on the Capitol Police force.

I know personally the heroism and bravery of the great men and women in the United States Capitol Police. I would not be here without their heroism and bravery. We have some of them who are in the prime of their career who would be forced to retire if we don't pass this legislation.

At a time, as was brought up, where we have shortages, we need to make sure that we not only can keep attracting new officers to the force, but when you have officers in the prime of their career that everybody agrees are worthy of keeping on, that they have that flexibility. That is what this bill does, gives the Capitol Police Board that flexibility.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge the adoption of the legislation and urge all my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the majority leader for sharing his tragic experience. I am grateful to him for his leadership on these important issues. Again, this is, in my mind, a common-sense way to make sure that we continue to have the backs of the members of the Capitol Police who do such an extraordinary job protecting this entire Capitol complex, the men and women who serve here, our staffs, our families, and all the American citizens who get to come and participate in this great democracy.

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

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

I just thank my colleague, Mr. MORELLE, for his work in moving this bill through quickly as well as the leadership of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration for also engaging this, as well as Leader Scalise. I think we all recognize the hard work that the men and women of the United States Capitol Police force do day in and day out to make sure that this institution is open and accessible to the people and those who visit here, as well as staff and Members are kept safe.

This bill is a real opportunity to make sure that those individuals who have crossed the age of 60 but still are ready, prepared, and able to serve in the United States Capitol Police are able to do that.

I appreciate the work of all of my colleagues in moving this through. I encourage all of our colleagues to vote in favor of this legislation.

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 Wisconsin (Mr. STEIL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 4530.

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.

FOSTERING THE FUTURE ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7432) to amend section 477 of the Social Security Act to improve coordination with Federal housing assistance programs for youth who have experienced foster care, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7432

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 "Fostering the Future Act".

SEC. 2. EXPANSION OF EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED FOSTER CARE.

Section 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(5), by striking "aged out of foster care" and inserting "experienced foster care at age 14 or older";

(2) in subsection (h)(2), by striking "age out of foster care" and inserting "experience foster care at age 14 or older";

(3) in each of subsections (a)(6) and (i)(2), by striking "16" and inserting "14";

(4) in subsection (i)(3), by striking "in no event may a youth participate in the program for more than 5 years (whether or not consecutive)" and inserting "may not allow a youth to participate in the program for more than 5 years (or, in the case of a youth who was involved in a remedial education activity referred to in paragraph (4)(B), for more than 6 years), whether or not consecutive";

(5) in subsection (i)(4)—

(A) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

"(A) may be available for the cost of attendance—

"(i) at an institution of higher education, as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, including a community college or postsecondary vocational institution; or

"(ii) at a short-term training program that is eligible for the Workforce Pell program under section 401(k), as described in section 481(b)(3) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1088(b)(3)), as added by section 83002(b) of Public Law 119-21;"

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A), as so amended, the following:

"(B) may be available for costs—

"(i) associated with participation in an apprenticeship program;

"(ii) to obtain a general equivalency degree; or

"(iii) to receive remedial education; and";

and

(6) in subsection (i), by adding at the end the following:

"(7) In this section, the term 'remedial education' means education or skill training needed to support obtaining a high school diploma or qualifying for postsecondary education, training, or an apprenticeship that is—

"(A) not already available through the school district of the student or another free local, State, or Federal program; and

"(B) is provided by an instructor with credentials relevant to the subject area of instruction, as determined by the State."

SEC. 3. INCREASE IN MAXIMUM EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHER AMOUNT AND PROVISION OF GREATER SUPPORT FOR FOSTER YOUTH PURSUING POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 477(i) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677(i)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by striking "that program" and inserting "that education or training program, (except that the State may establish a grace period to allow a youth to continue participation in activities described in paragraph (4)(A), after an assessment and consultation with the youth, if the State determines that reasonable circumstances warrant the grace period)"; and

(B) by striking "the program" and inserting "the voucher program"; and

(2) in paragraph (4)(C) (as so redesignated by section 2(5)(C) of this Act), by striking "\$5,000" and inserting "\$12,000".

(b) GUIDANCE.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with youth who have experienced foster care, shall develop and issue model guidance to States and jurisdictions receiving allotments under section 477(c) of the Social Security