

Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill that will help community banks. The bill is supported by the National Bankers Association and the Community Development Bankers Association, and I am very pleased to support it.

As we have discussed, there is more Congress can do to update the deposit insurance reform framework to ensure it is working for community banks, for midsize banks, for MDIs and CDFIs, for rural banks, and all of their customers, especially the small businesses, non-profits, churches, and other organizations and their workers.

Let's pass comprehensive deposit insurance reform into law without further delay. In the meantime, I, again, urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I thank, again, Whip EMMER and Mrs. BEATTY for their tireless work on this. It has taken a lot of years of collaboration between both parties on both sides of the aisle to find a path to move this bill forward, and we couldn't have done it without the hard work of the gentleman from Minnesota and the gentlewoman from Ohio. I am grateful for their work.

I recommend everybody on both sides of the aisle 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. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3234, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. 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.

AMERICAN ACCESS TO BANKING ACT

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4544) to direct certain Federal banking and credit union agencies to promote the formation of de novo regulated institutions through the review of application processes, the review of capital raising by de novo regulated institutions, and the establishment of various outreach programs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4544

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 "American Access to Banking Act".

SEC. 2. STREAMLINING APPLICATION PROCESS AND REVIEW OF CAPITAL RAISING BY DE NOVO REGULATED INSTITUTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each of the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies shall—

(1) for the purpose of streamlining the process of applying to become a de novo regulated institution, conduct a review of any application forms related to such process;

(2) to the extent practicable, gather information needed from applicants seeking to become a de novo regulated institution from other Federal Government agencies or public sources to minimize information requests of such applicants; and

(3) in consultation with the Securities and Exchange Commission, review how de novo regulated institutions raise capital while maintaining investor protections, including the impact of—

(A) general capital raising restrictions; and
(B) capital raising restrictions related to individuals who are not accredited investors.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, and annually for 5 years thereafter, each of the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies shall submit to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and publish on a public website of such agency a report that contains—

(1) a description of the actions taken by such agency pursuant to subsection (a); and

(2) as appropriate, any administrative or legislative recommendations with respect to the purpose described in subsection (a)(3).

SEC. 3. IMPROVING COMMUNICATION WITH DE NOVO REGULATED INSTITUTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each of the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies shall, at the request of an applicant to become a de novo regulated institution, designate an employee of the agency as a caseworker, who may perform such duty in addition to the other duties of the employee.

(b) CASEWORKER DUTIES.—Each caseworker described in subsection (a) shall, to the maximum extent practicable—

(1) meet with the lead organizers applying to become a de novo regulated institution to provide a tutorial with respect to the application process; and

(2) be the primary point of contact of the respective Federal financial institutions regulatory agency for such organizers during the application process.

(c) NEW CASEWORKER.—Each agency described in subsection (a) may designate a new caseworker, as appropriate, to support continuity based on staffing and responsibilities assigned to the current caseworker.

SEC. 4. DE NOVO MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ PARTNERSHIPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—At the request of an institution that seeks to become a de novo regulated institution, each of the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies shall, to the maximum extent practicable, provide a list to such institution of similar types of institutions that—

(1) were recently approved to become a de novo regulated institution; and

(2) are interested in volunteering to serve as a mentor to provide advice about the de novo application process.

(b) MENTORSHIP INFORMATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, each of the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies shall provide public information and directions on how an institution may request a mentor or serve as a mentor as described in subsection (a).

SEC. 5. STATE AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each of the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies shall develop a plan to—

(1) regularly consult with State regulators to promote cooperation between State and Federal banking and credit union agencies in the creation of de novo regulated institutions, including responding to any State regulator that requests assistance on how a State-chartered financial institution can request Federal insurance;

(2) regularly consult with stakeholders, including applicants to become de novo regulated institutions and recently approved regulated institutions, to inform any reforms that may support the creation of de novo regulated institutions, including rural institutions, community development financial institutions, and minority depository institutions; and

(3) provide guidance, training material, and regular workshops to assist any interested parties to understand such agencies processes.

(b) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this section, and every 5 years thereafter, each of the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies shall submit to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate the respective plan of such agency described in subsection (a).

(2) PUBLIC COMMENT.—With respect to developing the plan described in subsection (a), each of the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies shall—

(A) provide an opportunity for public comments; and

(B) take such public comments into consideration.

SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In this Act:

(1) FEDERAL BANKING AGENCY.—The term "Federal banking agency" has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813).

(2) FEDERAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS REGULATORY AGENCIES.—The term "Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies" has the meaning given the term in section 1003 of the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3302).

(3) REGULATED INSTITUTION.—The term "regulated institution" means—

(A) with respect to a Federal banking agency, a depository institution (as such term is defined in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813)) for which the Federal banking agency is the appropriate Federal banking agency (as such term is defined in such section 3); and

(B) with respect to the National Credit Union Administration, an insured credit union (as such term is defined in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1752)).

(4) STATE.—The term "State" means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, and each territory of the United States.

(5) STATE REGULATOR.—The term "State regulator" means—

(A) with respect to a Federal banking agency, a State banking regulator; and

(B) with respect to the National Credit Union Administration, the State regulatory agency having jurisdiction over a State credit union (as such term is defined in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1752)).

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—For purposes of this Act, the process of applying to become a de novo regulated institution shall include the process of applying for Federal

deposit insurance, Federal share insurance, or membership of a Federal reserve bank.

SEC. 7. DISCRETIONARY SURPLUS FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The dollar amount specified under section 7(a)(3)(A) of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 289(a)(3)(A)) is reduced by \$24,000,000.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on September 1, 2036.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days 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 Arkansas?

There was no objection. Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the CBO estimate for this bill.

Legislation Considered Under Suspension of the Rules

The Majority Leader of the House of Representatives announces bills that will be con-

sidered under suspension of the rules in that chamber. Under suspension, floor debate is limited, all floor amendments are prohibited, points of order against the bill are waived, and final passage requires a two-thirds majority vote.

At the request of the Majority Leader and the House Committee on the Budget, CBO estimates the effects of those bills on direct spending and revenues. CBO has limited time to review the legislation before consideration. Although it is possible in most cases to determine whether the legislation would affect direct spending or revenues, time may be insufficient to estimate the magnitude of those effects. If CBO has prepared estimates for similar or identical legislation, a more detailed assessment of budgetary effects, including effects on spending subject to appropriation, may be included.

EFFECTS ON DIRECT SPENDING AND REVENUES OF LEGISLATION CONSIDERATION UNDER SUSPENSION OF THE RULES IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Week of May 18, 2026

Table with 6 columns: Bill Number, Title, Effect on Direct Spending, Effect on Revenues, Additional Information on Direct Spending and Revenue Effects, Link to Published Estimates. Row 1: H.R. 4544, American Access to Banking Act, as amended, Increase by at Least \$500K, Increase by at Least \$500K, Would increase direct spending by \$12 million, increase revenues by \$12 million, and result in no increase in the deficit, N/A

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the ranking member's bill, H.R. 4544, the American Access to Banking Act. I thank Ms. WATERS for her diligent work on this important bipartisan legislation.

Over the past decade, Mr. Speaker, the United States has lost nearly 2,000 community banks, while only 62 de novo banks have opened during that same period.

These essential institutions have disappeared from Main Streets across America due to mergers, acquisitions, and bank failures. In one out of every three counties in our country, a community bank is the only on-the-ground banking option—one out of every three counties. That is why it is important to consider this bill.

□ 1720

Mr. Speaker, I was the CEO of a community bank in the Mississippi Delta where there were very few banking offices available for small businesses and agricultural communities spread out across the rural heartland. I have to say it is very troubling when a local farmer tries to finance his equipment or where a small business owner wants to expand their restaurant or get their first loan to start a business if there is not a community bank. That is where families go to build relationships with lenders who know their names, understand their communities, and recognize their circumstances.

Why aren't new banks forming? It is because we have made it extraordinarily difficult to start one. The application process is often complex, duplicative, and overly burdensome. Some of the requirements aren't even in statute that are held out for that young business development team, those young officers who want to go out on their own to serve a community by creating a new depository institution.

That is why I am pleased to support the ranking member of the full committee, Ms. WATERS of California's, American Access to Banking Act.

This bill directs the Federal bank regulators to make it easier to start a new bank or credit union by streamlining the application process, improving the capital-raising options, establishing mentorship programs, and strengthening coordination between Federal and State regulators.

Banking is not a partisan issue, and every American deserves access to a financial institution that can meet their needs.

This bill is very complementary of efforts made by our Financial Institutions Subcommittee Chair, ANDY BARR of Kentucky, to try to remove barriers to improving the ability to start a bank in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I am a proud supporter of this bipartisan legislation. I thank the ranking member for her leadership on it. I encourage my colleagues to support it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4544, the American Access to Banking Act that I sponsored.

The number of new banks and credit unions called de novo institutions, that were formed over the past 15 years has been very low. There were only 6 new bank charters issued annually the past 15 years and only 29 new credit unions formed between 2014 and 2023.

During that time, we saw about one-third of all Minority Depository Institutions, or MDIs, disappear, including half of our Black-owned banks.

Now, research from the Federal Reserve and others found a strong correlation between the interest rate environment and new bank formation.

In fact, we did have historically low interest rates at zero percent for many

years as we slowly recovered from the crisis, but there is more we can do to help.

Earlier this year, ReShonda Young testified before our committee about the challenges she is facing just trying to establish an MDI in Iowa.

Ms. Young's story is remarkable. When she was a small business owner with a popcorn business, she tried to get a loan, and she was discriminated against by bank after bank after bank.

What did she do? She joined with other entrepreneurs and sued the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for dragging its feet and not implementing section 1071 to ensure we have a more fair and transparent small business loan market. Her lawsuit helped push the CFPB to finalize that overdue rule.

But Ms. Young did not stop there. She decided to start her own bank so that she could provide the kind of small business loans to others that she was repeatedly denied for.

Ms. Young's story is an American story. When you get knocked down, you get back up and you keep pushing for a better way. Not only that, but you work to help others in your community so they can have chances that you never had.

In her testimony, Ms. Young highlighted a few challenges with the de novo process, like a lengthy application checklist. My bill would require these outdated procedures to be streamlined.

My bill would also minimize duplicative data requests, and require regulators to review capital-raising challenges de novos face in consultation with the SEC.

My bill also requires the designation of a caseworker as a single point of contact to assist de novo applicants throughout the process.

H.R. 4544 further requires the development of outreach and education program and Federal regulator engagement with stakeholders as well as coordination with State regulators to support them in chartering de novo firms.

For any American like Ms. Young who wants to start a bank or credit union, they should have that chance, and the American Access to Banking Act will help give them that chance.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support my bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I, again, thank the gentlewoman for her work on this bill. Over this Congress, we have had some really inspirational people come and testify.

In fact, all three that I am picturing in my mind are women and all three came to the committee to talk about the burdens of trying to start a new bank or build a small community bank.

I remember BankMiami was a case, and there have been quite a number of start-up banks in south Florida that are Minority Depository Institutions.

We had inspirational speakers in our committee, and they said we need to do better here on this. This is at the heart of what the ranking member is talking about. How can we improve this process so that more people can take that decision, if their market and the characteristics of their economics and their geography would be rewarded by new bank startups?

Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for her leadership. I invite her to close, and I urge all of our colleagues to support her effort.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman very much for advancing my bill to this point and helping to get it passed through the House not only as a stand-alone bill but also as part of our housing bill.

Entrepreneurs like Ms. ReShonda Young who dream of starting their own bank or credit union and providing access to affordable financial products and services to neighbors in their community should have that chance.

My bill has broad support, including from the American Bankers Association, America's Credit Unions, Conference of State Bank Supervisors, Consumer Federation of America, Defense Credit Union Council, National Bankers Association, and National Community Reinvestment Coalition.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the ranking member for her work on this bill. I urge all my colleagues to support

it, 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. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4544, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. 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.

COMMUNITY BANK DEPOSIT ACCESS ACT OF 2025

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5317) to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to ensure that certain custodial deposits of well capitalized insured depository institutions are not considered to be funds obtained by or through deposit brokers, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5317

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 "Community Bank Deposit Access Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. LIMITED EXCEPTION FOR CUSTODIAL DEPOSITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 29 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1831f) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(j) LIMITED EXCEPTION FOR CUSTODIAL DEPOSITS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Custodial deposits of an eligible institution shall not be considered to be funds obtained, directly or indirectly, by or through a deposit broker to the extent that the total amount of such custodial deposits does not exceed an amount equal to 20 percent of the total liabilities of the eligible institution.

“(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) CUSTODIAL DEPOSIT.—The term ‘custodial deposit’ means a deposit that is not deposited at an insured depository institution in return for fees paid by the insured depository institution pursuant to an agreement with a third party and that would otherwise be considered to be obtained, directly or indirectly, by or through a deposit broker, if the deposit is deposited at 1 or more insured depository institutions, for the purpose of providing or maintaining deposit insurance for the benefit of a third party, by or through any of the following, each acting in a formal custodial or fiduciary capacity for the benefit of a third party:

“(i) An insured depository institution serving as agent, trustee, or custodian.

“(ii) A trust entity controlled by an insured depository institution serving as agent, trustee, or custodian.

“(iii) A State-chartered trust company serving as agent, trustee, or custodian.

“(iv) A plan administrator or investment advisor, acting in a formal custodial or fiduciary capacity for the benefit of a plan.

“(B) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term ‘eligible institution’ means an insured depository institution that accepts custodial deposits, if the insured depository institution has less than \$10,000,000,000 in total assets as reported on the consolidated report of condition and income as reported quarterly to the appropriate Federal banking agency and—

“(i)(I) when most recently examined under section 10(d) was assigned a composite rating of 1, 2, or 3 under the Uniform Financial Institutions Rating System (or an equivalent rating under a comparable rating system); and

“(II) is well capitalized; or

“(ii) has obtained a waiver pursuant to subsection (c).

“(C) PLAN.—The term ‘plan’ has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1002).

“(D) PLAN ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘plan administrator’ has the meaning given the term ‘administrator’ in section 3 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1002).

“(E) WELL CAPITALIZED.—The term ‘well capitalized’ has the meaning given the term in section 38(b).”.

(b) INTEREST RATE RESTRICTION.—Section 29 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1831f), as amended by subsection (a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(k) RESTRICTION ON INTEREST RATE PAID ON CERTAIN CUSTODIAL DEPOSITS.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

“(A) the terms ‘custodial deposit’, ‘eligible institution’, and ‘well capitalized’ have the meanings given those terms in subsection (j); and

“(B) the term ‘covered insured depository institution’ means an insured depository institution that while acting as an eligible institution under subsection (j), accepts custodial deposits while not well capitalized.

“(2) PROHIBITION.—A covered insured depository institution may not pay a rate of interest on custodial deposits that are accepted while not well capitalized that, at the time the funds or custodial deposits are accepted, significantly exceeds the limit set forth in paragraph (3).

“(3) LIMIT ON INTEREST RATES.—The limit on the rate of interest referred to in paragraph (2) shall be not greater than—

“(A) the rate paid on deposits of similar maturity in the normal market area of the covered insured depository institution for deposits accepted in the normal market area of the covered insured depository institution; or

“(B) the national rate paid on deposits of comparable maturity, as established by the Corporation, for deposits accepted outside the normal market area of the covered insured depository institution.”.

SEC. 3. DISCRETIONARY SURPLUS FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The dollar amount specified under section 7(a)(3)(A) of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 289(a)(3)(A)) is reduced by \$4,000,000.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on September 1, 2036.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.