

We have a responsibility to ensure these programs operate with integrity and accountability.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7726 and help restore trust in these important programs.

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

Mr. Speaker, millions of families rely on safe, stable childcare in their communities. Unfortunately, the cost of childcare often rivals the cost of housing. Many communities lack adequate childcare altogether.

H.R. 7726 fails to meaningfully improve America's broken childcare system, but it does add unnecessary bureaucratic burdens to States and providers, many of whom are already struggling.

Fraud must be addressed, but in substance, not by discussing the merits of the title of the bill. Smart accountability means strong enforcement paired with practical flexibility. Requiring extra reports and punishing States and providers for minor, inadvertent mistakes does not protect children and doesn't even reduce fraud. It does put programs that families depend on at risk and allows the Trump administration to weaponize this legislation by withholding funding from States that didn't vote for him.

I oppose H.R. 7726, which fails to reduce fraud and prioritizes inflexible mandates over the real-world needs of working families.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

We have the responsibility to ensure taxpayer dollars are used to help Americans, not fraudsters and scammers. Mr. Speaker, if you noticed today, we heard testimony from members of this committee and off this committee, including a Member we just heard from Minnesota, the State with a significant problem that alerted us to the fraud, waste, and abuse that was going on, not simply States or Members that are going to be so-called targeted by the President.

These are Members who understand what went on and how taxpayer funds were being abused through fraud.

For too long, criminals have exploited Federal programs, stealing billions while children and families lose access to critical support. That must end.

The Stop Child Care Scams Act strengthens oversight, closes loopholes, and prevents bad actors from continuing their schemes across multiple programs.

These are straightforward, long-overdue reforms that will make a real difference. Every dollar lost to fraud is a dollar taken from someone who truly needs help.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Stop Child Care Scams Act.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 7726, which will have detrimental effects on child care in the United States. Fraud at any level is unacceptable, especially if it takes valuable child care away from families. But the Child Care and Development Fund already includes strong safeguards to help the program fulfill its core mission of caring for the Nation's youngest learners while supporting working families. Although this bill may be aimed at "addressing fraud," in reality it will leave many families without the child care assistance they need. The Child Care and Development Fund supports 1.4 million children each month. This bill, which adds onerous oversight requirements and is overly punitive for states that fail to meet requirements, will undermine the ability for the program to do what it is supposed to do—help low-income families afford child care. Any disruptions in the system—including freezing payments across all states—have real and immediate consequences. Child care is essential infrastructure that millions of American families need, and we should treat it as such. I strongly urge my colleagues, to oppose this legislation.

□ 1520

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired. Pursuant to House Resolution 1333, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

#### MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Subramanyam moves to recommit the bill (H.R. 7726) to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

The material previously referred to by Mr. SUBRAMANYAM is as follows:

Mr. Subramanyam moves to recommit the bill (H.R. 7726) to the Committee on Education and Workforce with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

#### SEC. 11. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall not take effect until the Attorney General posts publicly on the website of the Department of Justice, and submits to the Congress, an individualized list of all pardons granted by the President since January 20, 2025, for a crime involving fraud. Such list shall include the following information with respect to each listed pardon:

- (1) The kind of fraud committed by the person who committed such crime and the population impacted by such fraud.
- (2) The dollar amount and economic effect of such fraud.
- (3) The specific Federal program defrauded (if any) by such person.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XIX, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. 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 question will be postponed.

#### PREVENTING WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE IN TANF ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1333, I call up the bill (H.R. 8872) to amend part A of title IV of the Social Security Act to target funds to low-income families, strengthen program integrity guardrails for State expenditure of funds, require measurement of improper payments, and establish goals for eliminating fraud and improper payments under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1333, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means, printed in the bill, is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 8872

*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 "Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act".*

#### SEC. 2. STRENGTHENING PROGRAM INTEGRITY THROUGH IMPROPER PAYMENTS REVIEW.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 404 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 604) is amended by adding at the end the following:

*"(1) APPLICABILITY OF PAYMENT INTEGRITY LAW.—The Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019 shall apply to a State with respect to the State program funded under this part in the same manner in which such Act applies to a Federal agency."*

(b) *REPORT TO CONGRESS.*—Within 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the Congress a written report that contains a plan to reduce or eliminate improper payments made by States under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act within 10 years.

#### SEC. 3. TARGETING FUNDS TO FAMILIES IN NEED.

Section 404 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 604) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

*"(m) ESTABLISHING A THRESHOLD FOR FAMILIES IN NEED.—A State to which a grant is made under section 403(a)(1) shall use the grant only to provide assistance or services to a family whose income is less than twice the poverty guidelines updated periodically in the Federal Register under section 673(2) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 9902(2))."*

#### SEC. 4. DEADLINES FOR THE OBLIGATION AND EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS.

Section 404(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 604(e)) is amended to read as follows:

“(e) DEADLINES FOR OBLIGATION AND EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS BY STATES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a State to which funds are paid, after the effective date of this subsection, under section 403(a)(1) for a fiscal year shall obligate the funds not later than the end of the succeeding fiscal year, and shall expend the funds not later than the end of the 2nd succeeding fiscal year.

“(2) EXCEPTION FOR LIMITED AMOUNT OF FUNDS SET ASIDE FOR FUTURE USE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this subsection, a State to which funds are paid under section 403(a)(1), after the effective date of this subsection, for a fiscal year may reserve not more than 15 percent of the funds for future use in the State program funded under this part, subject to subparagraph (B) of this paragraph.

“(B) LIMITATION.—The total amount held in reserve by a State under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall not exceed an amount equal to 50 percent of the total amount paid to the State under section 403(a)(1) for the then preceding fiscal year.

“(C) NOTICE OF INTENT TO RESERVE FUNDS.—A State that intends to reserve funds under subparagraph (A) shall notify the Secretary of the intention not later than the end of the period in which the funds are available for obligation without regard to subparagraph (A) of this paragraph.”.

**SEC. 5. PROHIBITION ON STATE DIVERSION OF FEDERAL FUNDS TO REPLACE STATE SPENDING.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 404 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 604) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(m) LIMITATION ON USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS TO REPLACE STATE GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS.—A State shall use Federal funds received under this part only to supplement funds that, in the absence of the Federal funds, would be made available from State and local sources for programs assisted under this part, and not to supplant the funds.”.

(b) STATE CERTIFICATION.—Section 402(a) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 602(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(9) CERTIFICATION OF STATE SUPPLEMENTATION.—A certification by the chief executive officer of the State that the funds provided to the State under this part will not be used to supplant State or non-Federal funds for services and activities that promote the purposes of this part.”.

**SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

The amendments made by this Act shall take effect on October 1, 2027.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH).

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 include 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.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 8872, the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act, introduced by my Ways and Means Committee colleague Representative MIKE CAREY.

With an annual price tag of over \$16 billion, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program is a sizable investment and plays a critical support role for families who have fallen on hard times. A core tenet of the program is promoting self-sufficiency through work, a goal I know many of us see as a cornerstone of a successful welfare system.

Unfortunately, right now, there are major weaknesses in the TANF program that make it ripe for waste, fraud, and abuse. Despite the billions of dollars flowing through TANF, it is one of the few Federal programs we have that is not required to account for improper payments.

Additionally, investigations and reporting conducted by the Government Accountability Office found that the 78 percent of TANF spending that goes toward non-assistance activities lacks guardrails to prevent abuse and misuse of these Federal resources.

With instances of fraud occurring at an alarming rate across multiple government programs at the Federal, State, and local levels, Congress must act. That is why the Ways and Means Committee has held hearings and conducted critical oversight to determine what solutions will protect taxpayers and the families who should be benefiting from programs like TANF.

The Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act is a straightforward piece of legislation that addresses four key areas of concern, reflecting priorities of four members of the Ways and Means Committee.

The lead sponsor of this bill, Representative CAREY, has fought to keep States from sitting on TANF funds while families struggle. Right now, States are holding on to nearly \$8 billion in funds because there are no spending deadlines holding them accountable. This legislation requires that States spend down their TANF funds within a 3-year window.

Representative ARRINGTON, the chairman of the House Budget Committee who is a leader in the fight to rein in waste, fraud, and abuse in government, has championed a provision within this bill that finally requires the Federal Government to track and report instances of improper payments. This reporting is crucial to ensuring that policymakers and the American people know if tax dollars are being spent as advertised.

With her understanding of how States often repurpose TANF funds to cover unrelated gaps in State budgets, Representative TENNEY has worked to ensure States only use Federal TANF resources to supplement, not replace, State and local spending.

Thanks to the leadership of Representative ADRIAN SMITH, who has

worked to ensure TANF funding is actually going to those truly in need of assistance, this bill includes a provision that establishes an income threshold of 200 percent of the Federal poverty line, which is \$62,000 for a family of four, to ensure States are targeting TANF spending to give more to those who are truly in need.

These policies defend against the abuse and misuse of taxpayer dollars and improve the integrity of the TANF program to better support those it was created to serve.

I am grateful for the leadership of the members of the Ways and Means Committee who have made weeding out waste, fraud, and abuse in our Federal welfare programs a priority.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 8872. Democrats strongly oppose fraud, and that is why Representative JUDY CHU and I introduced H.R. 2108, the TANF State Expenditure Integrity Act, which would give the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services specific authority to monitor sub-grantee expenditures, to ensure that they are consistent with TANF's purpose of helping poor children.

When they are not, as was the case in the egregious fraud perpetrated by Brett Favre and Governor Phil Bryant in Mississippi, H.R. 2108 would require the State to recover the funds and provide them directly to the poor families they were intended for.

Republicans refused to work with us to enact that bill, which the U.S. Government Accountability Office identified as a bill that addressed their concerns about TANF program integrity.

□ 1530

Instead, less than 48 hours before our markup, they introduced H.R. 8872. This GOP bill would not enable a single fraud investigation. It would not recover a penny for the poor families TANF is supposed to help. It would not have protected the children of Mississippi, when multimillionaire Brett Favre used millions of dollars in TANF funds to build a volleyball stadium and invest in health stocks, nor would it reinstate the fraud-related penalty against Mississippi that the Trump administration canceled.

What H.R. 8872 would do is give Health and Human Services new power to decide what to call fraud and how to measure it. This GOP bill would give the Trump administration new power to seize confidential beneficiary data, levy penalties, and cut off State funding to help poor children.

We know exactly what to expect if we give HHS more power, because this January, the Department of Health and Human Services abruptly froze \$10 billion in critical social services funding for five States, including my home

State of Illinois, to exact revenge on Governors who stood up to President Trump.

The Trump administration intentionally chose to harm vulnerable families, children, small businesses, and communities in five States: namely, Illinois, California, Colorado, Minnesota, and New York, to settle a political score, and the Republicans in this House remained silent, not a word.

Fortunately, current law limits an administration's authority to weaponize support for low-income families. Consequently, the courts issued a restraining order that is essential to protecting tens of millions of children and families. If they had not, The Century Foundation estimates it would have cost struggling families \$400 million in lost earnings and help alone, not to mention the radiating harm to businesses, communities, and economies.

Now, the Republican leadership advances this farce of a bill to erase those protections, all while failing to address the biggest source of TANF fraud.

If Republicans want to protect taxpayers, they should stop accusing hard-working parents and look to the graft and vanity projects they keep enabling.

Over the 17 months he has been back in office, President Trump increased his net worth by over \$4 billion by selling cryptocurrency, insider trading, and leveraging his position. Most recently, the President spent \$5 million of taxpayer money to coat bronze statues in gold leaf, enough money to buy a week's worth of groceries for 20,000 families.

If Republicans want to protect taxpayers, then, at the very least, Congress should not give HHS any new power to harm families the next time President Trump decides to lash out at a Governor who spoke up about the harm his policies and corruptions have done to American families.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), the chair of the Subcommittee on Work and Welfare.

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act.

TANF was created with a clear purpose, and I think it is important to remember this: To help families move from welfare to work, promote self-sufficiency, and support low-income parents and children. That mission is undermined when taxpayer dollars are not properly protected.

When Federal welfare funds are vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse, the consequences are real. States face weaker incentives to ensure dollars are spent appropriately. Taxpayers lose confidence in the program and, most

importantly, families who truly need assistance lose out because resources are not preserved for them.

As the chairman of the Subcommittee on Work and Welfare, I have worked for years to identify and stop the TANF fraud in the program.

Chairman JASON SMITH and I sent a letter to the Government Accountability Office in 2023 requesting information on TANF's program accountability measures.

In response, the GAO issued five reports in 2025 identifying that TANF lacks numerous oversight and financial guardrails expected in public assistance programs. More specifically, the GAO identified 37 States with 162 TANF audit findings. Many of these findings were deemed severe, and the problems repeated over multiple years.

They also found that States are sitting on nearly \$8 billion in unspent TANF funds. That is \$8 billion of taxpayer money, which has doubled since 2015.

Finally, the GAO recommended that HHS be provided with authority to require States to measure and report improper payments.

This bill that we are debating here today will address many of these findings.

First, it finally would require improper payments reporting in TANF.

Second, it puts in place spending timelines so States aren't sitting on large reserves of funds that aren't making their way to families. This will ensure that States do not tap into those unused funds for needy families when there are State budget shortfalls, which happens way too often.

Lastly, the bill includes a new Federal eligibility guideline and targeting to make sure funds are going to families under 200 percent of the poverty line.

If Congress is going to provide billions of dollars each year for TANF, we have a responsibility and obligation as elected leaders to ensure that dollars are helping the families experiencing genuine financial hardship.

The Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act will reduce fraud, restore accountability, and help preserve TANF benefits for families who truly need them.

We should all be able to agree that welfare funds should go to families who need help and not to fraudsters, wasteful spending, or people or programs that can provide for themselves without Federal assistance.

In closing, I urge my colleagues to support—The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. LAHOOD. In closing, I urge my colleagues to support and help taxpayers by voting for the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act.

□ 1540

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I just want to remind my colleagues

that despite the rhetoric we will hear this afternoon on the floor, there is nothing in this bill that actually addresses fraud in the TANF program. Nowhere in H.R. 8872, outside of its title, does the word "fraud" even appear in this bill.

Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU).

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 8872, the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act.

Let me remind us of one of the biggest TANF fraud scandals of all time. Several years ago, former NFL quarterback Brett Favre conspired with Mississippi State officials to steal millions of taxpayer dollars meant for the State's poorest families. He stole this money to build a new volleyball court for his daughter's college.

Why did this happen? It was because under current law, the Federal Government has no authority to conduct oversight into how States spend their TANF block grant funds, which makes up roughly 80 percent of TANF spending.

That is where the biggest oversight gap exists, and this bill before us does nothing about it. Instead, it would require States to only report calculations about over- and underpayments but doesn't investigate fraud itself. By doing this, though, it empowers the administration to use these calculations to justify withholding TANF funds from certain States.

This selective process would only apply to less than 15 percent of total TANF funding. This completely ignores the 80 percent of TANF spending where the fraud is actually occurring. When Republicans brought this bill before the Ways and Means Committee, I offered an amendment to insert into the bill the bill that I had introduced with Congressman DANNY DAVIS, the TANF State Expenditure Integrity Act.

Our bill would finally allow Federal oversight of TANF block grant funding and require States that intentionally misuse TANF funds to direct an equivalent amount toward legitimate assistance for families. Simply put, our bill would actually go after the type of fraud that Republicans claim that they care about.

If my Republican colleagues were truly interested in preventing waste, fraud, and abuse, they would have welcomed my amendment. Instead, they blocked it, but this is no surprise. Their record on fraud speaks for itself.

Donald Trump publicly defended Brett Favre and actually canceled the modest penalty President Biden was able to impose on Mississippi. He is letting everyone off the hook for this blatant fraud, and Republicans in Congress haven't said a word about it.

Not only that. Last Congress, Republicans held a hearing on TANF fraud where they actually apologized to Brett Favre. It was embarrassing, and it was shameful.

For this reason, at the appropriate time, I will offer a motion to recommit this bill back to committee. If House rules would have permitted, I would have offered the motion with an important amendment to this bill.

My amendment would remove H.R. 8872's provisions empowering President Trump's continued attacks on struggling families and replace them with provisions that actually fight fraud, and that includes my TANF State Expenditure Integrity Act.

My motion to recommit would also address one of the most brazen acts of public corruption in American history: Trump's \$1.8 billion slush fund and his sham settlement.

Madam Speaker, I want to emphasize what happened here. The President of the United States sued his own government and got a settlement allowing him to direct \$1.8 billion of taxpayer dollars to political allies and January 6 rioters, the violent criminals who assaulted police officers and attacked our democracy.

After receiving overwhelming bipartisan backlash, the Trump administration is now claiming that it won't move forward with the fund. However, a statement is not law. If the administration truly intends to abandon this corrupt scheme, it should have no objection to Congress permanently prohibiting it.

Even that is only part of the story, because no such settlement and statement has been made regarding plans to withdraw the most egregious, self-serving part of this settlement: the provision granting President Trump, his family, and his businesses total immunity from all government audits and investigations before the DOJ, IRS, or any other government agency or department.

While the administration has retreated from its plan to reward Trump's allies with taxpayer dollars, it is charging ahead with giving Trump, his kids, and his companies lifetime immunity from IRS audits and tax prosecution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, my motion to recommit would invalidate in Federal law the entire settlement agreement, including the slush fund and the immunity provision, and it would forever prohibit any similar corrupt fund in the future.

I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD immediately prior to the vote on the motion to recommit.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in voting for the motion to recommit.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, before I yield to the gen-

tleman from Ohio, I just have to say that it is reckless to say on this floor that someone has stolen anything when they have never been criminally charged for anything. That is very, very bad for any Member of Congress to say that to a regular, everyday American who has never been charged with anything. Democrats should be ashamed.

Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CAREY).

Mr. CAREY. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding and for the opportunity to talk about some commonsense reforms to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

For context, TANF is a bipartisan program that was created over 30 years ago to help struggling families get back on their feet. The program supports families with their immediate needs while promoting a path toward work and self-sufficiency. Taxpayers deserve to have confidence that their tax dollars are being used effectively and as intended.

This is what the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act actually does. It improves clarity about the integrity of funds, targets assistance to the most vulnerable, and confirms that funds are actually spent. That is what it does.

Without additional safeguards, TANF will remain vulnerable to bad actors. This not only harms the taxpayers but even more so the families who actually need the help.

Congressional Republicans are committed to preventing waste, fraud, and abuse. Ohioans' own Vice President JD VANCE and the Task Force to Eliminate Fraud have the exact same goal. The changes proposed in H.R. 8872 will support both of these efforts.

Ultimately, the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act is about strengthening accountability. H.R. 8872 does not do this by imposing any cuts whatsoever. It doesn't impose any cuts whatsoever.

What this bill really does is ensure that more assistance is actually provided. It preserves the program's flexibility for States to utilize funds in ways that meet the needs of their communities while making sure that the resources are not wasted, misused, or diverted.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill and its non-controversial proposals to strengthen TANF for the future of our next generations.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

□ 1550

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois for yielding. I want to say to my colleagues, my Republican friends, that I agree with them that the way this program, TANF, was designed, it was a fraudster's dream.

It was designed with so-called flexibility, and the reason I know that is because I was in the Wisconsin State Senate when "ending welfare as we know it" was constructed by Tommy G. Thompson, then-Governor of the State of Wisconsin, and it was adopted the following year by Newt Gingrich and President Clinton.

It was designed that way. It was not just since poor Brett Favre, the Wisconsin quarterback, built the volleyball court with TANF dollars, poor thing getting blamed for it.

Before then, States were balancing their budgets with TANF money; cities were building infrastructure projects with TANF dollars; and CEOs who ran the welfare programs in our States were getting bonuses for denying welfare recipients benefits. This didn't just start.

I agree that we should rein in waste, fraud, and abuse with the provisions provided by Dr. DANNY DAVIS and Dr. JUDY CHU's bill. This bill doesn't do that at all.

All it does is provide HHS with the power to stop providing support for women and children who need daycare, to be able to do what they did earlier this year, and to freeze \$10 billion to blue States. This is all that this does. This does not get at the heart of the problem.

Madam Speaker, I ask our colleagues to vote against this bill, to come together with Dr. DAVIS and Ms. CHU and the rest of us who want to end the true source of waste, fraud, and abuse, and not abuse our children with this provision.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BEAN).

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank our chairman for yielding.

Taking care of our most vulnerable citizens is what a civilized society does, and it is why Congress created TANF, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. TANF is just that, temporary assistance for the most needy among us.

Like other safety net programs, Madam Speaker, we partner with the States. It is the most efficient way to deliver care.

My question for this body is, should we ever have to worry about the States using TANF dollars for any program other than TANF?

You wouldn't think we would have to worry about that at all, but, Madam Speaker, the report from the GAO, our Government Accountability Office, is in. It seems we do have to worry about States using TANF dollars for other than TANF recipients.

The report is in. They have used it for education programs and college scholarships. They have built roads and enhanced their State transportation systems. The crown gem offender, Madam Speaker, is a State, which will remain nameless today, that has built a sports stadium with TANF dollars. It is not what TANF was intended to do,

nor is it the creative, cooperative partnership that was intended by working with the States. It is time Congress says: Enough.

That is why I have sponsored a bill with CLAUDIA TENNEY from the great State of New York to create TANF dollars as a general revenue targeted specifically to the neediest among us and not as a revenue slush fund for these States. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill, H.R. 8872, the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act, which includes many reforms, but this one right here, States, we have to trust them with the money given.

Madam Speaker, I remind everybody in this room that every TANF family is different, but the typical TANF family is a single mom. She has 2.1 kids. She is working 1.2 jobs. She drives a car that is 16 years old. The back window is taped up. Maybe there is a spare tire that she can't change because diapers elevate higher than car repairs. She is the one we need to make these reforms for.

I urge my colleagues to join me, to join everybody, in voting "yes" for TANF reform so that we can help the neediest among us.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA).

Mr. CORREA. Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleagues from the other side: Let's go after fraud, waste, and abuse. But this bill allows the administration to hold back funding for children and families under the guise of fraud. Earlier this year, the administration froze \$10 billion in funding for families and children in blue States.

Let's talk about guardrails. A year ago, we gave ICE and CBP seven and three times their annual budgets, respectively. Where are those funds going? ICE just paid \$130 million for a warehouse in Georgia that was bought for \$30 million the year before. ICE just bought another property in Texas for \$123 million that was valued at \$11 million. Also, let's not forget Secretary Noem's \$170 million luxury jet.

Instead of going after children and families, let's go after these wasteful, fraudulent contracts. I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this measure.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Ms. TENNEY).

Ms. TENNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to support passage of H.R. 8872, the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, as it is known, was created to help families in poverty meet urgent needs while supporting work and long-term self-sufficiency.

Unfortunately, Federal TANF funds have become too easy for State governments to use as slush funds for unrelated programs, as you heard my great colleague, Mr. BEAN, describe. Some States—he left them unnamed—are

using it to build sports stadiums instead of focusing this money on families who are truly in need of assistance.

This is why I am leading this bill with my colleague from Florida, Mr. AARON BEAN, the Protect TANF Resources for Families Act, which is included in this bill package.

This bill says something very simple: Federal TANF funds can only be used to support families in poverty, and they cannot be used to fill State budget gaps.

This bill does not take away State flexibility. States will continue to have flexibility to operate their TANF programs in ways that work for individual communities, but flexibility requires responsibility.

Federal dollars provided for needy families should remain focused on needy families. Struggling families should be able to trust that TANF resources are being preserved for them. Taxpayers have the right to ensure that their money isn't being diverted through unfair State budget maneuvers.

This bill is an important step toward restoring accountability, protecting limited resources, and making sure TANF serves the families who truly need our help.

Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman JASON SMITH, subcommittee Chairman DARIN LAHOOD, and my colleague who cosponsors this bill, AARON BEAN from Florida, for marking up this important bill. I also thank our Speaker, Leader SCALISE, and Whip TOM EMMER for bringing this bill to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill to help us end waste, fraud, and abuse, and to provide accountability to our taxpayers.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 8872, the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program provides \$16 billion of taxpayer money each year to help low-income families get back on their feet. That is an important mission, but when taxpayer dollars are lost to fraud, improper payments, or poor oversight, that money is not helping a family in need.

For too long, TANF has lacked basic accountability measures that apply to many other Federal programs. In fact, TANF is one of the few Federal programs not required to report an annual improper payment rate. Madam Speaker, you can imagine that is an encouragement of fraud. It should concern every Member of this body.

□ 1600

This bill brings needed accountability to TANF by requiring improper payments be measured and reported.

You can see how many improper payments we found in other programs.

With the national debt now exceeding \$39 trillion, Congress has a responsibility to make sure every Federal dollar is spent effectively.

Reducing waste and fraud is not about weakening assistance to families in need. It is about protecting those programs so they reach the parents and children who truly depend upon them.

If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle really want to help struggling families, they should join us in making sure that TANF dollars are not lost to waste and fraud but instead go to the people the program was created to serve.

It is not surprising when you have a program funded by the Federal Government and administered by the State government there is fraud.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I encourage my Democratic colleagues especially to support this legislation.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. MILLER).

Mr. MILLER of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 8872, the Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act led by my colleague from Ohio (Mr. CAREY).

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, TANF, exists for one purpose, which is to help low-income families through difficult times and to support their path toward work, stability, and self-sufficiency. But for too long, TANF dollars have not been managed with the level of accountability that taxpayers and families deserve throughout our country.

The numbers are stark. From 2015 to 2024, unspent TANF balances more than doubled, from roughly \$4 billion to \$9.7 billion. States held approximately \$8 billion in TANF funds rather than spending them on needy families.

In my home State of Ohio alone, more than \$600 million was sitting unused. When billions of dollars sit idle year after year, those funds are not helping families find work, support children, or get through a crisis.

This is exactly why Congressman CAREY and I introduced the Improve Transparency and Stability for Families and Children Act earlier this Congress. I am pleased those reforms are now incorporated into H.R. 8872.

This legislation fixes the problem directly. It ensures funds actually reach low-income families, sets clear spending deadlines so money doesn't sit idle, holds States accountable, strengthens program integrity by requiring measurement of improper payments, and prevents Federal TANF dollars from being used to replace State spending. I believe everyone can get on board with that.

If we are serious about helping families in need and if we believe in TANF's mission of moving families from welfare to work and towards independence,

then we must ensure that the money actually reaches them and it is not lost to waste, fraud, or even bureaucratic mismanagement. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers at this time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

President Trump's economy has zero job creation. Skyrocketing gas prices and costly childcare make it more difficult and more expensive to work, crushing workers and families. Wage growth is slowing.

Alarming, this bill we consider today in the people's House intentionally fails to address any of those problems, nor does this bill take action to punish wealthy and well-connected people, people who stole tens of millions of dollars Congress provided to help some of the poorest children in Mississippi and throughout the country.

Instead, this bill would give the Trump administration's Health and Human Services new power to cut off assistance to struggling families and poor children based on the new "error rate," calculations that they define to advance their cruel designs under Project 2025.

When we help Americans who are struggling pay for food, utilities, or healthcare, Republicans are quick to label it welfare and accuse recipients of fraud.

But when the Department of Justice reaches into taxpayers' pockets and steals \$1.8 billion for a slush fund to pay the President and his allies, including convicted criminals who beat police officers guarding the Capitol on January 6, they remain and have remained silent.

When taxpayers' pockets pay for the President's self-anointed immunity for tax fraud not only for himself but also for his businesses and his family, it is truly reprehensible that my colleagues would remain silent.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this bill and to speak out against the real fraud and corruption poisoning our country. Let's make sure that we continue to help those poor, needy families and poor, needy children who need the benefits coming from a just society.

Mr. Speaker, I will vote "no" on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, waste, fraud, and abuse have no place in our government and certainly no place in programs meant to provide critical assistance to our Nation's most vulnerable.

The Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in TANF Act is a targeted and timely piece of legislation that pro-

tections the American taxpayers' hard-earned money and ensures that resources get to families who are truly in need of our help.

I appreciate my Ways and Means Committee colleagues for the time, attention, and work that they have contributed to this reform effort, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas). All time for debate has expired. Pursuant to House Resolution 1333, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 8872 is postponed.

□ 1610

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

The motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2860;

The motion to recommit H.R. 7726; Passage of H.R. 7726, if ordered; and Adoption of H. Con. Res. 86.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

NORTHWEST STRAITS MARINE CONSERVATION INITIATIVE RE-AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2025

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. 2860) to reauthorize the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Act to promote the protection of the resources of the Northwest Straits, 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 Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 374, nays 49, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 196]  
YEAS—374

Adams	Amodei (NV)	Balint
Aderholt	Ansari	Barr
Aguilar	Auchincloss	Barragán
Alford	Bacon	Barrett
Allen	Baird	Baumgartner
Amo	Balderson	Beatty

Begich	Garcia (CA)	McCollum
Bell	Garcia (IL)	McDonald Rivet
Bentz	Garcia (TX)	McDowell
Bera	Gillen	McGarvey
Bergman	Gimenez	McGovern
Beyer	Golden (ME)	McIver
Bice	Goldman (NY)	Meeks
Billirakis	Goldman (TX)	Mejia
Bishop	Gomez	Menefee
Bonamici	Gonzalez, V.	Menendez
Bost	Gooden	Meng
Boyle (PA)	Goodlander	Messmer
Bresnahan	Gottheimer	Meuser
Brown	Graves	Mfume
Brownley	Gray	Miller (OH)
Buchanan	Green, Al (TX)	Miller (WV)
Budzinski	Griffith	Miller-Meeks
Bynum	Grijalva	Min
Calvert	Grothman	Moolenaar
Carbajal	Guest	Moore (NC)
Carey	Guthrie	Moore (UT)
Carson	Hageman	Moore (WI)
Carter (GA)	Harder (CA)	Moran
Carter (LA)	Haridopolos	Morelle
Carter (TX)	Harris (NC)	Morrison
Casar	Hayes	Moskowitz
Case	Hern (OK)	Moulton
Casten	Hill (AR)	Mrvan
Castor (FL)	Himes	Mullin
Castro (TX)	Hinson	Murphy
Chu	Horsford	Nadler
Ciscomani	Houchin	Neal
Cisneros	Houlihan	Neguse
Clark (MA)	Hoyer	Nehls
Clarke (NY)	Hoyle (OR)	Newhouse
Cleaver	Hudson	Norcross
Clyburn	Huffman	Nunn (IA)
Cohen	Huizenga	Obernoite
Cole	Hurd (CO)	Ocasio-Cortez
Comer	Issa	Olszewski
Conaway	Ivey	Omar
Correa	Jackson (IL)	Owens
Costa	Jacobs	Pallone
Courtney	James	Palmer
Craig	Jeffries	Panetta
Crawford	Johnson (GA)	Pappas
Crenshaw	Johnson (LA)	Patronis
Crockett	Johnson (TX)	Pelosi
Crow	Jordan	Perez
Cuellar	Joyce (OH)	Peters
Davids (KS)	Kamlager-Dove	Pettersen
Davidson	Kaptur	Pfleger
Davis (IL)	Keating	Pingree
Davis (NC)	Kelly (IL)	Pocan
De La Cruz	Kelly (MS)	Pou
Dean (PA)	Kelly (PA)	Pressley
DeGette	Kennedy (NY)	Quigley
DeLauro	Khanna	Ramirez
DelBene	Kiggans (VA)	Randall
Deluzio	Kiley (CA)	Raskin
DeSaulnier	Kim	Reschenthaler
DesJarlais	Krishnamoorthi	Riley (NY)
Dexter	Kustoff	Rivas
Diaz-Balart	LaHood	Rogers (AL)
Dingell	LaLota	Rogers (KY)
Doggett	Landsman	Rose
Downing	Langworthy	Ross
Dunn (FL)	Larsen (WA)	Rouzer
Elfreh	Larson (CT)	Ruiz
Ellzey	Latimer	Rulli
Emmer	Latta	Rutherford
Escobar	Lawler	Ryan
Espallat	Lee (FL)	Salazar
Estes	Lee (NV)	Salinas
Evans (CO)	Lee (PA)	Sánchez
Evans (PA)	Leger Fernandez	Scalise
Fallon	Letlow	Scanlon
Fedorchak	Levin	Schakowsky
Feenstra	Liccardo	Schmidt
Fields	Lieu	Schneider
Figures	Lofgren	Scholten
Finstad	Loudermilk	Schrier
Fischbach	Lucas	Schweikert
Fitzgerald	Lynch	Scott (VA)
Fitzpatrick	Mackenzie	Scott, Austin
Fleischmann	Magaziner	Sessions
Fletcher	Malliotakis	Sewell
Flood	Maloy	Sherman
Fong	Mann	Shreve
Foster	Mannion	Simon
Foushee	Mast	Simpson
Fox	Matsui	Smith (MO)
Frankel, Lois	McBath	Smith (NE)
Franklin, Scott	McBride	Smith (NJ)
Friedman	McCaul	Smith (WA)
Frost	McClain	Smucker
Fulcher	McClain Delaney	Sorensen
Garamendi	McClellan	Soto
Garbarino	McClintock	Spartz