

interest laws or regulations every time they originate, review, or approve a loan is a simple step that further reinforces ethical standards and reminds them that misconduct has consequences. Implementing this practice will help to increase accountability, strengthen compliance, and deter fraud.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this bipartisan bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we must pass H.R. 7401 to strengthen integrity in SBA lending programs by requiring employees involved in loan decisions to certify they have no prohibited conflicts of interest.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing, this committee has played an integral role in conducting oversight of SBA programs, especially the pandemic relief programs. Approximately \$1.2 trillion of economic aid was distributed through SBA's pandemic relief programs over the course of the pandemic, providing economic relief to small businesses all over the country.

Unfortunately, bad actors took advantage of the programs, and it has become clear that we need to work together to recover fraudulent dollars. The previous administration took strong steps to root out fraud and to put internal controls in place to prevent it, and the Inspector General has been working diligently to uncover fraudulent schemes.

The bottom line is that the current process worked. The bad actor at the SBA was identified, investigated, and prosecuted. Moving forward, SBA employees being required to certify there is no conflict of interest before approving a loan provides an extra layer of security which will help deter fraud.

Once again, I applaud Representatives GOODLANDER and MEUSER for working together on this bill that enhances conflict of interest laws at SBA and provides even more accountability.

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

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Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 7401 to support transparency, accountability, and public confidence in the administration of SBA loans, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7401.

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. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make

the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

COVID FRAUD TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2026

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 826) to require the Inspector General of the Small Business Administration to submit a quarterly report on fraud relating to certain COVID-19 loans, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 826

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 "COVID Fraud Transparency Act of 2026".

SEC. 2. REPORT ON FRAUD RELATING TO CERTAIN COVID-19 LOANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 3 months thereafter, the Inspector General of the Small Business Administration shall submit to the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report on the number of borrowers engaged in fraud with respect to a covered loan.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include, with respect to the period covered by such report—

(1) the number and total dollar amount of all covered loans made;

(2) the number of new cases of fraud and suspected fraud;

(3) the number of fraud cases resolved; and

(4) the types of fraud cases described in paragraphs (2) and (3).

(c) COVERED LOAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term "covered loan" means—

(1) a loan made under paragraph (36) or (37) of section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)); or

(2) a loan made under section 7(b) of such Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)) in response to COVID-19 during the covered period (as defined in section 1110(a) of the CARES Act (15 U.S.C. 9009)).

(d) TERMINATION.—This Act and the requirements of this Act shall terminate on the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. COMPLIANCE WITH CUTGO.

No such funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. OLSZEWSKI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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 the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of my bill, H.R. 826, the COVID Fraud Transparency Act of 2026.

Earlier this year, I introduced this bill alongside my good friends the gentleman from New York (Mr. LATIMER), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BEAN), and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. MFUME).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we moved quickly to provide relief to families, workers, and small businesses facing unprecedented hardship. When the government acts at that scale and speed, we also have the responsibility to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent as intended, especially for honest, hardworking Americans. Unfortunately, we fell short in addressing that challenge.

The SBA Office of Inspector General estimates that roughly \$200 billion in potentially fraudulent relief funds were disbursed through COVID-19 relief programs. Over 5 years after the pandemic began, the work of accountability is not finished. The American people deserve to know how the fraud occurred and what lessons can be learned to better protect public resources in the future.

On March 16, President Trump announced the White House task force to eliminate fraud, to strengthen inter-agency coordination, and more to directly confront waste, fraud, and abuse. Since its formation, the task force has helped coordinate inter-agency efforts to identify improper payments, improve oversight, and advise in investigations into COVID-19-era-related fraud. That is what it means to be accountable to the American people.

By improving reporting requirements and enhancing oversight, we can gain a clearer understanding of the schemes of these bad actors who exploited these relief programs. More importantly, we will be able to identify the weaknesses that made them possible.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 826, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the COVID Fraud Transparency Act of 2026, as amended, and I applaud Chairman WILLIAMS and Representative LATIMER for their efforts to increase reporting on COVID fraud.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Small Business Administration stepped in and served as a critical lifeline to small businesses. The SBA distributed more than \$1.2 trillion of economic aid and executed 14 years' worth of lending in 14 days, keeping millions of businesses afloat.

I had the opportunity to see the impact of that lending firsthand, as I was serving as Baltimore County executive

prior to my time joining Congress. However, in an effort to disburse funds quickly, we know the SBA also weakened or eliminated internal controls, which allowed fraudsters to exploit those weaknesses and steal billions of dollars from the American taxpayers.

Better oversight begins with better information, and the legislation we consider here today will provide the committee with the data it needs to conduct better oversight.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 826, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we must pass H.R. 826 to require the SBA inspector general to provide regular reports on fraud involving COVID-19 relief loans and improve oversight and transparency of pandemic-era programs.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I close by underscoring that the single most effective tool for combating fraud is fully funding the SBA Office of Inspector General. I support this bill because it will enhance accountability, but we cannot overlook the fact that it is one part of a broader solution.

We must continue to strengthen oversight, improve data quality, and ensure that the IG has the resources it needs to detect and prevent fraud before it occurs. I look forward to working with my colleagues to do exactly that.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman again for bringing this bill forward. I lend my support to H.R. 826, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 826 because taxpayers deserve accountability, and Congress should have clear, ongoing information about efforts to combat COVID relief fraud.

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 Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 826, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT ACT

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 915) to authorize small business loans to finance access to modern business software, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 915

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 “Small Business Technological Advancement Act”.

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL USES FOR SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS LOANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(38) ACCESS TO MODERN BUSINESS SOFTWARE.—The Administration may provide loans under this subsection to finance, in whole or in part, business software or cloud computing services, or any such technology, that facilitates business operations, product or service delivery, the processing, payment, or tracking of payroll expenses, human resources, sales and billing functions, or accounting or tracking of supplies, inventory, records and expenses, including business tools that utilize artificial intelligence.”.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the amendment made by subsection (a) shall be construed to—

(1) provide that loans made under section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)) before the date of enactment of this Act for the purposes described in paragraph (38) of such section 7(a), as added by subsection (a), were not permissible;

(2) authorize the use of loans made under section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)) for research and development purposes; or

(3) limit the definition of working capital under the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 631 et seq.).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. OLSZEWSKI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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 the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 915, the Small Business Technological Advancement Act, introduced by my friends the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. ALFORD) and the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. LEE).

Small businesses thrive when they stay ahead of the curve. H.R. 915 provides an important clarification and removes any ambiguity to ensure that small businesses can use SBA 7(a) loans to purchase and upgrade technological systems and business software, including those that utilize artificial intelligence, to support their daily operations.

Technology is deeply ingrained in the day-to-day operations of small businesses. There are countless and valu-

able applications for technology in a small business, from tracking inventory to payment processing and from human resources to accounting. If an American small business wants to stay competitive in the global economy, it must stay on the cutting edge of technological development and application.

With this clarification, small businesses will be able to continue exploring innovative technologies and tools for the future. This forward-thinking bill will ensure that the SBA 7(a) program will keep American entrepreneurs competitive with their international counterparts.

Once again, I thank Representatives ALFORD and LEE for introducing this timely legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote in support of H.R. 915.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 915, the Small Business Technological Advancement Act of 2025.

Small businesses are increasingly using digital tools to support their day-to-day work. The use of these tools has only accelerated since the COVID-19 pandemic and has produced many positive outcomes. Digital tools have been shown to improve small business job creation, revenue growth, and forecasting certainty.

Small businesses have reported that the largest barrier to these innovative tools is the cost. It is important that the SBA support businesses in addressing this challenge so that they can continue adopting the digital tools that they need to work efficiently, support commerce, and create jobs in communities across the country.

The SBA’s flagship 7(a) loan program provides small businesses with working capital that can be used to finance the purchase of digital tools. Last June, the SBA further clarified that 7(a) loans could be used to finance business software or cloud computing services. However, some businesses have still reported uncertainty about using 7(a) loans for these purposes.

This bill eliminates that confusion and ensures consistency across administrations by confirming in statute that 7(a) loans can be used to finance digital tools. Hopefully, codifying this provision will lead to clarity and an increased uptake of digital tools in small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representatives ALFORD, LEE, and MCGARVEY for their collaboration on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. ALFORD).

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Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WILLIAMS for his stalwart