

in checkpoint technology upgrades. This will help modernize screening capability, strengthen security operations, and ensure our aviation system remains prepared to meet current and future threats.

Let me be clear. This is not a new fee that will be placed on flyers, and it does not raise taxes. The SAFEGUARDS Act simply ensures that the fees travelers currently pay are used for their original purpose and in line with the expectation of the traveling public.

Anytime a fee is collected from the American people, it should be carefully scrutinized. I take that responsibility seriously, which is why, when I examined the intent of this fee, I first asked whether the original purpose behind it remains important today. I believe it does.

The fee was established in the aftermath of September 11, one of the darkest days in our Nation's history. In the years that followed, Congress recognized that maintaining a safe and secure aviation system would require a long-term commitment to aviation security and continued investments in the technologies that help protect the traveling public.

The passenger security fee was created to support that mission, and travelers have paid it with the expectation that those dollars would be used to strengthen aviation security.

I am proud to reaffirm our commitment to the traveling public today with this bill. The SAFEGUARDS Act is about restoring trust, improving transparency and accountability, and ensuring the aviation security dollars are spent on aviation security.

I am proud that this legislation has earned bipartisan support and the backing of airports, airlines, and the travel organizations across the country.

□ 1600

I want to thank Chairman GARBARINO for his leadership and support in advancing this legislation. I also want to thank Mr. KENNEDY of New York for partnering with me on this effort, as well as my colleagues who have joined as cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support the SAFEGUARDS Act.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close when the chairman is prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARBARINO. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. EVANS).

Mr. EVANS of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the SAFEGUARDS Act of which I am a proud original cosponsor.

As my colleagues mentioned, this bill ensures that all revenue collected through the 9/11 Passenger Security Fee are invested back into aviation and airport security consistent with the fee's original intent.

Just last year, this \$5.60 fee on your plane ticket brought in over \$4.5 billion from U.S. passengers. The upcoming 25th anniversary of September 11 reminds us how important it is to use those resources to strengthen our national security systems today to prevent future tragedies tomorrow.

My district also borders Denver International Airport. Thousands of airport, airline, and TSA employees in that airport are my constituents—the third busiest in the Nation. To keep them and all U.S. passengers safe, it is critical that TSA receives every dollar possible to properly update security screening equipment and stop emerging threats.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bipartisan bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 8770 will help ensure TSA's frontline staff get more of the tools they need to keep travelers safe, and at a faster pace.

I look forward to working with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure there are no unintended consequences for TSA's workforce if this bill becomes law.

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

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

As you heard from my colleague from Colorado, \$4.5 billion was brought in last year under the 9/11 Passenger Security Fee. What passengers don't know is that the first \$1.6 billion last year was diverted to something else other than passenger security.

This bill would say the first \$750 million of that passenger security fee would go directly to equipment, and then the balance of that money would go to the TSA discretionary fund, which actually would allow the TSA to get access to this money.

Last year, the TSA discretionary fund didn't have access to this money until the first \$1.85 billion was spent. Now, they are going to get access, if this bill becomes law, after the first \$750 million is spent on security equipment to make our traveling public safe.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 8770, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BABIN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GARBARINO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8770, 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.

IMPROVING TRAVEL FOR MILITARY MEMBERS ACT

Mr. GARBARINO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 9328) to improve travel for active-duty personnel and accompanying family, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 9328

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 "Improving Travel for Military Members Act".

SEC. 2. IMPROVING TRAVEL FOR ACTIVE-DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL AND ACCOMPANYING FAMILY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (in this section referred to as the "Administrator") may establish a pilot program at airports to expedite access to security screening for traveling active-duty military personnel and accompanying family members to support and facilitate the ease of travel for such personnel and family members. The Administrator may carry out this subsection only to the extent such access does not compromise security protocols.

(b) SECURITY REQUIREMENTS.—If the Administrator establishes the pilot program under subsection (a), the Administrator shall carry out the following:

(1) Ensure each passenger described in such subsection is screened in accordance with the vetting status of such passenger under the Secure Flight program of the Transportation Security Administration, in accordance with paragraph (2) of section 44903(j) of title 49, United States Code.

(2) Prevent individuals carrying out screening functions under section 44901 of such title from allowing any passenger into a TSA PreCheck or other expedited security screening lane unless such passenger has received a boarding pass indicating eligibility for TSA PreCheck or such other expedited security screening.

(3) Permit local Administration management to open or close checkpoint lanes and reallocate available resources as needed to maximize security effectiveness and efficiency based on passenger volume.

(c) SELECTION OF AIRPORTS.—If the Administrator establishes the pilot program under subsection (a), in selecting airports for such pilot program, the Administrator shall—

(1) give priority to an airport that is not more than a certain distance, as determined by the Administrator, from a military installation (as such term is defined in section 2801 of title 10, United States Code) to which not fewer than a certain number, as determined by the Administrator, of active-duty military personnel are stationed;

(2) consider airports with adequate space to accommodate dedicated screening lanes for traveling active-duty military personnel and accompanying family members; and

(3) use any other consideration the Administrator determines necessary.

(d) BRIEFING.—If the Administrator establishes the pilot program under subsection (a), not later than nine months after such establishment, the Administrator shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a briefing on such pilot program.

(e) SUNSET.—If the Administrator establishes the pilot program under subsection (a), the Administrator shall carry out such pilot program for a period of three years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GARBARINO) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WALKINSHAW) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GARBARINO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 9328.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 9328, the Improving Travel for Military Members Act. The Improving Travel for Military Members Act will allow the TSA Administrator to establish a 3-year pilot program to expedite access to security screening for traveling Active-Duty military personnel and their accompanying family members.

If established, this pilot program will focus on airports closest to military installations with large Active-Duty populations, which will help to ease travel for the men and women bravely serving our Nation.

I want to thank Representative BIGGS for her leadership and encourage my colleagues to support the bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 9328, the Improving Travel for Military Members Act.

Our military servicemembers and their families are required to travel regularly, uprooting their lives to move to new locations.

Last year, TSA initiated a pilot program at select airports to provide Active-Duty military and their families front-of-line access to security screening.

H.R. 9328 would cement TSA's ongoing pilot program and codify requirements for appropriate security protocols.

Expediting wait times for servicemembers and their families makes travel a little bit easier and a little bit less stressful for them, and I support advancing this effort.

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

Mr. GARBARINO. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Mrs. BIGGS).

Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I don't speak on this legislation as an outside observer. As a Member currently serving in the Air National Guard, I have worn the uniform. I have seen firsthand what it asks of

servicemembers and their families. This legislation is written from experience, not just policy.

Mr. Speaker, more than 1.3 million Americans serve our Nation on Active Duty, and they answer the call with very little notice—shipping out on deployment orders, relocating their families across the country on PCS moves, or rushing to emergency assignments at a moment's notice.

They don't get to plan ahead. They don't get to choose their travel dates. They simply go because that is what the service requires.

Last summer, the Transportation Security Administration launched the Serve with Honor, Travel with Ease initiative to better support our servicemembers while advancing much-needed modernization across our aviation system as passenger volumes continued to grow. Depending on the airport, military members and their families may receive expedited screening through dedicated lines, preferred lanes, or front-of-line access.

My legislation, the Improving Travel for Military Members Act, builds on this important effort by establishing a 3-year pilot program to expedite security screening for Active-Duty military personnel and their accompanying family members with priority given to airports located near military installations.

That means in my home State of South Carolina, which is home to a number of military installations, servicemembers will benefit from faster, more efficient travel while maintaining the same high security standards.

Let me be very clear: Every passenger remains subject to appropriate security screening. What this bill does is gives airports the flexibility to implement the program based on their own operational needs, their proximity to military bases, and passenger volume.

This bill is targeted. It is practical, and it is fiscally responsible.

A few minutes saved at a security line may seem insignificant to some, but to a military spouse managing three children and a cross-country move on 48 hours' notice, it is anything but.

It sends a message to every servicemember and their family: America sees you, values you, and respects the sacrifices you make in service to our country.

I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation for our servicemembers and their families.

□ 1610

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

Mr. Speaker, military servicemembers and their families make sacrifices for our Nation every day. We owe it to them to make their lives easier in ways big and small wherever and whenever we can. This bill represents a step toward easier travel for Active Duty military and their families.

I thank the gentlewoman for her work on that, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GARBARINO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 9328, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GARBARINO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 9328, 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.

HOMELAND SECURITY CAPABILITIES PRESERVATION REPORTING ACT OF 2026

Mr. GARBARINO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8874) to amend the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 to require recurring reports on the transition of jurisdictions no longer eligible for Urban Area Security Initiative funding, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8874

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 "Homeland Security Capabilities Preservation Reporting Act of 2026".

SEC. 2. REPORTS ON TRANSITION OF JURISDICTIONS NO LONGER ELIGIBLE FOR URBAN AREA SECURITY INITIATIVE FUNDING.

Paragraph (1) of section 7102(b) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117-263) is amended, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting "and every three years thereafter" after "Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GARBARINO) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WALKINSHAW) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GARBARINO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on H.R. 8874.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 8874, the Homeland Security Capabilities Preservation Reporting Act of 2026.