Like too many families across the country, my family has been touched by neurodegenerative disease. I lost my father to Parkinson's. However, since I started working on the first Accelerating Access to Critical Therapies for ALS Act, there hasn't been one Member of Congress whom I talked to who didn't have a personal story or know the impact of one of these diseases.

Our bipartisan work on the first Accelerating Access to Critical Therapies for ALS Act broke through the bitter politics that can divide this place. I believe we have the opportunity to do that again today.

In the last 5 years, ACT for ALS programs have helped people living with ALS to access promising therapies. They have created new methods for researchers to share their work and sustain critical natural history studies.

Since we passed the first bill 5 years ago, we have been able to secure over $350 million in Federal funding for these programs. Today, we are voting on a bill to extend these programs for 5 more years.

To everyone living with ALS who has advocated for this bill, I hope today's vote shows that Congress hears you and we are here for you and that, every once in a while, we break through. At those moments, I am proud to serve here.

To Brian who is still with us fighting the disease and Sandra: Thank you for your tireless advocacy and big dreams.

Finally, I thank Representative KEN CALVERT for his work on this with me in the House, and Senators CHRIS COONS and LISA MURKOWSKI for their work in the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

□ 1620

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I will mention Brian and Sandra testified before our committee. When I was first elected to Congress, the Ensor family from Bullitt County, Kentucky, came to see me, and I got to know Mitch. I went to his funeral services, unfortunately. I was touched by his family, which is why this bill is important to me.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage everybody to vote for this bill. There may be a procedural call on this bill. This bill will pass this week. I look forward to seeing it pass, being sent to the Senate, and hopefully signed into law very soon.

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the ACT for ALS Reauthorization Act, H.R. 8205, legislation that will reauthorize programs that support research and development of drugs and other therapies to address ALS.

It is hard to believe, but the original ACT for ALS Act was signed into law a little less than five years ago. As a Co-Chair of the bipartisan ALS Caucus, I saw first-hand the effort to get that landmark legislation across the finish line was the result of the passion and detepnination of the ALS advocacy community.

The passage of the ACT for ALS Act authorized key programs to expand access to new investigational drugs and grants for research of this terrible disease. Working with my Appropriations Committee colleagues, the ALS Caucus, and ALS advocates, we have been successful at making historic investments into these programs.

In Fiscal Year 2022, Congress invested nearly $30 million in ACT for ALS programs. That number increased nearly 200 percent in Fiscal Year 2025 to $86 million—nearly matching the $100 million authorization cap enshrined into law. Since the initial passge, the law has demonstrably sped infrastructure, access, and targeted progress.

By reauthorizing the ACT for ALS, the trajectory is hopeful due to better tools, data, and collaboration. ALS patients and families are relying on us not to lose momentum and to build upon hopeful progress and someday find a cure for this devastating illness.

I want to thank my ALS Caucus Members, including the bill's sponsor Representative QUIGLEY, for their work. I want to give my heartfelt appreciation, once again, to the ALS advocacy community and the families who have been forever changed by ALS. I urge all of my colleagues to stand with these families, give them hope, and pass the ACT for ALS Reauthorization Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YAKYM). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8205, 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. GUTHRIE. 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.

PUTTING PATIENTS FIRST BY STRENGTHENING PROVIDER ACCOUNTABILITY IN FECA ACT

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8823) to amend the Federal Employees Compensation Act to allow the Secretary of Labor to suspend payments to medical providers who have been convicted of fraud, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8823

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 ''Putting Patients First by Strengthening Provider Accountability in FECA Act''.

SEC. 2. FRAUD CONVICTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8103 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''These expenses'' and inserting ''Subject to subsection (c), these expenses'';

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''The Secretary, under'' and inserting ''Subject to subsection (c), the Secretary, under''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(c)(1) The Secretary of Labor may suspend payments to a provider of services, appliances, or supplies furnished pursuant to subsection (a), or vouchers or certifications described in subsection (b) for the expenses incurred by the employing agency with respect to such a provider, if the provider has been convicted of fraud with respect to—

''(A) this subchapter;

''(B) any Federal health care benefit program (as defined in section 24 of title 18, United States Code); or

''(C) any State program for which payments are made to providers for services, appliances, or supplies similar to such services, appliances, or supplies provided pursuant to this subchapter.

''(2) The Secretary shall promulgate regulations to carry out this subsection.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this Act shall apply with respect to payments made to a provider of services, appliances, or supplies on or after the date that is 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 8823.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 8823, bipartisan legislation that protects both taxpayers and the Federal employees who rely on the Federal Employees' Compensation Act, when they are injured on the job.

Federal workers who are navigating an injury deserve timely, honest, and compassionate care, not to become the target of fraud. Programs like FECA exist to ensure these workers receive the medical treatment and support they need to recover.

Unfortunately, some bad actors have exploited that trust. Instead of following through on the responsibility to care for injured workers, certain medical providers have treated FECA like a personal ATM: submitting fraudulent claims, abusing the system, and enriching themselves at the expense of both taxpayers and the very people they were entrusted to help.

The Office of Inspector General recently testified before Congress that since 2015, it has opened more than 320 criminal investigations involving the FECA program. These investigations have resulted in the indictment and conviction of 322 individuals and more than $1.7 billion in recovered funds.

This is unacceptable. Every fraudulent claim weakens the program that countless injured Federal employees depend on. Every act of deception undermines confidence in a system that exists to support workers during a difficult moment in their lives.

H.R. 8823 delivers a straightforward, commonsense solution. It codifies existing Department of Labor policy to prevent medical providers who are convicted of defrauding FECA from continuing to receive taxpayer-funded payments through the program. If someone has been found guilty of exploiting injured workers and stealing public funds, they should not continue to profit from the very program they abused.

This legislation sends a clear message, Mr. Speaker: If you cheat taxpayers, exploit injured workers, and abuse the public trust, there will be consequences.

Fraud should have no place in our workers' compensation system. Ambulance-chasing schemes and dishonest providers have taken advantage of this program for far too long. Today, we have the opportunity to put an end to that abuse and reaffirm that these funds are meant to serve injured workers, not line the pockets of fraudsters.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 8823 and tell these scammers that their payday is over.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 8823, Putting Patients First by Strengthening Provider Accountability in FECA Act.

Providers are the greatest source of fraud in the Federal Employees' Compensation Act program, otherwise known as FECA. For example, during this committee's oversight of the opioid crisis, we learned about corrupt compounding pharmacies that were crushing up pills and putting them into creams, even though the medicines in those pills were not absorbed through the skin. A 15-ounce tube of this useless cream got charged to the FECA program for $15,000.

Existing rules allow the Department of Labor to strike a provider from the list of eligible providers in the FECA program when they are convicted of fraud in any public health program. Those rules do not enable the Department to stop payment on any claims that a convicted provider has already submitted prior to the conviction. That could amount to millions of dollars in claims with a high risk of fraud moving through the system.

There are, of course, due process issues that could arise, but this bill already contemplates those issues by empowering the Department of Labor to develop appropriate rules for implementing the new authority. All in all, this bill closes an important gap and protects taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to my colleagues Representatives OMAR and MACKENZIE on this issue. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MACKENZIE), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections and the author of this legislation.

Mr. MACKENZIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 8823, the Putting Patients First By Strengthening Provider Accountability in FECA Act, which I am leading alongside my colleague, Representative OMAR.

H.R. 8823 amends the FECA program, or the Federal Employees Compensation Act, to codify the Department of Labor's ability to suspend payments to medical care providers who have been convicted of fraud with respect to this program.

Each year, the FECA program provides benefits to hundreds of thousands of injured Federal workers. This is their system, and they deserve for it to operate efficiently, reliably, and effectively. That requires us to establish commonsense protections against bad actors who would abuse FECA and rip off the Federal workers in the process.

Throughout this year, we have heard numerous concerning reports of providers targeting Federal programs with fraudulent schemes, and FECA is no exception.

□ 1630

As chair of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee, I held a hearing in which we heard from those who testified about fraud costing taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars, money that could have gone toward providing quality care to Federal workers who were injured.

This is unacceptable. Every dollar that goes to a fraudulent provider is one less dollar going toward providing high-quality medical care to an injured Federal worker. That is why when a provider is convicted of fraud, the Department of Labor should have clear authority to shut down the flow of taxpayer dollars that was going into their pockets.

Currently, DOL has the authority to suspend payments to medical providers who are convicted of fraudulent activity. This authority has not been codified and could be rescinded at any time. When it comes to protecting taxpayers and injured workers, our laws must be clear: No dollars should go to fraudulent providers now or at any point in the future.

That is why H.R. 8823 gives DOL the permanent authority to block bad actors from hijacking the system that Federal workers rely on. H.R. 8823 does not aim to restrict access to medical care for our injured Federal employees. Instead, this bill helps ensure that care is only delivered by providers who meet clear standards of professional and ethical conduct.

It is time that we give taxpayers and Federal workers the commonsense, bipartisan protections that they deserve. That is why I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, this simple, bipartisan bill protects taxpayers. It does so without weakening the FECA program. It simply targets truly bad actors, corrupt physicians, pharmacists, and other providers who exploit injured Federal workers and rip off the FECA program.

This is an example of the kind of reform that makes sense. We are not saving money by turning our backs on the people who need these benefits. Instead, we are focusing the attention where it ought to be, on the providers who profit off workers' pain unlawfully.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, families across the Nation carefully budget every dollar they earn to provide for themselves and their loved ones. When they send their tax dollars to Washington, they deserve to know that their hard-earned money is being managed with the same discipline and responsibility.

The American people expect us to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars. They work hard, pay their taxes, and deserve to know that those funds are not lining the pockets of fraudsters who exploit the system for personal gain.

Fraud is never a victimless crime. It steals taxpayer dollars and diverts funds away from those they are intended to serve. Every dollar lost to fraud is a dollar that cannot be used to provide legitimate care for injured workers or fulfill commitments we have made to them.

Congress has a responsibility to protect both the integrity of our programs and the taxpayers who fund them. That means ensuring there are real consequences for those who abuse the public's trust and preventing them from continuing to do so. It also means taking commonsense steps to strengthen accountability and safeguard the programs that millions rely upon.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 8823 does exactly that. It helps ensure that providers who have been convicted of defrauding the Federal Employees' Compensation Act program cannot continue to be allowed to profit from the very program they exploited.

This is a straightforward measure that protects taxpayers, strengthens accountability, and preserves the integrity of an important program for injured Federal workers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, stand up for responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars, and vote ''yes'' on H.R. 8823.

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 Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8823, 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. WALBERG. 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.

VALUE OVER COST ACT OF 2026

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1118) to amend title 41, United States Code, and title 10, United States Code, to provide best value through the multiple award schedule program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1118

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 ''Value Over Cost Act of 2026''.

SEC. 2. PROVIDING BEST VALUE THROUGH THE MULTIPLE AWARD SCHEDULE PROGRAM.

Section 152(3)(B) of title 41, United States Code, is amended by striking ''lowest overall cost alternative'' and inserting ''best value''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BURLISON) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SUBRAMANYAM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I support the Value Over Cost Act, H.R. 1118, which modernizes the General Services Administration's governmentwide Multiple Award Schedule program.

GSA's Multiple Award Schedule program is the Federal Government's most-used contracting procedure for commercial products and services. Federal agencies rely on the Multiple Award Schedule to purchase the best commercial products, services, and solutions at the best price.

Currently, GSA is required to evaluate the ''lowest overall cost alternative'' when determining what will be available on the Multiple Award Schedule. This requires a burdensome process that can actually lead to higher prices over time as contractors pass hidden administrative or ongoing support costs along to the Federal Government.

This bill allows GSA to consider awarding contracts based on the best value instead of the lowest overall cost alternative.

This reform mirrors a change that was made in fiscal year 2026 in the National Defense Authorization Act, putting the civilian agencies on equal footing with our defense agencies.

This bill will maximize the Federal Government's ability to get the best value when procuring modern technology.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representatives BYRON DONALDS and JARED MOSKOWITZ for their leadership on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support this targeted government efficiency bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1118, the Value Over Cost Act of 2026, as well.

The GSA maintains a list of goods and services that they can order from vendors called the Multiple Award Schedule. This simplified process allows the government to make orders quickly and get discounts for bulk purchases.

The Value Over Cost Act would clarify that the government can choose these contracts based on best quality, not just lowest cost. These are known as best value contracts.

This is a commonsense bill that will make sure the Federal Government spends its dollars wisely while delivering for the American people the services they need.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important governmentwide procurement reform 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 Missouri (Mr. BURLISON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1118, 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. BURLISON. 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.

□ 1640

ENSURING FEDERAL PURCHASING EFFICIENCY ACT

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7283) to amend title 41, United States Code, to amend the time period for certain acquisition-related dollar thresholds.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7283

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 ''Ensuring Federal Purchasing Efficiency Act''.

SEC. 2. ENSURING FEDERAL PURCHASING EFFICIENCY THROUGH ADJUSTMENT OF CERTAIN ACQUISITION-RELATED DOLLAR THRESHOLDS EVERY 3 YEARS.

Section 1908(c)(2) of title 41, United States Code, is amended by striking ''of each year evenly divisible by 5'' and inserting '', 2028, and every 3 years thereafter''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BURLISON) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SUBRAMANYAM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Ensuring Federal Purchasing Efficiency Act is a simple, commonsense reform to government procurement.

The Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council is required to adjust certain dollar thresholds, such as the simplified acquisition threshold, every 5 years. However, everyone has seen how quickly the value of money can move in just 5 years.

This bill would simply require these thresholds to be updated every 3 years instead of every 5 years.

These dollar thresholds define the applicability of different policies, procedures, and restrictions to the procurement of property or services needed by Federal agencies to achieve their missions.

Raising these dollar thresholds more frequently saves taxpayer dollars on administrative costs and increases competition to do business with the government, especially for small businesses.

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