

The bill has now come back to us from the Senate, as has been said, with additional authorizations for security and democracy assistance. It also sends, I think, a very clear message that the United States will not tolerate the Russian incursion into Ukraine, human rights abuses, or corruption by imposing sanctions, visa bans, and asset freezes.

□ 1615

As we all know, Ukraine is facing an extraordinarily difficult economic situation. The International Monetary Fund has now said they will step in with a financing package, but the United States and our partners must also help during this time of need.

By giving the administration the ability to provide loan guarantees from funds already appropriated, this bill will provide some stability for Ukraine throughout this tumultuous time.

This is a critical bill at an important moment. The Congress must stand with the government of Ukraine. We must get this bill passed and to the President's desk as soon as possible. We have already waited too long while other issues, such as the IMF, got unnecessarily entangled with aid and sanctions proposals.

Mr. Speaker, we must pass this bill today and I hope overwhelmingly. I urge a "yes" vote.

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

In closing, let me stress once again that this bill sends a strong message of support to the people of Ukraine at a critical moment. We are the greatest country in the world. We have interests all over the world. I think that it is important that we don't shirk from those interests, but rise to the top with them.

When there are problems around the world, the United States needs to be there. It doesn't mean being the policeman of the world, but it means standing with our friends and allies against brutal aggression. When countries stand up for democracy, they look to the United States as the role model and the leader.

Today, we are leading. Today, we are acting as a role model. Today, we are helping the beleaguered people of Ukraine.

The coming weeks and months will be very difficult for Ukraine. The country faces significant challenges as it seeks to return to political and economic health, so it is very important that the people of Ukraine know that the U.S. stands with them. They should know that we will support them as they seek to build a more democratic, prosperous, and just state and society.

They will know that we support them in urging them to look westward rather than eastward. That is what Russia fears. They fear that these countries will look westward. They will look west and see the Western allies and see what we have to offer.

Then they look eastward, and they see Putin as a bully, someone who will

do whatever it necessary to keep them in line, and they don't want that.

Putin may think that he is rebuilding the old Soviet Union, but we will continue to press forward with democracy and stand foursquare with the people of Ukraine in their quest for democracy.

I urge all my colleagues to vote for this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

This bill does come at a critical time.

In closing, I will just say that U.S. officials are pressing President Putin to respect Ukrainian sovereignty, but this diplomacy will only have a chance if it is backed up by a combination of the threat of tough sanctions that are being implemented to their fullest and by the message of more energy independence for Ukraine.

I am very pleased to have worked closely with Ranking Member ENGEL and many other Members on this bipartisan legislation. It represents, as Mr. ENGEL indicated, what Congress can accomplish on the floor of this House in terms of policy when we unite to advance U.S. interests.

By our action here today, we will send a clear message of American resolve. That message will be heard in Kiev, it will be heard in Moscow, and it is going to be heard around the globe.

I urge all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 4152.

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. ROYCE. 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.

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMING TO UKRAINE AND NEIGHBORING REGIONS

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2183) United States international programming to Ukraine and neighboring regions.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2183

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.

(a) Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) The Russian Government has deliberately blocked the Ukrainian people's access to uncensored sources of information

and has provided alternative news and information that is both inaccurate and inflammatory;

(2) United States international programming exists to advance the United States interests and values by presenting accurate and comprehensive news and information, which is the foundation for democratic governance;

(3) The opinions and views of the Ukrainian people, especially those people located in the eastern regions and Crimea, are not being accurately represented in Russian dominated mass media;

(4) Russian forces have seized more than five television stations in Crimea and taken over transmissions, switching to a 24/7 Russian propaganda format; this increase in programming augments the already robust pro-Russian programming to Ukraine;

(5) United States international programming has the potential to combat this anti-democratic propaganda.

(b) PROGRAMMING.—Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Incorporated, and the Voice of America service to Ukraine and neighboring regions shall—

(1) provide news and information that is accessible, credible, and accurate;

(2) emphasize investigative and analytical journalism to highlight inconsistencies and misinformation provided by Russian or pro-Russian media outlets;

(3) prioritize programming to areas where access to uncensored sources of information is limited or non-existent, especially populations serviced by Russian supported media outlets;

(4) increase the number of reporters and organizational presence in eastern Ukraine, especially in Crimea;

(5) promote democratic processes, respect for human rights, freedom of the press, and territorial sovereignty; and

(6) take necessary preparatory steps to continue and increase programming and content that promotes democracy and government transparency in Russia.

(c) PROGRAMMING SURGE.—RFE/RL, Incorporated, and Voice of America programming to Ukraine and neighboring regions shall—

(1) prioritize programming to eastern Ukraine, including Crimea, and Moldova, and to ethnic and linguistic Russian populations, as well as to Tatar minorities;

(2) prioritize news and information that directly contributes to the target audiences' understanding of political and economic developments in Ukraine and Moldova, including countering misinformation that may originate from other news outlets, especially Russian supported news outlets;

(3) provide programming content 24 hours a day, seven days a week to target populations, using all available and effective distribution outlets, including—

(A) at least 8 weekly hours of total original television and video content in Ukrainian, Russian, and Tatar languages, not inclusive of live video streaming coverage of breaking news, to be distributed on satellite, digital, and through regional television affiliates by the Voice of America; and

(B) at least 14 weekly hours the total audio content in Ukrainian, Russian, and Tatar languages to be distributed on satellite, digital, and through regional radio affiliates of RFE/RL, Incorporated;

(4) expand the use, audience, and audience engagement of mobile news and multimedia platforms by RFE/RL, Incorporated, and the Voice of America, including through Internet-based social networking platforms; and

(5) partner with private sector broadcasters and affiliates to seek and start co-production for new, original content, when possible, to increase distribution.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2014, in addition to funds otherwise made available for such purposes, up to \$10,000,000 to carry out programming in the Ukrainian, Balkan, Russian, and Tatar language services of RFE/RL, Incorporated, and the Voice of America, for the purpose of bolstering existing United States programming to the people of Ukraine and neighboring regions, and increasing programming capacity and jamming circumvention technology to overcome any disruptions to service.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 15 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall submit to the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Foreign Relations and Appropriations of the Senate a detailed report on plans to increase broadcasts pursuant to subsections (a) and (b).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in strong support of S. 2183, legislation to bolster U.S.-backed international broadcasting to Ukraine and the surrounding region. This legislation passed the House overwhelmingly last week as part of H.R. 4278. It was authored by myself and Mr. ENGEL.

While the Senate did not act on the full House package of legislation to support Ukraine, I am pleased that the Senate did recognize and act on this important piece of legislation. With its passage, this bill goes to the President's desk.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is central to our effort to counter Russian aggression and to send the type of support we need for the democratic development of Ukraine.

Throughout the crisis, Russians and Ukrainians alike have been bombarded by portrayals of Ukrainian protesters and the interim government, as you can hear on the Russian propaganda broadcast, what they call fascist mercenaries.

This, of course, is a rather deplorable attempt to draw a connection between those who yearn for freedom in Ukraine to the brutal Nazi invasion of the second World War. Overwhelmingly, the country of Ukraine voted for independence.

In this false narrative, which really is sort of a big lie, stark images of chaos and violence are used to persuade viewers that ethnic and linguistic Russians are under attack in Ukraine.

Footage of a border crossing between Ukraine and Poland has been used to

support the outlandish claims that Ukrainian refugees are fleeing into Russia.

In Crimea, Russian forces have seized control over at least a dozen television and radio stations that are now used to broadcast misleading and false news and information around the clock.

Russian propaganda right now is in overdrive. A survey by Russia's only independent polling service, Levada, earlier this month showed that 63 percent of Russians believe state media portrays an objective picture of Ukraine.

This bill puts us on the offensive in this information battle. It does so by requiring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the Voice of America to increase broadcasts to the people of eastern Ukraine and Crimea, prioritizing programming to populations that are being inundated with Russian propaganda and combating the misinformation they are receiving.

This bill also supports efforts to circumvent Russian jamming. The Russian government has targeted Ukrainian television and radio stations, jamming their signals and disrupting their ability to reach Ukrainian audiences while the Russian propaganda broadcasts come in relentlessly.

In addition, this bill supports U.S. international broadcasting to the Balkans and Moldova, two regions that are subject to the wider Russian propaganda campaign.

The free flow of information forms the foundation for a strong democratic society. Russian propaganda kills democratic prospects. This is the problem with the fact that the state and Russia has now taken over all independent media.

As they struggle to build democracy, this bill will help provide the people of Ukraine with news and information that is accessible, credible, and accurate. It will basically be surrogate broadcasting.

I urge its passage, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 2183, a bill to provide surge news broadcasts to the people of Ukraine and the surrounding region, in order to counter Russian propaganda.

I want to, again, concur with everything that Chairman ROYCE said. I agree with every word he mentioned. I am, again, very happy to have been working closely with him on this legislation in a bipartisan fashion.

Chairman ROYCE feels as I do, particularly strongly about broadcasting. It is something that is very important. It is something that helped to win the cold war.

It is something that we are able to get into countries, so they hear the truth when they are denied the truth from their own governments, and that is what this bill does.

Over the past few weeks, the people of Ukraine, Russia, and much of East-

ern Europe have been bombarded by the state-controlled and directed Russian media. Among other things, these so-called reports claim that fascists and neo-Nazis have taken control of the government in Kiev, that they have been attacking ethnic Russians in Ukraine and similarly in Crimea, and that they have engaged in widespread anti-Semitic acts.

Despite the complete lack of evidence, President Putin and other Russian officials have repeatedly referred to these alleged events to justify the invasion of Crimea and their massing of troops on Ukraine's border.

It is important to note that a number of prominent Jewish leaders in Ukraine, including Chief Rabbi Yaakov Dov Bleich, have recently made clear that the Russian allegations about anti-Semitic acts in Ukraine are false and that this baseless propaganda has been used as a pretext for the illegal annexation of Crimea.

I will insert in the record a letter from Ukrainian Jewish leaders debunking the fabrications emanating from Russia.

The legislation before us today, which is very similar to a provision included in the bipartisan Ukraine Support Act that passed the House last week, is a critical piece of our comprehensive approach to address the crisis in Ukraine.

S. 2183 directs Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the Voice of America to significantly increase radio, TV, and Internet programming in Ukraine and other countries in the region.

It also requires RFE/RL and Voice of America to expand their network of reporters in eastern Ukraine and Crimea and focus on news and information that directly rebuts misinformation from the Kremlin-controlled Russian media.

I would note, Mr. Speaker, that this legislation originated in the House as part of the Foreign Affairs Committee's Ukraine Support Act and was broken off in the Senate to create a separate bill.

In the interest of expediting passage, I will support the bill, but in the future, I might expect that Congress would follow a different process.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting S. 2183 to help ensure that the people of Ukraine, Moldova, the Balkan States, and other countries in the region have access to objective and comprehensive news.

I reserve the balance of my time.

OPEN LETTER OF UKRAINIAN JEWS TO RUSSIAN
FEDERATION PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN
FEDERATION VLADIMIR VLADIMIROVICH PUTIN

Mr. PRESIDENT: We are Jewish citizens of Ukraine: businessmen, managers, public figures, scientists and scholars, artists and musicians. We are addressing you on behalf of the multi-national people of Ukraine, Ukraine's national minorities, and on behalf of the Jewish community.

You have stated that Russia wants to protect the rights of the Russian-speaking citizens of the Crimea and all of Ukraine and

that these rights have been trampled by the current Ukrainian government. Historically, Ukrainian Jews are also mostly Russian-speaking. Thus, our opinion on what is happening carries no less weight than the opinion of those who advise and inform you.

We are convinced that you are not easily fooled. This means that you must be consciously picking and choosing lies and slander from the entire body of information on Ukraine. And you know very well that Victor Yanukovich's statement used to describe the situation after the latest treaty had been signed—"... Kyiv is full of armed people who have begun to ransack buildings, places of worship, and churches. Innocent people are suffering. People are being robbed and killed in the streets . . ."—is simply a lie, from the first word to the very last.

The Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine are not being humiliated or discriminated against, their civil rights have not been infringed upon. Meanderings about "forced Ukrainization" and "bans on the Russian language" that have been so common in Russian media are on the heads of those who invented them. Your certainty about the growth of anti-Semitism in Ukraine, which you expressed at your press-conference, also does not correspond to the actual facts. Perhaps you got Ukraine confused with Russia, where Jewish organizations have noticed growth in anti-Semitic tendencies last year.

Right now, after Ukraine has survived a difficult political crisis, many of us have wound up on different sides of the barricades. The Jews of Ukraine, as all ethnic groups, are not absolutely unified in their opinion towards what is happening in the country. But we live in a democratic country and can afford a difference of opinion.

They have tried to scare us (and are continuing their attempts) with "Bandera followers" and "Fascists" attempting to wrest away the helm of Ukrainian society, with imminent Jewish pogroms. Yes, we are well aware that the political opposition and the forces of social protests who have secured changes for the better are made up of different groups. They include nationalistic groups, but even the most marginal do not dare show anti-Semitism or other xenophobic behavior. And we certainly know that our very few nationalists are well-controlled by civil society and the new Ukrainian government—which is more than can be said for the Russian neo-Nazis, who are encouraged by your security services.

We have a great mutual understanding with the new government, and a partnership is in the works. There are quite a few national minority representatives in the Cabinet of Ministers: the Minister of Internal Affairs is Armenian, the Vice Prime Minister is a Jew, two ministers are Russian. The newly-appointed governors of Ukraine's region are also not exclusively Ukrainian.

Unfortunately, we must admit that in recent days stability in our country has been threatened. And this threat is coming from the Russian government, namely—from you personally. It is your policy of inciting separatism and crude pressure placed on Ukraine that threatens us and all Ukrainian people, including those who live in Crimea and the Ukrainian South-East. Southeastern Ukrainians will soon see that for themselves.

Vladimir Vladimirovich, we highly value your concern about the safety and rights of Ukrainian national minorities. But we do not wish to be "defended" by sundering Ukraine and annexing its territory. We decisively call for you not to intervene in internal Ukrainian affairs, to return the Russian armed forces to their normal fixed peacetime location, and to stop encouraging pro-Russian separatism.

Vladimir Vladimirovich, we are quite capable of protecting our rights in a constructive

dialogue and in cooperation with the government and civil society of a sovereign, democratic, and united Ukraine. We strongly urge you not to destabilize the situation in our country and to stop your attempts of delegitimizing the new Ukrainian government.

Signed:

Josef Zisels, Chairman of the Association of Jewish Communities and Organizations of Ukraine (VAAD) Ukraine, Executive Vice President of the Congress of National Communities of Ukraine; Alexander Suslensky, D.Sc., Vice President of the Jewish Confederation of Ukraine, businessman; Andrei Adamovsky, First Vice President of the Jewish Confederation of Ukraine, member of the "Hillel" Jewish Student organization Observation Council (citizen of Russia); Evgen Chervonenko, Vice President of the European Jewish Congress, businessman; Rabbi Alex Dukhovny, Head Rabbi of the Ukrainian Progressive Judaism communities; Rabbi Reuven Stavov, Head Rabbi of the Ukrainian Traditional Judaism communities; Alexander Paskhaver, Member of the VAAD Ukraine Coordination Council, economist; Leonid Finberg, Director of the NaUKMA Center for the Studies of History and Culture of Eastern European Jewry, VAAD Ukraine Vice Chairman; Anatoliy Podolsky, Director of the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies, Vice Chairman of VAAD Ukraine; Igor Kuperberg, Chairman of the Zionist Federation of Ukraine, Vice Chairman of VAAD Ukraine; Semen Belman, Vice President of the Jewish Council of Ukraine, President of the Chernigiv Jewish Community; Alexander Gaidar, Leader of the Union of Ukrainian Progressive Judaism Religious Communities; Vyacheslav Likhachev, CNCU Chief expert in monitoring and analysing xenophobia and anti-Semitism, member of the VAAD Ukraine Coordination Council (citizen of Russia and Israel); Michael Gold, Editor-in-chief of the VAAD Ukraine newspaper "Hadashot"; Galina Haraz, Engineer (citizen of Ukraine and Israel); Igor Turov, PhD in history, Director of the Jewish Studies Certificate Program of VAAD Ukraine, VAAD Ukraine, Presidium member; Diana Gold, VAAD Ukraine Presidium member; Alexander Roitburg, Artist; Evgen Greben, Director of the "Maccabi" Jewish Cultural and Sports Society (Kyiv); Grigoriy Pickman; "B'nei B'rith Leopoldis" President; Igor Kerez, VAAD Ukraine Trustee Board member; businessman; (Signatures still being collected); March 4, 2014.

□ 1630

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), a very respected member of our Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New York.

Let me begin first by thanking and extending my commendation to the distinguished chairman of our committee, Mr. ROYCE, and our distinguished ranking member, Mr. ENGEL. They have comported the Foreign Affairs Committee in a civil and bipartisan, collegial fashion that I think is a model for this Congress, and I wish we could emulate that in more of our committee work and here on the floor of the House of Representatives. They understand, both of them, that foreign policy has to be bipartisan, that the United States' interest must trump

partisan issues and interests, and I thank them both for their leadership and their inspiration.

I rise in strong support of these two bipartisan bills which contain provisions supported by our committee and the full House in recent weeks.

The House initially passed a bill to provide loan guarantees to Ukraine on March 6, and with today's vote, the bill finally will go to the President for his signature. It authorizes \$150 million in aid to Ukraine, and another \$100 million for this fiscal year for increased U.S. security cooperation among NATO states in response to the situation in Ukraine. This compromise legislation will also codify and expand the sanctions imposed last month by the Obama administration against certain Russian and Ukrainian officials who have undermined the Ukrainian Government or committed human rights abuses.

The second bill authorizes up to \$10 million for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the Voice of America to increase their broadcasts into eastern Ukraine—including the Crimea, Moldova, and other nearby ethnic Russian communities—consistent with the House-passed bill.

As the ranking member just noted, the power of radio certainly was something we saw during the cold war era, where truth could be beamed into homes, people had the courage to listen, and it actually changed minds, hearts, and, ultimately, the politics of the entire Soviet-dominated region.

Mr. Speaker, the United States and its allies cannot allow the flagrant violation of sovereignty that occurred by Russia in Crimea in violation of the international law, blatantly, to stand. Doing so would be an abrogation of our moral responsibility as a world power, and it would be turning our backs on the lessons we should have learned from the catastrophic events of the previous century.

Mr. Putin's claims that Russian speakers in Crimea were in jeopardy is nothing more than a fabrication and a ruse. Russia's interests were never threatened in the Crimea after the revolution in Kiev.

The current treaty with Crimea provided Russia with naval and military privileges and bases through the year 2042. That treaty was never threatened by Kiev. That treaty was never abrogated until the Russians' lower chamber of Parliament voted to abrogate that treaty, as a matter of fact.

Putin has learned nothing from history and is, in fact, bent, apparently, on repeating it. Crimea was settled by Stalin to have a Russian majority. He expelled and executed much of the native population of Crimea.

Mr. Putin seems to have learned nothing from that history, other than there is power at the end of the barrel of a gun. And the so-called referendum in Crimea was also, frankly, carried out with the assistance of buses-in thugs and at the end of the barrel of a

gun. I guess, as I have said before with respect to Mr. Putin, once a KGB agent, always a KGB agent.

If Mr. Putin's goal was to deter Ukraine and other former Soviet satellite nations from turning to the West, he has failed miserably. Ukraine and its neighbors are now looking at this aggression and turning even more to the West for their orientation and their support. As they do, the United States and its allies must be there to stand with them against this naked aggression, a raw and reckless act by the Russian Government.

I urge my colleagues to support these two bills. Speak with one voice on behalf of the United States Congress, and send a decisive message to the aggressive Mr. Putin and his Russian Government.

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

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

In closing, I would like to say that information is power, and we must not yield the media landscape to intentional efforts by the state-controlled and directed Russian media to mislead the people of Ukraine and the surrounding countries by providing false and deceptive information. These reports, as was mentioned, have been used as a pretext to the annexation of Crimea and possible incursions into eastern Ukraine and even Moldova and, I might say, even Georgia. That is why this bill is necessary to ensuring that there is access to objective news and information.

I again urge the Congress to pass this with an overwhelming, bipartisan majority.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, it is a sad state of affairs. There was one television station left in Russia that had some measure of independence, that wasn't state-controlled. Russia, President Putin, went after that institution, and now it is no longer broadcasting.

Russia has been waging an intense, aggressive, and very blunt disinformation campaign. Not only is that campaign directed at disinformation to people in Ukraine, but they have also spun tales of sinister plotting by the West. This measure, S. 2183, responds by directing U.S. international broadcasters to advance access to uncensored sources of information, the truth, about what is happening on the ground in Ukraine, to use stringers and reporters and to operate as a surrogate radio broadcast source in order to get news and information to people that are otherwise subject to the Russian propaganda, state-run propaganda that is coming into the country. I think it is important that this be done because the Ukrainian stations themselves have now been jammed by the Russians, by the Russian Government.

The former head of Radio Free Europe once described the mission of his

broadcasts as one that "irritates authoritarian regimes, inspires democrats, and creates greater space for civil society." We need to create greater space for civil society in Eastern Europe today. We need to provide a platform to inspire those who want to see democratic governance, and that is exactly the type of response that is needed.

For years, this type of broadcasting has been pivotal in helping young democracies push back against media lies and distortions and get off of their feet. We know from listening to Vaclav Havel and Lech Walesa how important this broadcasting can be. It is the type of broadcasting needed now in Ukraine and the surrounding region more than ever.

So I urge the House to pass S. 2183 and ensure that Russian attempts to undermine democracy in Ukraine through an intense propaganda campaign do not go unanswered.

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 California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2183.

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. ROYCE. 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.

WEATHER FORECASTING IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2014

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2413) to prioritize and redirect NOAA resources to a focused program of investment on near-term, affordable, and attainable advances in observational, computing, and modeling capabilities to deliver substantial improvement in weather forecasting and prediction of high impact weather events, such as tornadoes and hurricanes, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2413

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 "Weather Forecasting Improvement Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. PUBLIC SAFETY PRIORITY.

In accordance with NOAA's critical mission to provide science, service, and stewardship, the Under Secretary shall prioritize weather-related activities, including the provision of improved weather data, forecasts, and warnings for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy, in all relevant line offices.

SEC. 3. WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING INNOVATION.

(a) PROGRAM.—The Assistant Administrator for OAR shall conduct a program to develop improved understanding of and forecast capabilities for atmospheric events and their impacts, placing priority on developing more accurate, timely, and effective warnings and fore-casts of high impact weather events that endanger life and property.

(b) PROGRAM ELEMENTS.—The program described in subsection (a) shall focus on the following activities:

(1) Improving the fundamental understanding of weather consistent with section 2, including the boundary layer and other atmospheric processes affecting high impact weather events.

(2) Improving the understanding of how the public receives, interprets, and responds to warnings and forecasts of high impact weather events that endanger life and property.

(3) Research and development, and transfer of knowledge, technologies, and applications to the NWS and other appropriate agencies and entities, including the American weather industry and academic partners, related to—

(A) advanced radar, radar networking technologies, and other ground-based technologies, including those emphasizing rapid, fine-scale sensing of the boundary layer and lower troposphere, and the use of innovative, dual-polarization, phased array technologies;

(B) aerial weather observing systems;

(C) high performance computing and information technology and wireless communication networks;

(D) advanced numerical weather prediction systems and forecasting tools and techniques that improve the forecasting of timing, track, intensity, and severity of high impact weather, including through—

(i) the development of more effective mesoscale models;

(ii) more effective use of existing, and the development of new, regional and national cloud-resolving models;

(iii) enhanced global weather models; and

(iv) integrated assessment models;

(E) quantitative assessment tools for measuring the impact and value of data and observing systems, including OSSEs (as described in section 8), OSEs, and AOAs;

(F) atmospheric chemistry and interactions essential to accurately characterizing atmospheric composition and predicting meteorological processes, including cloud microphysical, precipitation, and atmospheric electrification processes, to more effectively understand their role in severe weather; and

(G) additional sources of weather data and information, including commercial observing systems.

(4) A technology transfer initiative, carried out jointly and in coordination with the Assistant Administrator for NWS, and in cooperation with the American weather industry and academic partners, to ensure continuous development and transition of the latest scientific and technological advances into NWS operations and to establish a process to sunset outdated and expensive operational methods and tools to enable cost-effective transfer of new methods and tools into operations.

(c) EXTRAMURAL RESEARCH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program under this section, the Assistant Administrator for OAR shall collaborate with and support the non-Federal weather research community, which includes institutions of higher education, private entities, and nongovernmental organizations, by making funds available through competitive