

Mr. Speaker, my bill, H.R. 690, would help DNDO use its limited resources toward projects that actually close the vulnerability gaps. Preventing and detecting nuclear smuggling is a complex endeavor. It requires seamless coordination between law enforcement and intelligence officials across the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 690, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 690.

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. DONOVAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 690.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SECURING THE CITIES ACT OF 2017

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 655) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Securing the Cities program to enhance the ability of the United States to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high consequence events utilizing nuclear or other radiological materials that pose a high risk to homeland security in high-risk urban areas, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 655

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 “Securing the Cities Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. SECURING THE CITIES PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title XIX of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 591 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 1908. SECURING THE CITIES PROGRAM.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Director for Domestic Nuclear Detection shall establish the ‘Securing the Cities’ (‘STC’) program to enhance the ability of the United States to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high consequence events utilizing nuclear or other radiological materials that pose a high risk to homeland security in high-risk urban areas. Through the STC program the Director shall—

“(1) assist State, local, tribal, and territorial governments in designing and implementing, or enhancing existing, architectures for coordinated and integrated detection and interdiction of nuclear or other radiological materials that are out of regulatory control;

“(2) support the development of a region-wide operating capability to detect and report on nuclear and other radioactive materials out of regulatory control;

“(3) provide resources to enhance detection, analysis, communication, and coordina-

tion to better integrate State, local, tribal, and territorial assets into Federal operations;

“(4) facilitate alarm adjudication and provide subject matter expertise and technical assistance on concepts of operations, training, exercises, and alarm response protocols;

“(5) communicate with, and promote sharing of information about the presence or detection of nuclear or other radiological materials among appropriate Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial governments, in a manner that ensures transparency with the jurisdictions served by such program;

“(6) provide augmenting resources, as appropriate, enabling State, local, tribal, and territorial governments to sustain and refresh their capabilities developed under the STC program; and

“(7) provide any other assistance the Director determines appropriate.

“(b) DESIGNATION OF JURISDICTIONS.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Director shall designate jurisdictions from among high-risk urban areas under section 2003, and other cities and regions, as appropriate.

“(c) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—The Director shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate not later than three days before the designation of new jurisdictions under subsection (b) or other changes to participating jurisdictions.”.

(b) GAO REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate an assessment, including an evaluation of the effectiveness, of the Securing the Cities program under section 1908 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by subsection (a) of this section.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1907 the following new item:

“Sec. 1908. Securing the Cities program.”.

SEC. 3. MODEL EXERCISES.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director for Domestic Nuclear Detection of the Department of Homeland Security shall report to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate on the feasibility of the Director developing model exercises to test the preparedness of jurisdictions participating in the Securing the Cities program under section 1908 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by section 2 of this Act) in meeting the challenges that may be posed by a range of nuclear and radiological threats.

SEC. 4. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, I rise in support of H.R. 655, the Securing the Cities Act of 2017.

Representing New York’s 11th Congressional District, which includes Staten Island and Brooklyn, and as a former district attorney, I fully understand the importance of protecting our major cities from catastrophic terrorist attacks. In keeping our pledge to never forget 9/11, it is our duty to ensure that such an attack never happens again. This legislation underscores our commitment and gives the Department of Homeland Security the tools it needs to carry out this mission.

In 2015, the Committee on Homeland Security held a hearing at Ground Zero in lower Manhattan. At that hearing, we heard from Commissioner Bratton of the New York City Police Department who described the current threat environment facing New York City. In his testimony, he specifically referenced the risk that terrorists may introduce illicit nuclear materials into the city to conduct an attack. Similarly, Secretary of Homeland Security Kelly recently stated: The United States must prepare for the eventuality of a catastrophic attack given the potential impact and consequences.

This bill establishes the Securing the Cities program at the Department of Homeland Security to enhance the ability of the United States to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high-consequence events using nuclear and other radiological materials in high-risk urban areas.

The Securing the Cities program within the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office provides training, equipment, and other resources to State and local law enforcement in high-risk urban areas to prevent a terrorist group from carrying out an attack using a radiological or nuclear device.

The Securing the Cities program began in 2006 as a pilot program in the New York City region which included Jersey City and Newark. Since 2007, the New York City region has purchased nearly 14,000 radiation detectors and trained nearly 20,000 personnel. The pilot program has been so successful it was expanded to the Los Angeles/Long Beach region in fiscal year 2012, the National Capital Region in fiscal year 2014, and to the cities of Houston and Chicago in 2016. Once the Securing

the Cities program is fully implemented, it will protect nearly 100 million people across this country.

I would like to thank the Department of Homeland Security for its hard work and commitment to this program. Given the alarming terrorist threat from ISIS and al Qaeda and their willingness to carry out an attack using a weapon of mass destruction, this program could not be more vital.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 655.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 655.

For over a decade, the Securing the Cities program has provided a growing number of first responders from New York City and Newark, New Jersey to Los Angeles and Long Beach to Washington, D.C., Houston, and Chicago with the tools they need to detect radiological and nuclear threats.

Securing the Cities is administered by the Department of Homeland Security's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, DNDO, which houses the Department's experts on preparing for and responding to rad/nuc events.

The program makes funding available to participating jurisdictions for planning and analysis related to radiological and nuclear threats, as well as equipment purchases, training, and exercises.

Through this program, DNDO supports grantees by providing subject matter expertise, training, coordination, and technological support. H.R. 655 would formally authorize the existing Securing the Cities program and improve it by directing the Government Accountability Office to assess the program and offer recommendations for how it could become more effective.

Mr. Speaker, this bill passed the House last Congress by a vote of 441-4.

Mr. Speaker, the Securing the Cities program plays a critical role in protecting communities across America from the threat posed by radiological and nuclear weapons.

H.R. 655 will ensure that this important program continues and becomes more robust in future years. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 655.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 655, 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. DONOVAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 655.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS ALLOWABLE USE ACT

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 437) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to codify authority under existing grant guidance authorizing use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 437

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 "Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act".

SEC. 2. USE OF CERTAIN HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT FUNDS FOR ENHANCING MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS, MEDICAL SURGE CAPACITY, AND MASS PROPHYLAXIS CAPABILITIES.

Section 2008 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (14) as paragraphs (11) through (15), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following new paragraph (10):

"(10) enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities, including the development and maintenance of an initial pharmaceutical stockpile, including medical kits, and diagnostics sufficient to protect first responders, their families, immediate victims, and vulnerable populations from a chemical or biological event;" and

(2) in subsection (b)(3)(B), by striking "subsection (a)(10)" and inserting "subsection (a)(11)".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, I rise today in support of H.R. 437, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act. H.R. 437 was introduced by Congressman BILIRAKIS, a former chairman of the Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications Subcommittee.

This bill amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make it clear that

State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security Initiative Grant funds may be used to enhance medical preparedness and purchase medical countermeasures.

H.R. 437 codifies current grant guidance to ensure that recipients of the State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security Initiative Grants will continue to be able to use these funds for medical preparedness equipment and activities.

Mr. Speaker, the threat of a terrorist attack using a chemical or biological agent is real. We must ensure our first responders have the tools and capabilities they need should such an event occur.

In my district, the City of New York has put their Homeland Security grants to good use for this purpose. In 2014, they held a full-scale exercise which simulated an anthrax attack on the city. Participants from agencies across the city, including the health department, the New York City Police Department, and the Office of Emergency Management worked to set up locations to quickly distribute lifesaving medical countermeasures to city residents across the five boroughs.

We must ensure that the State Homeland Security Grant Program and the Urban Areas Security Initiative funds continue to be available, despite any changes to yearly grant guidance, for exercises like the one conducted by New York City and other important medical preparedness activities. This bill does just that.

Identical language to H.R. 437 passed the House last Congress by a vote of 377-2.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman BILIRAKIS for introducing this commonsense bill. I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1630

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 437. Whether the result of a naturally occurring outbreak, like Zika or Ebola, or an intentional release of bio-pathogens, like anthrax attacks that shook Washington immediately after 9/11, we must ensure that our public health and medical response communities are prepared to respond to events that may stretch their capabilities.

In recent years, the Metropolitan Medical Response System Program has been eliminated, and grants supported by the Department of Health and Human Services, such as the Hospital Preparedness Program, have been cut. As a result, many jurisdictions have been forced to make tough choices and, in many cases, divert other limited funding to support medical preparedness.

Under current law, the Urban Area Security Initiative and the State Homeland Security Grant Program funding can be used to bolster medical preparedness capabilities, but the ability to use funds for that purpose is contingent on the grant guidance issued