

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2018

SPEECH OF

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2017

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3354) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes:

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Chair, as the co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Parkinson's Disease and a member of the Congressional Multiple Sclerosis Caucus, I'm proud of the collective work of the 114th Congress in enacting 21st Century Cures—a bipartisan undertaking to help our healthcare innovation infrastructure thrive and deliver more hope for all patients.

Personally, I have family members who have suffered with Parkinson's—I witness this debilitating disease through them. It's hard to watch. Few things in America are truly universal—diseases, sadly, are one of those things.

Currently, we do not have accurate information about how many people are living with neurological diseases like Parkinson's and Multiple Sclerosis, geographic location, or even basic attributes like gender, ethnicity, etc. Lack of accurate information slows critical research while erecting new and reinforcing existing barriers to health care services that these vulnerable patients need.

21st Century Cures addressed this issue by statutorily developing the necessary infrastructure to collect data on neurological diseases so key health stakeholders could better understand the patient population, facilitate research, and proactively plan for health care needs—saving lives while controlling costs. This infrastructure is the National Neurological Conditions Surveillance System.

Information provided by the National Neurological Conditions Surveillance System will provide a foundation for understanding factors, such as clusters of diagnoses in certain geographic regions, variances in the number of men and women diagnosed with neurological diseases, and differences in health care practices among patients. Unfortunately, funds were not appropriated to formally establish this database at CDC.

Mr. Chair, I understand that we must practice fiscal discipline and exercise fiscal constraint. I understand difficult decisions must be made in this appropriation bill. I understand the fiscal environment in which we now find ourselves due to our low budget caps here in the House. However, as the budget caps are higher in the Senate, I ask that should the measure we are considering be put before a conference committee, that funding be made available for the National Neurological Condi-

tions Surveillance System so that we can realize the mission of 21st Century Cures—to accelerate medical product development and bring new innovations and advances to patients who need them faster and more efficiently. I hope you will work with me to find funding for this critical system for patients.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2018

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2017

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3354) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes:

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of Amendment No. 66, offered by Representative JAYAPAL, to strike the \$535 million increase for ICE enforcement and instead add \$30 million to ICE's Office of the Inspector General and \$10 million to DHS's Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. This additional oversight funding would support investigations of sexual assault in immigration detention as mandated by the Prison Rape Elimination Act.

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was passed in 2003 as a result of a remarkable bipartisan effort led by Congressman Frank Wolf and myself in the House and Senators Jeff Sessions and Ted Kennedy in the Senate.

Ten years after passage of PREA, in 2014, DHS finalized regulations to comply with PREA. This year, 2017, is the first in which DHS is instituting those regulations by auditing its facilities for compliance.

We must aid DHS in its efforts to investigate and prevent sexual abuse. According to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at DHS, during the two-year period from May 2014 to July 2016, it received over 1,000 complaints from detainees reporting sexual abuse or assault. The Office of Inspector General investigated only 24 of those complaints—that is 2.4 percent of the total complaints that were made by detained immigrants.

Immigrant detainees also face barriers to reaching the Inspector General's telephone hotline for reporting abuse, because, according to a 2013 report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), approximately 14 percent of calls placed to that hotline did not go through because, for example, the call was not answered.

This Amendment is an essential step to giving DHS resources to comply with PREA and protect immigrants from sexual abuse and assault in detention facilities.

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SPEECH OF

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2017

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3354) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes:

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of an amendment I've offered to provide the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) an additional \$9 million. The purpose of this amendment is to enable the agency to focus on connected and automated vehicles by expanding its workforce to validate the safety of these transformative vehicles, defining new testing protocols as the technology advances, and to better collaborate with industry, and state and local governments to conduct adequate oversight of their deployment on our roads.

Connected and automated vehicles are a rapidly emerging technology with the potential to improve safety and mobility, decrease congestion, and increase the overall efficiency of our nation's transportation network. But along with this progress comes a number of pressing policy challenges. The federal government can, and must, play a role in maximizing the societal benefits of these technologies.

In a time when the technology that enables automated vehicles is rapidly advancing, I firmly believe that we must continue to promote U.S. leadership in this industry, with the goal of full deployment of automated vehicles on our roads and highways. Policies that balance consumer protection while facilitating innovation will ultimately benefit our manufacturing and transportation industries and their workers.

As Co-Chair of the Unmanned Systems Caucus, I have been holding periodic roundtables around the country on connected and autonomous transportation policy for the past two years. I have listened to experts from O.E.M.s, tier 1 suppliers, information technology companies, transportation planners, and tech start-ups.

Part of this interest is from my background as an engineer, and my work as the Ranking Member of the House Science Committee's Research Subcommittee. Last Congress, I introduced the Future TRIP Act to promote automated vehicle research. Key provisions of that bill passed into law in the FAST Act.

NHTSA has done an admirable job of working with the industry in developing policy guidance while allowing enough flexibility to promote innovation for an industry that is constantly evolving. It is exactly this kind of consensus-based incremental change that will

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