

this effort in making this happen and, hopefully, being fruitful in adjusting the Endangered Species Act.

URGING NATO ALLIES TO HONOR FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

(Mr. BISHOP of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with grave concern regarding the security of our world.

Recently, the House passed the National Defense Authorization Act, which included my amendment urging our NATO allies to step up and participate in the cost of their own defense. President Trump was correct to raise this issue at the NATO summit in Brussels.

America's commitment to our NATO allies is absolutely ironclad—it always has been—but for too long, the United States has shared an unequal financial burden in contributing to the global and regional security that NATO provides.

In 2014, each member country agreed to spend a minimum of 2 percent of their GDP on defense, but currently, only 5 of 29 member countries meet this threshold. With new challenges from an increasingly belligerent Russian state, instability across the Middle East and North Africa, and emerging cybersecurity threats around the world, it is time for our allies to honor their commitments.

As negotiators continue to finalize the NDAA conference report, I urge the inclusion of my amendment that passed the House to ensure our allies pull their own weight in support of our collective defense, which will strengthen NATO and help achieve peace through our collective commitment.

DISPARAGING NATO ALLIES IS NOT PRODUCTIVE

(Mr. CONNOLLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, we just heard my friend from Michigan talk about how NATO allies have to live up to their obligations.

NATO allies have been living up to their obligations. In fact, article V of NATO has only been invoked once, and it was on behalf of the United States by our NATO allies.

The way to get NATO working is not to blow up a NATO summit, and it is not to disparage NATO allies—allies of half a century. Now we see that same wrecking ball strategy in the United Kingdom, our oldest ally on the face of the Earth.

This is no way to conduct foreign policy. It is destructive, and it will hurt the United States' interests that have been served long by our allies and by NATO in particular.

I hope the President of the United States comes to his senses and under-

stands talking discretely is far better than blowing it up.

UNFUNDED MANDATES INFORMATION AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2017

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. 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 H.R. 50.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 985 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 50.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 0915

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 50) to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes, with Mr. MAST in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

The gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, in 1995, Congress passed the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, or UMRA, to prevent the imposition of burdensome and costly Federal unfunded mandates. Over the course of this Congress, the Oversight and Government Reform Committee has developed a record that clearly shows UMRA has fallen short of its original goals.

Last year, the committee sought input on UMRA and received several hundred responses from Governors, State legislators, and county officials regarding the impact of Federal laws and regulations.

Too often, State and local governments are confronted with the rotten choice of raising taxes on their residents or cutting services residents depend on in order to comply with Federal mandates. Unfunded federal mandates strain State and local budgets, and subvert the principles of American federalism.

Federal agencies treat States as servants to their regulatory whims, rather

than as partners to consult before imposing new, burdensome mandates.

In an April 2017 hearing, a Kentucky county executive testified that Federal agencies treat their responsibilities under UMRA as an exercise to “check a box,” rather than an opportunity to engage in a meaningful intergovernmental partnership.

H.R. 50, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act, is designed to solve these problems. It will improve the quality of regulatory and legislative analysis and close the current loophole which allows an agency to bypass UMRA analysis by not issuing a notice of proposed rulemaking.

According to the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office, 35 percent of major rules are issued without a notice of proposed rulemaking. That means more than one-third of the regulations with the greatest impact on the economy are excluded from UMRA's cost-benefit and other analyses.

H.R. 50 also expands the definition of direct costs to ensure economic analysis considers foregone profits, costs passed on to consumers, and behavioral changes.

Requiring Federal regulatory agencies and the Congressional Budget Office to include all anticipated costs in cost estimates will help ensure that analyses are complete and provide an accurate description of the full effects of regulations and legislation.

H.R. 50 enhances transparency, accountability, and communication between the Federal Government and State, local, Tribal, or private sector partners. It requires Federal agencies to engage in a more thorough regulatory process by codifying key provisions of President Clinton's Executive Order 12866. These principles were reaffirmed by President Obama in Executive Order 13563 and are consistent with President Trump's executive orders on regulatory reform.

Under UMRA, agencies are required to consult with State, local, and Tribal governments when developing significant regulatory mandates. H.R. 50 extends this requirement to the private sector, which is similarly burdened by unfunded Federal regulatory mandates.

The bill also requires independent agencies like the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, and the Federal Communications Commission to comply with UMRA.

Finally, H.R. 50 extends judicial review to help ensure agencies carefully consider the least costly and least burdensome regulatory alternative, giving courts the authority to stay regulations for noncompliance with UMRA. These changes are critical to achieving what Congress set out to do when UMRA was passed in 1995.

Requiring greater transparency and improving analysis prior to imposing Federal mandates is not a partisan goal. State and local governments headed by Republicans and Democrats