



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2020

No. 24

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 5, 2020.

I hereby appoint the Honorable HENRY CUELLAR to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2020, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

TELEHEALTH INCREASES ACCESS TO CARE FOR MONTANANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montana (Mr. GIANFORTE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, many Montanans live in frontier and rural areas where access to doctors and specialists is a big challenge. They don't worry about when they can see a doctor; they worry if there is even a doctor to see.

For Montana seniors with mobility issues, getting out to see a doctor can

be difficult and can delay their care leading to worse health outcomes.

Montana, unfortunately, also has the highest suicide rate in the Nation. Thousands of Montanans lack adequate access to mental healthcare.

Telehealth can fix these problems. Telehealth increases access to care, brings down healthcare costs, and, in some cases, saves lives.

Unfortunately, Federal telehealth programs have been poorly managed. Currently, 10 different Federal agencies operate telehealth programs with little or no coordination between them.

That is why Chairwoman ESHOO and I have worked for months on ways to improve and increase telehealth services. I appreciate her leadership on this important issue.

Today, we introduce the National Telehealth Strategy and Data Advancement Act. Our bill reauthorizes telehealth grant programs, provides greater oversight of Federal agencies, and helps implement telehealth programs across the country.

Using modern technology to make healthcare more accessible is a commonsense solution. It will particularly help us with our rural doctor shortage in Montana.

This bill will ensure that patients can have access to doctors and specialists in a way that is convenient for them.

I look forward to working on this bipartisan bill. It is a critical step as we ensure all Americans, particularly those in our rural and frontier areas, have access to better, affordable healthcare.

GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, last night in this Chamber, we heard a bloviating, self-congratulatory speech

full of exaggerations, half-truths, and outright falsehoods. The President pretended to have addressed, or was going to address, concerns of the American people.

He said he is taking care of prescription drugs. Yeah. Really. They haven't done a damn thing. We sent a bill to the Senate and it is sitting there.

Second, he said, oh, we are going to protect preexisting conditions. Funny thing, his Attorney General is in court arguing that those preexisting conditions should no longer be protected. But, hey, what the heck.

And then he did devote one sentence—one sentence—to infrastructure. What happened to the \$2 trillion plan he campaigned on and carries on about all the time? Well, so far, he has only proposed cuts.

But one issue of vital concern to the American people that is the focus this week—this is National Gun Violence Survivors Week—did not receive a single mention by the President, despite the fact that several commonsense bipartisan reforms and programs have passed this House and have received no action in the Senate in a year.

H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Comprehensive Background Checks Act, passed on February 27. No action in the Senate.

The Enhanced Background Checks Act passed February 28—bipartisan. Again, no action in the Senate.

Every year, guns are sold to people who aren't supposed to have them—including at that horrible church shooting a couple of years ago—because of a mandate that, if there is confusion over a background check, they have to get the gun within 3 days.

Over the last 10 years, 35,000 guns, because of that provision, were sold to people who were not qualified under Federal law to have the guns. And guess what. Then the Feds contact the FBI who screwed up the background check, contacts the local law enforcement and says, "Hey, go get the gun

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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from that felon," endangering our local law enforcement.

This would plug that loophole.

The Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization passed April 4. No action in the Senate. And, for the first time in 20 years, we are going to do some research on gun violence. There are other bills we should be doing.

In my State, we have adopted red flag laws. And over here, they say, well, we can't have red flag laws for abusers because of their constitutional rights.

Well, we have set it up in a way that we have had 160 petitions for red flag restrictions. Most of them—actually, the majority—were for people at risk of suicide; and then a minority were for abusive relationships, and 32 of those were denied by a judge.

Due process was followed, but lives were saved. But, no, we can't take that.

Bump stocks, we banned fully automatic weapons decades ago. Bump stocks, essentially, turn a semiautomatic into a very inaccurate, nearly full automatic in terms of ready to fire. But if you are shooting at a stadium full of people, it doesn't matter how inaccurate it is; you are going to hit a lot of people.

We can't even bring up legislation—or, well, the Republicans won't support legislation to ban bump stocks, hate crimes legislation, the list goes on.

Just one other quick issue. You can go online to armslist.com, and if you are not eligible to buy a gun, you can get one. It is very evident that, in study after study done, that many of the people selling guns on armslist.com are felons and not allowed to own firearms, and they will sell to other felons. It will say: No background check necessary. Will cross State lines—all sorts of things like that.

All those things need to be banned. Those are commonsense gun violence reforms.

And, in this week, just, really, this week, National Gun Violence Survivors Week, let's do something to end the bloodshed.

RECOGNIZING THE KANSAS CITY CHIEFS, SUPER BOWL CHAMPIONS, AND BOB DOLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, much like America's great comeback that President Trump described at his State of the Union message last night, this past Sunday, my team, the Kansas City Chiefs, had a miracle comeback victory in the fourth quarter of Super Bowl LIV.

After 50 years, the Chiefs are once again Super Bowl champions. As a born-and-raised Chiefs fan, watching them win the title was a dream come true.

Of course, we all saw the game, but just before it started something happened that you may have missed. Dur-

ing the singing of the national anthem, just past the end zone, my mentor and friend, 96-year-old Senator Bob Dole, who was seriously wounded during his service in World War II, insisted on standing up out of his wheelchair during the performance. And with a little help, that is exactly what he did.

In an age when people can't even agree in honoring our flag, it is powerful to see one of our Nation's greatest heroes from our Greatest Generation continue to show us the way.

Thank you, Senator Dole, for your patriotism and love of country.

And congratulations to my Super Bowl champions, the Kansas City Chiefs.

CHAOS AT THE IOWA CAUCUS

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, we all saw the Iowa caucus and the chaos that Democrats are offering—chaos, along with higher taxes and Medicare for all that takes away the insurance that you get at your job.

As Senate Majority Leader MCCONNELL said yesterday, these same Democrats who want to take over everyone's healthcare and micromanage the entire economy couldn't even organize their own traditional Iowa caucuses.

Contrast this to last night at the State of the Union message when President Trump talked about the strongest economy of our lifetimes, including record job and wage growth. We saw how the President wants to bring us together to deliver even more results, more trade deals for Kansas, and a safer, more secure America. You can count on me that I will be standing beside him to help deliver those results.

The Democrats offer chaos, higher taxes, and poverty. President Trump and the Republicans offer prosperity, hope, and security.

CREATING A PROGRAM WITHIN THE VA TO GIVE VETERANS ACCESS TO SERVICE DOGS

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, tonight the House will vote to pass the PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act, which will create a program within the VA to give veterans access to treatment by working with service dogs.

Midwest Battle Buddies is an organization based in Kansas that works with veterans who are suffering from PTSD or other service-related issues. The veterans are paired with a dog and attend weekly sessions to train the dogs. Once the training is completed, the dogs become their service dogs.

According to Chip Neumann, president of the organization, therapy dogs provide veterans unconditional love. They do not judge their owners when they have breakdowns from stress or external triggers and can react and intervene if the veteran is having an episode and can often prevent them from spiraling out of control.

There is just something wonderful about dogs, as we all know.

The training sessions also act as mini therapy sessions, as veterans realize they are with others dealing with the same issues.

Midwest Battle Buddies has seen the possible impact service dog therapy can have for our cherished veterans.

I look forward to passing the PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act to extend access to service dog therapy throughout the VA, to provide the best treatment for America's veterans.

HONORING GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS' WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. MCBATH) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Gun Violence Survivors Week because I, too, am a survivor.

This week, just a month into the new year, there will have been more gun deaths in the United States than our peer countries will experience in an entire year—one month.

I wear black today. I wear black all week long to stand for every survivor, every victim, every family that mourns the unnecessary gun deaths that happen each and every single day.

I met earlier this week with Mary Miller-Strobel, whose brother, Ben, was a combat veteran suffering from depression and PTSD. Ben had lost 30 pounds after his tour. Returning home, his father asked him about his weight loss. Ben replied that he couldn't eat, and he said: "It's just so hard out there, Dad. It smells like death."

Ben was seeking treatment at a local VA hospital, but his family continued to worry about him. They worried that, in a moment of desperation, Ben might end his own life.

Mary and her father drove to every gun store in their area. At each store, they showed photos of Ben, pleading with them not to sell him a gun.

Ben Miller died by suicide. He used a gun that he bought at a local gun store.

Too often we are told that we must accept these tragedies. We are told that, instead of changing our laws, we must have more active shooter drills, more first graders coming home with tears in their eyes, 6-year-olds asked to decide for themselves whether they are more likely to survive by hiding in a closet or if they should rush the gunman; more mothers reading messages from their children as they are locked inside a school and they are pleading: Mom, if I don't make it, I love you, and I appreciate everything that you have done for me; more vigils each and every day for those that we continue to lose.

Too often, we are told that we must accept these tragedies. I refuse to accept that. Millions of Americans across the country refuse to accept that. This Congress should refuse to accept that.

We refuse to accept that, because we have passed bipartisan legislation that will help save lives, legislation like the Bipartisan Background Checks Act, a commonsense bill that will keep guns away from those who should not have them.

□ 1015

We have passed H.R. 1112, the Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2019, which would close the Charleston loophole.

We have passed a bill that gives the CDC and the NIH \$25 million to study gun violence, the first of its kind in over 20 years.

I have even introduced a bill that would give loved ones and law enforcement more tools to keep guns away from those who are a danger to themselves or to others; tools that may have helped Mary save her brother, Ben's life.

With every unnecessary shooting, we continue to feel the weight of this injustice; and I personally know that sense of injustice.

When my son, Jordan, was killed, I found myself asking America, how could you allow this to happen to my child, my family, to my Jordan? And after Parkland, I knew that this country needed to stand up and to do something about it.

I knew that I had something that I had to do, and I knew that I needed to stand up for families like mine in Marietta, Georgia, who are terrified that their children will not come home from school, and they are terrified of being me.

So I made a promise to my community that I would act. And I promised that I would take all the love and the support and protection that I had given to my child and use it to serve the American people. I promised I would always be a mother on a mission to save the lives of children from across America, children like my son.

During this Gun Violence Survivors Week, I pray that we all remember that this is in our hands. Families like Mary's, children graduating from high school, communities in Charleston, in Columbine, in Parkland, in Sandy Hook, in Dayton, in El Paso, in Las Vegas, in the hundreds of places where shooters and shootings don't even make the news. Their lives are in our hands.

I thank my colleagues, and survivors, and volunteers, and advocates across this country for their tireless work to protect our families.

May God bless us all in this fight to save American lives.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF OFFICER ALAN MCCOLLUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CLOUD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLOUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor and to mourn the loss of one of Corpus Christi Police Department's finest, Officer Alan McCollum, who was tragically killed in the line of duty.

President Ronald Reagan once said: "There can be no more noble vocation than the protection of one's fellow citizens."

Officer McCollum was a compassionate, devoted, and admired public servant who dutifully worked to keep south Texas safe.

Before serving as a police officer, Officer McCollum served 21 years in the U.S. Army, earning the Bronze Star and numerous other accolades. Following the Army, his service to others continued by joining the Corpus Christi Police Department in 2013, where he was a valued member of the Honor Guard and SWAT team.

Last year, he once again demonstrated his willingness to sacrifice his own safety for others by helping push an overturned car back on its wheels after it had caught fire, saving the life of the driver.

On Saturday, Officer McCollum paid the ultimate price, sacrificing himself, while upholding the rule of law.

Scripture tells us that the Lord is near to the brokenhearted and those who are crushed in spirit. Right now, so many of us, in Texas, the Corpus Christi Police Department, and the family of Officer McCollum, are brokenhearted.

Our prayers are for his family and friends touched by this tragedy, and especially his wife of 12 years, Michelle, and his three daughters, Hannah, Carissa, and Lilianna, would feel the Lord near them during this difficult time. I extend my deepest condolences to them during this extremely difficult time.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF OFFICER MICHAEL LOVE

Mr. CLOUD. Mr. Speaker, this week, I had the opportunity to visit Corpus Christi Police Officer Michael Love in the hospital as he recovers from injuries he sustained in the line of duty.

Over the weekend, he was conducting a routine traffic stop when his patrol vehicle was struck, pinning him down.

I had heard from many of his fellow officers of his optimistic and indomitable spirit, which I had the opportunity to witness firsthand when I visited him and his wife, Lauren, in the hospital. He told me that, despite everything he is going through, even knowing the months of recovery that lie ahead, he would still sign up to serve our community as a Corpus Christi police officer.

We cannot express our gratitude enough for his sacrifice and his bravery.

We must continue to pray for the safety of all our first responders, and support them as they protect us, as well as their families, who they hug a little bit tighter every day as they face the dangers that lie ahead.

We are thankful for the loving, brave, and patriotic man that is Officer Michael Love, and for those who serve with him.

GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me say that my heart hurts for my colleague and my sister, LUCY MCBATH, as she confronts on a daily basis the pain of our failure to act on sensible gun safety legislation.

I rise today, as many of my colleagues will, almost one year since the House took the steps to curb violence by passing H.R. 8, a bill that has yet to receive any consideration in the Senate.

We are in the middle of Gun Violence Survivors Week. Yet, despite survivors' calls for action; despite the calls of parents and friends who have lost loved ones to guns; despite the calls from our young people who just want to be safe in school; and despite our calls of the communities who want to be safe in their homes, we have yet to get H.R. 8, or any other gun violence bill considered in the Senate.

The paralysis around preventing gun violence is disgusting, and it is deadly. This story line that preventing people from buying assault weapons or stockpiling ammunition is somehow infringing upon their rights is deeply hurtful, and it is wrong thinking.

Including suicides by guns, there were 177 deaths on New Year's Day alone. There were three mass shootings, and the lives lost included three children between the ages of 12 and 17. That's just one day, the first day of this year. Yet, Republicans in the Senate continue to refuse to move any bill that might keep more families from getting that phone call.

There are so many options available to us. There is the baseline, bipartisan bill, like, H.R. 8, that we have already passed in the House. There are bills that would go even further, like my own Handgun Licensing and Registration Act of 2019, and the Stop Online Ammunition Sales Act of 2019.

One would require registration for handgun purchases, just like the government requires registration and basic standards for voting, operating a vehicle, even opening a business. It would ensure accountability and allow enforcement to identify threats.

The other places a very basic principle into law; that you shouldn't be able to stockpile bullets without ID or without law enforcement being aware.

Mr. Speaker, there are bills that would keep guns out of the hands of violent criminals, and bills that would push us to study gun violence as the health crisis it is. So far, none of these seem to be good enough for most of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, or the other side of the Capitol.

We are approaching a point from which we cannot return, where failure to act will normalize gun violence in our schools, in our neighborhoods, and in our society.

The survivors that we honor today, the families of those we have lost, and the countless Americans who wonder if they might be next deserve so much more from us.

I stand here today representing all of the loss of the survivors and what they have experienced. But I stand here, representing the hope that my granddaughter, Kamryn Anne Marie Watson, is safe in her school, just like all of the other children should be. Nothing less is acceptable.

PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. TORRES of California). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUDD. Madam Speaker, tomorrow, the House will vote on the Protecting the Right to Organize Act of 2019, or the PRO Act. This legislation is a liberal wish list that represents a draconian overhaul of our Nation's labor laws at the expense of employers, workers, and economic growth, while strengthening the authoritarian power of big labor.

Madam Speaker, despite the fact that the National Labor Relations Board and the U.S. Supreme Court have recognized that there should be ample time for "uninhibited, robust, and wide-open debate in labor disputes," the PRO Act deliberately speeds up election processes so that employees don't have time to learn about the potential downsides of joining a union.

Specifically, the bill codifies the provisions of an NLRB regulation called the "ambush election rule" which significantly shortens the time span in election processes. Democrats purposely inserted this provision because they know union bosses are more likely to win elections when employees are uninformed about the downsides of union membership.

Second, the PRO Act increases liability for businesses by dramatically expanding the definition of "joint employer" to also include indirect control and unexercised potential control over employees. These terms are incredibly broad and ambiguous, meaning businesses could find themselves held liable for labor violations committed by another business when they might not have even been aware that they were considered a joint employer in the first place.

Even worse, the risk of increased liability incentivizes large businesses to stop contracting out to small businesses. This would force large businesses to keep more jobs in-house which, ultimately, raises prices for both businesses and consumers.

The expanded definition of joint employer is also detrimental for franchise businesses. A recent study showed that the definition change has led to a 93 percent increase in lawsuits against franchise businesses, costing them over \$33 billion annually, and leading to the loss of 376,000 jobs.

The study also showed that the majority of franchise businesses have been offering less services just in order to avoid lawsuits. This chilling effect

hurts, again, both workers and consumers alike.

The PRO Act also compels private-sector employees to either join a union or risk being fired. The bill abolishes the State Right to Work Laws which allow workers the freedom to choose whether or not they want to pay fees to a union.

If Right to Work Laws are repealed, not only will unions gain unprecedented new power, but economic growth and employment will suffer. A 2018 study by the National Economic Research Associates found that between 2001 and 2016, States with Right to Work Laws saw private-sector employment grow by 27 percent; while States without Right to Work Laws grew only 15 percent.

To top it off, the PRO Act strips workers of their right to cast anonymous ballots in union elections. Under current law, workers are able to anonymously oppose joining a union by casting "secret" and unpublicized ballots. However, this PRO Act abolishes this practice and forces employees to make their choice public about unionizing, which makes it easier for unions to intimidate and threaten workers who do not wish to sign up.

Senior fellow at the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, Vincent Vernuccio, has said: "The secret ballot is a bedrock principle of democracy. It allows people to vote the way they feel without fear of reprisal. Without it, those who hold the elections would hold all the power."

This bill should be opposed by anyone who is concerned with worker freedom and continuing our country's economic boom. The PRO Act needs to be permanently benched.

□ 1030

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, today, I rise because it is National Gun Violence Survivors Week, a time when we focus on sharing and amplifying the stories of gun violence survivors who live with the impacts of gun violence every day.

I recall the morning of June 12, 2016, when my wife and I were awakened at 6 in the morning by a barrage of texts because the unthinkable happened to our happy little town of Orlando, Florida. Gun violence on a massive scale had reared its ugly head at a place where people just wanted to have a good time, at the Pulse nightclub.

We lost 49 Americans that day, 49 of my fellow Orlandoans who were just there to enjoy friendship and camaraderie. Their lives were taken way too early from us. But we also have to focus on the 53 who were wounded, the survivors of the Pulse nightclub tragedy. One of them is a coworker of mine, Ramses Tinoco.

Ramses is a paralegal who was good spirited, hard-working, and always excited about the job. Suddenly, for several weeks, he wasn't able to come back to work, or at least in a regular fashion. I remember talking to him about what it was like to be there. It was hard for him to talk about it, and I don't blame him because no one should have to see those types of horrors.

Another good friend of mine, Ricardo Negron-Almodovar, a lawyer in Puerto Rico who came to central Florida for a new start, and within less than a year of living in Orlando, he faced this vicious tragedy. But he has been fighting back. He is now on the Pulse national memorial advisory committee. We have a bipartisan bill going through the House that would make it a national memorial to remember those 49 we lost and those 53 wounded survivors.

But I also want to talk about the folks who take care of the survivors.

Terry DeCarlo, who is pictured here on the far right, was retiring the Monday after the Pulse nightclub shooting from the LGBT+ Center in Orlando. Terry couldn't retire when his community needed him most, so he stayed on for a year, bringing in supplies, helping with mental health, helping the families coming from around the country to help their loved ones who were still surviving.

During that time, all Terry thought about was others. It was only a few months after he retired a year-plus later that he found out that he had advanced stages of cancer that was teeming through his jaw. One can only wonder whether, if he wasn't so busy, he might have gotten treatment or had noticed beforehand. But that wasn't Terry.

Terry cared about others. Terry lived to serve, and we just lost him last month. It is a sad tragedy, but Terry's legacy will be remembered.

We also have to honor with action, with real solutions. The shooter in this instance had a SIG Sauer MCX semi-automatic rifle, a weapon of war made for battlefields, not for a suburban nightclub, one that could do unspeakable carnage even before police could get on the scene.

There are things that are even more common ground than assault weapons bans. Our House passed a bipartisan universal background checks bill to make sure that, simply, those who aren't supposed to have guns don't get them. With giant loopholes for gun shows and private sales, this just doesn't make sense. It is time to pass it.

Also, the Charleston loophole, where we saw someone put a false address, and when the background check didn't come back, he automatically got his guns and shot up a church in Charleston.

It is time for action.

ADDRESSING SERIOUSNESS OF
SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAF-
FICKING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address a serious issue that affects millions of people around the world, to include many Americans: slavery and human trafficking. Despite major progress, many countries still struggle to define and understand human traffic operations and how to combat it.

Most of us assume that human trafficking transports people only internationally. In reality, the 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report showed that a majority of human trafficking survivors were identified in their countries of citizenship. While women and children may account for the majority of people trafficked, adolescent boys and men also have been victims of this modern-day slavery.

Everyone is vulnerable to human trafficking, women, children, foster youth, Native Americans, immigrant children, those with disabilities, and the LGBTQ community. That is why the public must be educated on human trafficking and reject the misconception that it can't or won't happen to them or someone they know.

While there is not an exact statistic on how many people are trafficked in the United States, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo assessed as many as 24.9 million people—adults and children—are trapped in this human form of modern slavery around the world, including our own country.

We may also assume trafficking occurs only in major cities like New York or Las Vegas, but it also happens in suburbs, rural areas, and on Tribal or farmland. In Nebraska, 900 individuals are being sold online for sex each month, and 75 percent of them are from just Omaha.

I am grateful for the steps Nebraska has taken to combat trafficking and protect survivors, but legislation can do only so much. Organizations such as the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of State have worked hard to fight this global issue and have been trained to locate and deter human trafficking.

I thank the Nebraska State Patrol, the sheriff departments, and local law enforcement for their diligent work in capturing traffickers and rescuing survivors. I thank the many nonprofit volunteer organizations that are dedicated to making a difference in combating this crime.

In honor of the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Month this past January, we must commit to work together to address this heinous crime and ensure that all are safe from exploitation.

BRINGING AWARENESS TO IMPORTANCE OF
MENTORING

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Mentoring

Month from this past January. As a member of the Youth Mentoring Caucus, I rise to bring awareness to the importance of supporting strategies and policies that enhance mentoring programs and increase the procurement of quality volunteer mentors.

Research has shown that mentoring relationships have positive effects on people's lives in so many ways. Mentoring reassures our youth that they are not alone in dealing with everyday challenges; creates opportunity for personal growth and development; and provides youth, especially those in foster care, with vital relationships, networks, and counseling services needed to navigate life and successfully transition into adulthood.

I know the power of mentorship firsthand. I joined the Air Force in 1985 after a faith-based mentor saw where my talents leaned, and I would never have been a five-time commander nor a general officer without thoughtful mentors.

In my district, MENTOR Nebraska has partnered with 26 Omaha public schools to implement a mentoring program called Success Mentors, which serves over 600 youth. Within the last 2 years, the percentage of mentored youth in North Omaha increased by 150 percent. In the last 5 years, the percentage of mentored juvenile justice youth increased by 250 percent. In addition to a number of positive benefits associated with increased mentorship, this program has shown an improvement in school attendance—by over 50 percent in one school alone.

Congress must partner and support State and local governments and nonprofits so they can continue to prioritize new ways and approaches for serving at-risk or disadvantaged youth and connect them with caring adults who will help them navigate life and be their support system.

That is why I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 3061, the Foster Youth Mentoring Act of 2019, which addresses the need for greater support of mentoring programs that serve youth in foster care by developing best practices and quality mentoring standards when searching for and hiring mentors.

I thank our Nation's mentors, who are actively strengthening our communities and making a difference in the educational, personal, and professional lives of today's youth. Additionally, I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to commit to improving our youth's outcomes and futures by supporting legislation like H.R. 3061.

RECOGNIZING GUN VIOLENCE
SURVIVORS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, this week, we recognize Gun Violence Survivors Week across our country. In my district alone, there

have been 331 gun-related deaths and 716 injuries, including seven mass shootings over the last 7 years.

There are two sides of the coin when it comes to ending gun violence. Implementing commonsense gun safety measures that a vast majority of Americans support must be our top priority. At the same time, we have to begin addressing the root cause of gun violence in our communities, which is a revolving door phenomenon. Victims of gun violence are caught up in the drug wars, the culture of retaliation, and disrespect.

In fact, the rate of violent reinjury at most of the Nation's trauma centers is as high as 45 percent. One of the leading risk factors for violent injury is prior violent injury.

While these victims are recuperating in the hospital, they are a captive audience. They are confined to bed, if only for a few days. This offers us a window of opportunity where we can offer support when they most need it.

I am in the process of finalizing bipartisan, bicameral legislation with my colleague Congressman KINZINGER from Illinois, and our measure creates a new grant program to provide the victims of gun violence, who often become repeat victims of predators themselves, with the resources they need to stop this vicious cycle. This might include bus money, clothes for a job interview, or some groceries. Often, victims need help finding an affordable apartment or getting off drugs.

Violence intervention programs, like the ones that our bill will support, work. They reduce recidivism and hospital readmissions, jail time, and unemployment. This is why my previously introduced bill was endorsed by organizations such as the NAACP, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the American College of Surgeons.

The University of Maryland's Shock Trauma Center has been rated the top trauma center in the world. They support our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. They do research as it relates to all sorts of trauma. Shock Trauma is led by Dr. Tom Scalea, with the great doctors, nurses, and aides who work in that great institution. They have implemented this program that I am talking about here today, and let me tell you, it works.

I am excited to reintroduce my bill so we can work on lowering the rates of firearm deaths throughout the country.

HONORING EDDIE BRIDGES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Eddie Bridges of Greensboro, North Carolina.

Members of Congress rarely get the opportunity to honor those who have truly dedicated their lives to the public good. That is because it is increasingly

rare to encounter those who are truly selfless, truly dedicated to a cause larger than themselves, and who truly care about preserving the best of our natural resources for future generations. Greensboro's Eddie Bridges is such a rare person.

Madam Speaker, Eddie is an unselfish leader whose love of the outdoors and sportsmen's community has led him to become one of the most effective conservation leaders in the history of North Carolina.

On behalf of North Carolina's congressional delegation, I want the world to know what an impact Eddie has made and to thank him in this official salute, which nobody has ever deserved more.

Madam Speaker, Eddie founded the North Carolina Wildlife Habitat Foundation, which raised \$5 million and has funded \$1.5 million in conservation projects across North Carolina.

□ 1045

Eddie has been the driving force behind wildlife resource improvements that will benefit future generations forever. Thanks to Eddie's persuasive abilities and creative thinking, he has recruited the State of North Carolina and others to join him—to the tune of millions of dollars in projects—to improve wildlife restoration, water quality, and habitats statewide.

Eddie's foundation has funded, for example, a quail habitat project in the Sandhills Game Land, a bass habitat project at Jordan Lake, a North Carolina State University black bear research project in Hyde County, and created the Frank A. Sharpe Junior Wildlife Education Center in Guilford County.

We can all thank Eddie Bridges for the idea to create the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission's Wildlife Endowment Fund, which currently has \$130 million in assets and has funded \$70 million for wildlife restoration and habitat improvements.

Madam Speaker, Eddie also helped create the State waterfowl stamp and State income tax checkoff for nongame and endangered wildlife, which together have raised \$10 million for nongame wildlife and waterfowl projects. The endowments founded by Eddie have raised more than \$200 million to preserve and improve our natural habitat areas.

Eddie served 12 years on the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission after being appointed by Governor Hunt. He has received top national awards, including the Field and Stream Conservation Hero of the Year Award, the Budweiser National Conservationist of the Year Award, the prestigious Feinstone Award, the Thomas L. Quay Wildlife Diversity Award, and the Chevron Conservation Award. Last year, Eddie was inducted into the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame.

But talk to Eddie and he will tell you these awards aren't about him; they are about his desire to give something

back. As Eddie said to the Wilmington Star-News last January: "It's about much more than me. It honors the 1 million men, women, and children who hunt and fish and inject more than \$1.3 billion into North Carolina's economy every year."

An accomplished athlete at Elon University, a leader in the sportsman community, and a hunter and angler legend, conservationist Eddie Bridges has made a positive impact on North Carolina's natural resources like no other before him.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the entire delegation, I wish to thank Eddie for his years of service, his incredible resource development to strengthen our State's wildlife, and the educational impact on our youth and future generations. It is truly an honor to know Eddie and to recognize him today.

PRESIDENT TRUMP HIGHLIGHTS NUMEROUS SUCCESSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, just over 12 hours ago, President Donald J. Trump stood in this Chamber and delivered an incredible State of the Union Address. He highlighted numerous successes during his time as President of the United States: Over 7 million jobs created;

Record unemployment—record unemployment—for five decades;

The lowest unemployment in over 70 years for women;

Record unemployment for African, Hispanic, and Asian Americans;

Doubling of the child tax credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000;

Orchestrating phase one of the China trade agreement, which increases the amount of agriculture products that the Chinese have to purchase from American farmers—the largest purchase in the history of our country;

Passing of the USMCA agreement. The President campaigned on it. It was a promise made. It was a promise kept;

The largest military pay raise in the history of this country.

The President said he was going to build a barrier along the southern border. He highlighted 100 miles of it being finished in his State of the Union Address yesterday, with 500 more miles still planned.

He highlighted how his administration has approved a record number of generic drugs, and, for the first time in over 50 years, drug prices have actually gone down.

He highlighted numerous successes that all Members of Congress who attended heard. It was unfortunate to sit in this Chamber and watch the Democrats on the other side not stand, not applaud for these successes for America, these victories for America, the people who sent us to Washington, the people we serve, the people who are our bosses. These are their victories. These

are their successes. But just because they came out of the mouth of President Donald Trump, the Democrats oppose them.

Folks, that is chaos in government.

Ever since the Democrats took control of this Chamber, they have had one mission, one mission alone, and that is to remove the duly elected 45th President of the United States, Donald J. Trump.

Their mission wasn't about lowering the cost of prescription drugs. Their mission was not getting government off the backs of small businesses, family farmers, and individuals. Their mission was about removing Donald Trump.

This partisan impeachment sham, this impeachment circus will be done today. In the United States Senate, President Donald J. Trump will be acquitted for life. You will see the process that happened in the House of Representatives was clearly a sham in impeaching the President of the United States.

It was so unfortunate yesterday to be sitting here and watching Speaker PELOSI, after the end of the speech, tear up the official speech of the President of the United States. That shows the true hatred that the Democrat socialists have for the President of the United States. That conduct is not fitting for the Speaker of the House.

When the Speaker tore up that State of the Union speech, she ripped up the words that recognized one of the last living serving Tuskegee airmen.

When she ripped up that speech, she ripped up the story of a 21-week-old surviving child who was born in a Kansas City, Missouri, hospital.

When she ripped up that State of the Union speech, she ripped up the story and the recognition of the families of Rocky Jones and Kayla Mueller.

RECOGNIZING MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD RECIPIENT MELISSA FIKE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, the prestigious Milken Educator Awards have been called the Oscars of teaching. I rise today to pay tribute to a resident of Missouri's Fourth District who was recently honored as one of the Milken Family Foundation's outstanding educators.

Melissa Fike of Oakland Middle School of Columbia, Missouri, has taught for 14 years and was not told ahead of time about her award. She was shocked to hear her name announced during a recent school assembly packed by Oakland Middle School students and staff.

As a winner, she receives an award, the recognition of her colleagues, and a check for \$25,000.

Teachers make an indelible mark on the lives of young people through their kind words, encouraging smiles, impartation of knowledge, or by helping

plant a seed that bears fruit in future years. Melissa Fike has distinguished herself and made an impact that will be felt for years to come.

Madam Speaker, I want to commend Melissa Fike on her great work making a difference in the lives of so many young people and congratulate her on this prestigious award.

RECOGNIZING MORRIS BURGER, FORMER PRESIDENT AND CEO OF BURGERS' SMOKEHOUSE

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, it is with great joy that I share news of Morris Burger, former president and CEO of Burgers' Smokehouse of California, Missouri, being inducted into the Meat Industry Hall of Fame.

After serving his country in the Army, Morris returned home to run the family business with the goal of producing the finest cured ham in the country. The business was extremely successful and expanded numerous times over recent decades to the point that its business orders now exceed 500,000 hams and tens of thousands of pounds of bacon, sausage, and specialty meats each year.

Morris retired in the 1990s, and the business is now run by the third and fourth generations of Burger family members.

Morris Burger has left a legacy to be proud of as Burgers' Smokehouse continues to epitomize quality, taste, and innovation, while playing an active role in the community and remaining an influential leader in the industry.

Congratulations, Morris Burger, for being inducted into the Meat Industry Hall of Fame, a well-deserved honor.

STOP DRUG SMUGGLING BY FILLING THE TUNNELS ASAP

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, last week, our U.S. Customs and Border Patrol agents announced the discovery of a highly sophisticated, illegal, 4,309-foot cross-border tunnel from Mexico into California built by the drug cartels.

Unfortunately, while the tunnel was first found in August of 2019, it will still take several months to close the tunnel as the agency completes a mandatory environmental review and a lengthy contractor bidding process.

In October of 2018, I visited the southern border and heard directly from Customs and Border Patrol agents in Arizona, and I heard a similar story.

The process of closing drug tunnels is arduous and time-consuming. It often takes 3 to 4 months to abate this threat. That is unacceptable.

Last year, I introduced H.R. 3968, the Eradicate Crossing of Illegal Tunnels Act, to address these problems.

This bill expedites the approval process by removing the unnecessary red tape currently preventing our CBP agents from addressing this critical vulnerability. It allows the Secretary of Homeland Security to waive the environmental review and for indefinite contracts to be secured so drug tunnels can be filled in a timely manner.

We need to ensure our Border Patrol agents have the tools necessary to effi-

ciently and effectively remove illegal access into our country, hurting our community with illegal drugs. It is time to pass this crucial legislation, and I call on my colleagues to support my bill.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize February as Career and Technical Education Month. Each year, this month highlights the benefits of a skills-based education and the valuable contributions that CTE students make to the American workforce and the American economy.

More specifically, February 2 through February 8 is SkillsUSA Week. SkillsUSA is a leader in the CTE movement. This annual celebration represents nearly 370,000 SkillsUSA members across the country who are developing the personal, workplace, and technical skills necessary to earn and keep good-paying and rewarding jobs.

A one-size-fits-all approach to education is not an effective way to prepare students for the workforce. We are doing students a great disservice when we only promote what is considered a traditional college experience.

When we look at the potential of our Nation's learners and contrast that with the 7 million unfilled jobs nationwide, clearly, there is a disconnect. This is often referred to as the skills gap, and CTE can help us bridge this divide.

Now, I have the privilege of serving as the co-chair of the bipartisan House Career and Technical Education Caucus alongside my colleague and good friend, Congressman JIM LANGEVIN.

Over the years, we have met with many educators, counselors, administrators, and students to better understand the resources necessary to support learners of all ages.

I am proud of the legislation that we have put forward to ensure students have the tools they need to pursue a rewarding education, and, eventually, a rewarding career.

With this kind of support, we can help empower students and better prepare them for a 21st century workforce. Most recently, that includes H.R. 5092, the Counseling for Career Choice Act, a bill that would invest in career counseling for high school students as well as professional development opportunities for the counselors who support them.

Career and technical education is not a plan B. It is a valuable educational option that is empowering learners of all ages to take control of their personal and professional futures.

To me, the ideal educational system is one that allows students to get in with as few barriers to entry as pos-

sible, get the education that they need, and get out. By providing students with a clear picture of what the workforce entails—or, more specifically, by investing in career and technical education—we can help make that a reality.

Madam Speaker, I am asking my colleagues to join me in celebrating Career and Technical Education Month by supporting the Counseling for Career Choice Act and other common-sense, bipartisan bills that help provide quality CTE opportunities to our Nation's students.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. SÁNCHEZ) at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi Seth Frisch, New Shul of America, Rydal, Pennsylvania, offered the following prayer:

Almighty, I stand before You in prayer and in memory as I am reminded of Solomon, King of ancient Israel, who would preside over a most unusual judicial hearing, one in which two mothers would lay claim to the life of one child, a child they each would insist to be their own.

This parable allows us to see Solomon's wisdom as preserving the nation, as we are sadly reminded, so soon after his death, that the kingdom is split asunder.

I, too, am reminded of Abraham Lincoln, when he spoke with prophetic-like prescience: "A house divided cannot stand," which was soon to become a war of brother against brother. From this we would soon learn that our future lies not in enmity, but in unity.

For, Lord, the Book of Leviticus, from Your Torah, teaches us in words inscribed upon the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land, to all of the inhabitants thereof," thus uniting one of our Nation's ideals, "e pluribus unum," out of the many, one.

Lord God, the Founders of this Nation understood our strength to be in the celebration of our differences while assiduously working to put our divisions behind us.

And so it is, Dear God, that we pray You remain with us. Continue to guide all of us in realizing the dream of this great country, to be a Nation indivisible, a Nation seeking liberty, and above all, a Nation providing liberty and justice to all.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAHOOD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING RABBI SETH FRISCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to welcome Rabbi Seth Frisch, who delivered today's opening prayer to the people's House.

Since his ordination in 1986, at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York, Rabbi Frisch has been a source of comfort and counsel to Jews around the world. In his current posting as rabbi and teacher of the New Shul of Philadelphia, Rabbi Frisch helps serve as a guide for those who want to learn more about what it means to be Jewish in a safe and supporting setting.

In a way, today's opening prayer was a homecoming for Rabbi Frisch, who previously served as a legislative assistant to the chairman of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

I pray that we will all heed his words today, that out of many, we are one Nation. Let us strive to put our divisions behind us and realize our dream of a country indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS WEEK

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of National Gun Violence Survivors Week, a time when we

remember the tragic and life-altering impact of the gun violence epidemic that continues to affect thousands of families across the country.

Every year, 36,000 Americans are killed by gun violence and 100,000 Americans are injured. In my city alone, an average of 765 people die of gun violence every year.

Too many families have been touched by this violence. Too many young people go to school afraid. Too many Americans live in fear.

Last night, the President's State of the Union only mentioned firearms once. And instead of presenting a plan, it defended the NRA.

We owe it to every survivor and to everyone who has been touched by gun violence to do more than hold a moment of science or post a hashtag on Twitter. We owe the American people real action.

PUNXSUTAWNEY PHIL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank one of the most productive, job-producing constituents in my district, Punxsutawney Phil.

Over the weekend, Punxsutawney Phil delivered us some good news: He predicted an early spring for the second year in a row.

But that is not the only good news. Groundhog Day draws tens of thousands of tourists to Jefferson County each year, which boosts revenue at local restaurants, hotels, and other small businesses.

Last week, activists claimed that Punxsutawney Phil should be replaced by an animatronic groundhog powered by artificial intelligence.

Well, I believe in creating jobs, not eliminating them. And Punxsutawney Phil is no exception. I will always stand up for the hardworking men, women, and rodents in the 15th District of Pennsylvania.

In all seriousness, Groundhog Day brings together people of all different backgrounds, and this fun family celebration reminds us of the importance of tradition. It is not only an economic stimulus in the district, but it is also a great source of pride.

GUN VIOLENCE IS AN EPIDEMIC

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

Mr. CARBAJAL. Madam Speaker, today, I rise because there is an epidemic in our country. One hundred Americans die every day from gun violence. We are 25 times more likely to die from guns than people who live in comparable nations.

Gun violence is personal to me. When I was a young boy, my sister took her

life with my father's revolver. In 2014, my community was devastated by the Isla Vista shooting that killed six people and left 14 injured.

I rise because there are commonsense solutions to curb this violent trend. One of those is my bipartisan Extreme Risk Protection Order Act of 2019, which will help ensure people who have demonstrated that they are at risk of hurting themselves or others temporarily don't have access to guns. The bill passed out of the committee. I now ask the House to bring this legislation to the floor.

The House has already sent two bipartisan background check bills to the Senate; yet, Senate Majority Leader MCCONNELL has not acted. There is no excuse.

I will continue to rise until we end this epidemic.

HIGHLIGHTING IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING THE SECOND AMENDMENT

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

Mr. BUDD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight the importance of protecting the Second Amendment to the Constitution.

In my district, Commissioners in Davidson, Davie, Iredell, and Rowan Counties in North Carolina recently passed resolutions that simply affirm the Second Amendment rights of their residents and declare that these counties will never participate in the infringement of those rights through unconstitutional gun control.

Anti-gun politicians in neighboring Virginia and other States are trying to undermine and overturn the Second Amendment. That is why these measures in my State are both necessary and timely.

I commend these counties, and I remain fully committed to defending the rights of responsible, law-abiding gun owners.

Madam Speaker, it is a people problem, not a device problem.

GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS WEEK

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

Mr. MORELLE. Madam Speaker, it pains me to stand before you today and recognize Gun Violence Survivors Week. As a Nation, we grieve for all the lives lost senselessly and all those who must live in the wake of these acts of horror.

This week alone, we have seen another school devastated by gun violence, another community uncertain how to move forward.

Our country is faced with a growing epidemic, and it is our responsibility as lawmakers to take action to protect our communities.

That is why I am proud to have joined Senator ELIZABETH WARREN, Congressman HANK JOHNSON, and a group of colleagues to introduce the Gun Violence Prevention and Community Safety Act.

This bold reform includes my bill to strengthen gun shop regulations and prevent the theft of legal firearms. Over 30 percent of guns used in a crime are identified as stolen, and every one we keep out of the hands of the wrong people is a step closer to a safer reality for our Nation. The time to act is now.

SUPPORTING MAGNET SCHOOLS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I am grateful to be recognized by the Magnet Schools of America as a Champion of Magnet School Excellence and to be a steadfast supporter of magnet schools. I appreciate that President Donald Trump's praising of magnet schools was included last night in the State of the Union.

Last week, I had the opportunity to visit Dutch Fork Elementary School Academy of Environmental Sciences, a magnet school in Irmo, South Carolina. Dutch Fork is one of many amazing examples of how magnet schools are important for academic excellence. I had the opportunity to meet with students and teachers and talk with them about their unique educational experiences.

I was thankful to talk with Katrina Goggins, the Director of Communications for District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties, Principal Julius Scott, Assistant Principal Brandon Gantt, School District Five Magnet Director Sara Wheeler, and Shirley Cope.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism with the courageous leadership of President Donald Trump.

HONORING THE UNBREAKABLE BOND OF MARK AND DAVID CARLES

(Mr. ROSE of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROSE of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mark and David Carles, two brothers with an unbreakable bond.

Ever since they were kids growing up on Staten Island, Mark and his older brother, David, have been absolutely inseparable. When Mark was diagnosed with a rare form of liver cancer in October of 2018, David postponed his baseball career to take care of his brother.

While Mark was using a breathing tube and unable to speak, the brothers communicated using sign language. After a life-threatening surgery, the first thing Mark did was sign David's name.

Mark is a talented runner who, with David's support, refused to let chemotherapy get in the way of his training, whether it was doing laps down hospital corridors or running around the dining room table.

The brothers have even encouraged their father, Sandy, to run with them as well. All three train for road races together. Mark recently finished the Staten Island Athletic Club 5K in under 24 minutes.

Mark and David, your deep commitment to one another is an inspiration to Staten Island, all of New York City, and all of America.

Mark, you are a fighter. You inspire your family, your friends, and all those who you fight for as well.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF METAMORA HIGH SCHOOL COACH PAT RYAN

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I rise today in the House to recognize and congratulate Metamora High School head football coach Pat Ryan, who has announced his retirement after 30 years at the helm of the program.

Over his 30-year tenure, Coach Ryan has led the Redbirds to seven championship games and two State titles. He retires with a record of 268-76, and a spot in the Illinois High School Football Hall of Fame.

Coach Ryan's greatness is known across central Illinois. His players love him. His students love him. Even his rivals love him, or at least love competing against him.

Not only is Coach Ryan a legend on the field, but his success off the field in modeling young men is unrivaled and unmatched. Coach Ryan coached thousands of students and left a profound impact on the lives of countless players. Many of his former players have become educators and coaches themselves and attribute their career paths to Coach Ryan's positive influence on their lives.

Congrats to Coach Ryan on his legendary career, both on and off the field. He has made our central Illinois community a better place, and he will be missed on Friday nights. I congratulate him on his Hall of Fame career.

Go Redbirds.

□ 1215

RECOGNIZING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, I urge every one of my colleagues to use Black History Month to celebrate the contributions of people who came to this hemisphere not of their own free

will—in chains, in bondage, and then helped to make this country great.

It is important that we not only recognize them and their contributions but their example of resilience:

Philip Reid, who as an enslaved man was responsible for casting the statue which sits atop this building, and as a free man supervised the installation of the Statue of Freedom; Maggie Walker, who became the first woman to preside over a savings institution, which during the Great Depression consolidated to become the Consolidated Bank and Trust, which still exists today; Ralph Bunche, an American diplomat fundamental to the creation and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights who later went on to be the first African American to win the Nobel Peace Prize for his negotiation efforts between Egypt and Israel; and William Leidesdorff of Saint Croix, master of shipping of vessels, rancher, gold miner, and one of the founders of San Francisco.

These Americans are quietly embedded in our Nation's history, but today, this month, we celebrate them, their work, and their dedication.

RECOGNIZING EINAR MAISCH

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Einar Maisch for his 34 years of service to the Placer County Water Agency. Water resiliency and infrastructure are pressing needs in northern California, and Einar has devoted his career to solving these critical issues.

As general manager, he worked to make PCWA the local leader in water rights by overseeing the clear and transparent budget process, increasing customer accessibility to the agency, and expanding its regional and national influence on water issues.

Throughout his long tenure, Einar has always prioritized the needs and interests of the customers and the community. His work will leave a lasting impact on water planning, resiliency, and management in northern California for decades come, and the north State is very thankful for all Einar has done.

Madam Speaker, I thank Einar, and I wish him the best of luck in his much-deserved and probably busier retirement. May he keep his knowledge and experience available to all of us.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS WEEK

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Gun Violence Survivors Week.

Every year, roughly 36,000 Americans are killed from gun violence. This is an

average of 100 Americans every single day. Also, there are close to 100,000 Americans injured every year from gun violence, yet we do very little to prevent these preventable injuries and deaths.

I am proud to come from a State with effective gun laws. In New Jersey, we have strong background checks, a ban on high-capacity magazines, and an extreme risk protection order for possible victims. That is why New Jersey has one of the lowest firearm death rates in America. If we had national laws such as the ones in New Jersey, we could save lives and spare families the hurt and horrors of gun violence.

HELPING VETERANS WITH TRAINED SERVICE DOGS

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

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Madam Speaker, for far too long, we have failed to serve veterans struggling with the invisible wounds of war, veterans who nearly gave everything to us.

From veterans who served in Vietnam and Korea to those who have recently returned home from Afghanistan and Iraq, Congress has done too little to curb the often-devastating effect post-traumatic stress can have in the lives of the brave men and women who served our Nation in combat.

That is why I am proud today to rise in support of my colleague Representative STEVE STIVERS' bipartisan bill, which will help veterans in the Lowcountry and across this Nation manage the symptoms of post-traumatic stress by pairing them with trained service dogs.

With the help of a service dog, many veterans with severe post-traumatic stress are able to return to work, attend college, and spend more meaningful time with their families and their loved ones. The brave men and women who voluntarily raised their right hands and swore an oath to defend our Nation deserve nothing less than the opportunity to succeed when they return home.

The PAWS Act is a critical step in the right direction. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this bipartisan legislation.

AMERICANS WILL JUDGE

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

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, "I solemnly swear that in all things appertaining to the trial of the impeachment of Donald John Trump, President of the United States, now pending, I will do impartial justice according to the Constitution and laws."

That is the oath Senators swore on January 16. It is the oath created by Senators when they tried the first im-

peachment of a President in 1868. It is an oath rooted in the Revolution fought by their grandparents to create a republic of laws, not kings. It is an oath whose power derives from its common sense: that a juror must always be impartial for a trial to be fair. And it is an oath made necessary by the fact that Senators are not, as we are not, under normal circumstances, impartial in our work.

The words chosen for this oath recognize that when our Constitution calls Senators to try impeachment, it calls them away from their role as partisans. When that oath is taken, Senators are supposed to step back from the affiliation of party or political kinship with or opposition to the President on trial. They are required, as the oath plainly states, to "do impartial justice according to the Constitution and laws."

Madam Speaker, this afternoon, Senators will be asked to vote on the two Articles of Impeachment the House presented on abuse of power and the obstruction of Congress. After voting to refuse to hear evidence and call witnesses with pertinent information, nearly all Republican Senators have already announced that they will vote against the articles.

In doing so, many of them acknowledge that what President Trump did was wrong and inappropriate. They accept that it was wrong for him to withhold military aid to Ukraine until the President of that country promised to interfere in the American elections.

The evidence of President Trump's abuse of power and attempt to solicit foreign interference in the 2020 elections is clear enough that Republican Senators cannot and have not denied the facts, yet they cannot bring themselves to confront this President and are choosing party over country.

The Senator from Alaska, in explaining her decision to vote to block witnesses and evidence, tried to deflect responsibility from the consequences of her actions, writing: "I have come to the conclusion that there will be no fair trial in the Senate." I agree with that. She further said: "It is sad for me today to admit that, as an institution, the Congress has failed."

Madam Speaker, the Congress has not failed. The House did its job, whether you agree or not. In regular order, by a vote of this House, we impeached the President of the United States based upon our oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.

The House did its job and did so with the solemnity required when undertaking the process of impeachment, which we did not seek but accepted as our responsibility under the Constitution. We held hearings, called witnesses, and subpoenaed documents. Many of the witnesses and documents, of course, were withheld by the White House.

It is the Senate that will fail if Senators do not uphold their oaths to im-

partial justice. It is the Senate, Madam Speaker, that will fail if it does not hold this President accountable for using a hold on military aid to compel an ally to interfere in our election for his own personal gain.

History will judge poorly those who choose fear of their party over the courage to do the right thing. Neither the Speaker nor myself, nor the whip, JIM CLYBURN, urged any member in our party to vote any way on impeachment. There was no lobbying. There was no pressure. Our members voted consistent with their oath of office and the conviction that that vote was required by that oath to protect and defend the Constitution.

Americans will judge. I am often asked why the House passed Articles of Impeachment even knowing that the odds were slim that Senate Republicans would set aside partisanship and hear the case as impartial jurors. It is because I know future generations will look back on this chapter in our history and ask: Who stood up for the Constitution and the laws? Who stood up for the values our Founders charged us to keep? Who refused to shrink from the heavy responsibilities of their oath? I can be proud that the House did its job, followed the law, defended our Constitution.

We did not convict; that is not our role. Essentially, what we said was there was probable cause that powers had been abused and certainly cause to see that the President refused to cooperate with the constitutional responsibilities of the House of Representatives.

I am also proud of the House managers, as all of my colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle are proud of our managers who made their case. They made their case with intellect. They made their case with evidence that had been adduced here in the House. They made their case and appealed to Senators to hold this President accountable, as our Founders intended.

Almost everybody has watched a trial either in person or on television. A trial is not an opening argument and a closing argument with nothing in between. Seventy-five percent of our people wanted to have witnesses because that was their understanding of what a trial is, not just argument at the beginning and argument at the end, but evidence for jurors who have pledged to be impartial to consider. Any judge in this country would agree that opening and closing statements alone are not a trial.

Nevertheless, the House managers proved their case. The truth is clear. The American people know what that truth is and know what this President has done. And they will remember who on this day abided by the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

PUPPIES ASSISTING WOUNDED
SERVICEMEMBERS FOR VET-
ERANS THERAPY ACT

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4305) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on dog training therapy, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4305

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 “Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers for Veterans Therapy Act” or the “PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) According to the analyses of veteran suicide published by the Department of Veterans Affairs in August 2016 and titled “Suicide Among Veterans and Other Americans”, and in June 2018, titled “VA National Suicide Date Report”—

(A) an average of 20 veterans died by suicide each day in 2014;

(B) mental health disorders, including major depression and other mood disorders, have been associated with increased risk for suicide;

(C) since 2001, the proportion of users of the Veterans Health Administration with mental health conditions or substance use disorders has increased from approximately 27 percent in 2001 to more than 40 percent in 2014; and

(D) overall, suicide rates are highest among patients with mental health and substance use disorder diagnoses who are in treatment and lower among those who received a mental health diagnosis but were not at risk enough to require enhanced care from a mental health provider.

(2) The Department of Veterans Affairs must be more effective in its approach to reducing the burden of veteran suicide connected to mental health disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder (in this section referred to as “PTSD”), and new, rigorous scientific research provides persuasive weight to the growing anecdotal evidence that service dogs ameliorate the symptoms associated with PTSD, and in particular, help prevent veteran suicide.

(3) Several organizations have proven track records of training service dogs for veterans with severe PTSD and dramatically improving those veterans’ quality of life, ability to re-enter society, and, most importantly, their chances of survival.

**SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
PILOT PROGRAM ON DOG TRAINING
THERAPY.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of the Act, subject to the availability of ap-

propriations, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program under which the Secretary shall make grants to one or more appropriate non-government entities for the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of addressing post-deployment mental health and post-traumatic stress disorder (in this section referred to as “PTSD”) symptoms through a therapeutic medium of training service dogs for veterans with disabilities.

(b) DURATION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—The pilot program required by subsection (a) shall be carried out during the five-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(c) CONDITIONS ON RECEIPT OF GRANTS.—As a condition of receiving a grant under this section, a non-government entity shall—

(1) submit to the Secretary certification that the entity is an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that—

(A) provides service dogs to veterans with PTSD; and

(B) is accredited by, or adheres to standards comparable to those of, an accrediting organization with demonstrated experience, national scope, and recognized leadership and expertise in the training of service dogs and education in the use of service dogs;

(2) agree to cover all costs in excess of the grant amount;

(3) agree to reaccept or replace the service dog the organization provided to the veteran, if necessary, as determined by the organization and the veteran;

(4) provide a wellness certification from a licensed veterinarian for any dog participating in the program;

(5) employ at least one person with clinical experience related to mental health;

(6) ensure that veterans participating in the pilot program receive training from certified service dog training instructors for a period of time determined appropriate by the organization and the Secretary, including service skills to address or alleviate symptoms unique to veterans’ needs;

(7) agree to provide both lectures on service dog training methodologies and practical hands-on training and grooming of service dogs;

(8) agree that in hiring service dog training instructors to carry out training under the pilot program, the non-government entity will give a preference to veterans who have successfully graduated from PTSD or other residential treatment program and who have received adequate certification in service dog training;

(9) agree not to use shock collars or prong collars as training tools and to use positive reinforcement training;

(10) agree that upon the conclusion of training provided using the grant funds—

(A) the veteran who received the training will keep the dog unless the veteran and the veteran’s health provider decide it is not in the best interest of the veteran;

(B) if the veteran does not opt to own the dog, the entity will be responsible for caring for and appropriately placing the dog;

(C) the Department of Veterans Affairs will have no additional responsibility to provide for any benefits under this section; and

(D) the Department of Veterans Affairs will have no liability with respect to the dog;

(11) provide follow-up support service for the life of the dog, including a contact plan between the veteran and the entity to allow the veteran to reach out for and receive adequate help with the service dog and the organization to communicate with the veteran to ensure the service dog is being properly cared for; and

(12) submit to the Secretary an application containing such information, certification,

and assurances as the Secretary may require.

(d) VETERAN ELIGIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For the purposes of this section, an eligible veteran is a veteran who—

(A) is enrolled in the patient enrollment system in the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code;

(B) has been recommended for the pilot program under this section by a qualified health care provider or clinical team based on the medical judgment that the veteran may potentially benefit from participating; and

(C) agrees to successfully complete training provided by an eligible organization that receives a grant under this section.

(2) RELATIONSHIP TO PARTICIPATION IN OTHER PROGRAM.—Veterans may participate in the pilot program in conjunction with the compensated work therapy program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(3) CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT.—To remain eligible to participate in the program, a veteran shall see the health care provider or clinical team of the Department of Veterans Affairs treating the veteran for PTSD at least once every six months to determine, based on a clinical evaluation of efficacy, whether the veteran continues to benefit from the program.

(e) COLLECTION OF DATA.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall—

(1) develop metrics and other appropriate means to measure, with respect to veterans participation in the program, the improvement in psychosocial function and therapeutic compliance of such veterans and changes with respect to the dependence on prescription narcotics and psychotropic medication of such veterans;

(2) establish processes to document and track the progress of such veterans under the program in terms of the benefits and improvements noted as a result of the program; and

(3) in addition, the Secretary shall continue to collect these data over the course of five years for each veteran who has continued with the dog he or she has personally trained.

(f) GAO BRIEFING AND STUDY.—

(1) BRIEFING.—Not later than one year after the date of the commencement of the pilot program under subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall provide to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a briefing on the methodology established for the program.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the program terminates, the Comptroller General shall submit to the committees specified in paragraph (1) a report on the program. Such report shall include an evaluation of the approach and methodology used for the program with respect to—

(A) helping veterans with severe PTSD return to civilian life;

(B) relevant metrics, including reduction in metrics such as reduction in scores under the PTSD check-list (PCL-5), improvement in psychosocial function, and therapeutic compliance; and

(C) reducing the dependence of participants on prescription narcotics and psychotropic medication.

(g) DEFINITION.—For the purposes of this section, the term “service dog training instructor” means an instructor who provides the direct training of veterans with PTSD and other post-deployment issues in the art and science of service dog training and handling.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID P. ROE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 4305, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1230

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers for Veterans Therapy Act, otherwise known as the PAWS Act, introduced by Representative STIVERS of Ohio.

This bill has more than 300 cosponsors, which put it on the Consensus Calendar. It reflects this Chamber's desire to pass legislation addressing veterans' mental health, which I strongly support.

The bill calls for the VA to establish a 5-year pilot program to make grants available to appropriate nongovernmental entities "for the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of addressing post-deployment mental health and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms through a therapeutic medium of training service dogs for veterans with disabilities."

Mr. Speaker, I think everyone in this room today can agree that dogs—and animals, more broadly speaking—make great companions. In fact, in 2018, Americans spent \$72 billion on their pets. Years of research have illustrated numerous positive health outcomes, such as lowering blood pressure.

I intend to vote "yes" on this bill; however, I do have concerns about this bill becoming law before VA's study examining the possible therapeutic benefits of veterans with PTSD receiving either a service dog or an emotional support dog is complete.

Service dogs and emotional support dogs are very different, and it is important that we understand the efficacy of providing veterans with PTSD with either type of dog. Relying on the dog for companionship is far different than using dogs as a form of behavioral health treatment.

Mr. Speaker, like any other treatment, therapy, or pharmaceutical provided to veterans, research must be performed so informed policy and treatment decisions can be made. A draft monograph outlining VA's findings is complete and currently undergoing peer review by the National Academy of Sciences. The VA anticipates having a final report to Congress not later than the end of July 2020.

Before this bill was placed on the Consensus Calendar, I had hoped to wait to have the findings of this study so that we could properly review and mark up this legislation, ensuring veterans receive effective, evidence-based treatments for PTSD.

Mr. Speaker, we are passing this legislation without scientific evidence supporting the effectiveness of service dogs for the treatment of PTSD. However, I support this bill because its placement on the Consensus Calendar reflects the will of the Members of this Chamber, and years of research have shown positive health outcomes related to owning dogs for companionship.

When we receive the study, I intend to work with our Senate colleagues to improve and strengthen this legislation so that we can ensure veterans diagnosed with PTSD receive effective treatments.

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

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4305, as amended, the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers for Veterans Therapy Act, or the PAWS Act.

This bill is sponsored by Congressman STEVE STIVERS from Ohio. STEVE is a brigadier general in the Army National Guard, where he wore our Nation's uniform for over three decades of service in Ohio and overseas in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Needless to say, he knows firsthand the toll that military service can take and the need to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs is equipped to provide our veterans with all the services and supports that they need to not only recover from their wounds of war, but to lead healthy, full, and meaningful lives as civilians. The PAWS Act would provide VA with an additional tool to accomplish that goal by providing grants to organizations to assist veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health challenges through service dog training.

Veterans participating in the program would be paired with a prospective service dog and work with a qualified service dog training instructor to train the dog as a certified service animal. At the conclusion of the training, if the veteran and the veteran's provider agree that it is in the best interests of the veteran, the veteran will be able to keep their dog, or it would be paired with another veteran in need.

The grant program that the PAWS Act would create is based on service dog training therapy programs at Walter Reed National Medical Center in Maryland and the Palo Alto VA Medical Center in California. Both of those programs are well established and have shown remarkably positive anecdotal outcomes for servicemembers and veterans who have gone through them.

It won't come as a surprise to any dog owner—me, included—that the

companionship and unconditional love offered by man's best friend has a powerful real-world healing effect. The old saying is, in Washington, "if you want a friend, get a dog." I am glad that this program will expand that effort as well as the unique assistance that trained service dogs provide to more of our Nation's heroes.

This bill is cosponsored by 321 of our House colleagues, a tremendous bipartisan show of support that is reflective of the desire of this body to care for those who have borne the battles and are struggling with invisible injuries as a result.

I am grateful to General STEVE STIVERS for his hard work getting this bill to the House floor today, and I am happy to support it.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Ms. SHERRILL), my good friend.

Ms. SHERRILL. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman TAKANO for yielding.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4305, the PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act. This important bipartisan legislation will create a pilot program within the Department of Veterans Affairs to give veterans access to treatment derived from working with service dogs.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the gentleman from Ohio, Representative STIVERS, for his tireless leadership on this legislation. I deeply appreciate his dedication to our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Speaker, thousands of veterans, between 11 and 20 percent, experience post-traumatic stress disorder. Too many of the men and women who serve our country return home with unseen trauma that can make it hard to carry out daily activities, like going to work or going to school. We owe it to our veterans to make sure that they have the resources they need to recover.

In November, I had the opportunity to spend some time with a Vietnam veteran named Walter Parker and his service dog, Jackson. Walter shared how his partnership with Jackson has dramatically improved his life. Jackson helps Walter participate in activities that we all take for granted, like going to the movies or the grocery store. Their bond has been instrumental in Walter's continuing recovery.

His story is not unique. Researchers, doctors, and veterans, themselves, all report the same thing: Service dogs soothe the invisible wounds of war.

Under the PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act, the VA will partner with non-profit organizations working with veterans and service dogs to create work-therapy programs that help veterans learn the art and science of training dogs. After completing the program, the veterans may adopt their dogs to provide continued therapy.

Mission-based therapy has been proven to be a successful means of treating PTSD, and this legislation will enable

more veterans to access the care that service dogs can provide.

Mr. Speaker, Walter and Jackson and countless other vets and their service dogs are proof that this therapy works. We owe it to our veterans to explore creative ways to help them after they have given so much to our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important and innovative legislation and give veterans the treatment they need and deserve.

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I do want to give a shout-out to former Congressman Ron DeSantis, now Governor Ron DeSantis of Florida, who championed this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS), my good friend.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID P. ROE) for yielding time.

This bill is, indeed, a blending of a bill that Governor DeSantis had in the last Congress and a bill we had in the last Congress, and we now have 321 cosponsors on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, our servicemembers returning from war sometimes have invisible wounds. I served as a battalion commander in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and soldiers under my command came back with post-traumatic stress and, indeed, some even with traumatic brain injury.

All too often, we see the links between military service and mental health conditions, including post-traumatic stress, as well as traumatic brain injury and even suicide.

Mr. Speaker, we lose 20 veterans a day to suicide. Congress has to work to address that situation. Mental health and the suicide epidemic that are facing veterans can't be solved with a single solution, but it is important we look at this comprehensively and come up with as many building blocks as we can to address this crisis. That is why I introduced the PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act, which is based on clinical evidence from Kaiser Permanente and Purdue University.

The PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act would establish a pilot program in the Department of Veterans Affairs authorizing the Secretary to give grants to local service dog training organizations so that they can work with veterans, and veterans can receive training to train service dogs and also end up with a service dog if it is appropriate for them.

This effort has been 10 years in the making, and it is time that we actually bring it to a conclusion. I am grateful that so many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle support it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give a special thanks to Representative KATHLEEN RICE, my lead Democrat cosponsor, and the many other folks who worked on this bill. I also want to thank the majority leader, STENY HOYER, for bringing it to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, 321 Members of Congress don't agree on a lot, but they

agree we have got to address the problem of veteran suicide and give access to veterans to service dogs if the veterans have post-traumatic stress.

There is a Senate bill. This bill passed the House 2 years ago. My version of the bill passed the House 2 years ago but died in the Senate. There is now a Senate version with Senator TILLIS, Senator SINEMA, Senator FISCHER, and Senator FEINSTEIN. It is bipartisan. I am hopeful they will get that done in quick order here. We owe it to these veterans to give creative solutions to treat their mental health and their anxiety issues.

Since it was brought up, I do want to mention that this VA study was authorized in the 2010 National Defense Authorization Act. It is 2020. That is 10 years. In that time, it was started, studied for 4 years, halted, then it began again. It has been delayed three times, and now they say it may be out in June. I am hopeful that it is, but we can't wait any longer. Our veterans can't wait any longer.

In the interim, this has been studied at Purdue University and Kaiser Permanente, and the studies were conclusive: The efficacy of service dogs works. The results are undisputed. There is less anxiety. These veterans are on fewer drugs. There is a lower incidence of suicide.

We can't wait any longer to address this crisis. We must pass this bill today.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I urge them to support H.R. 4305.

God bless our veterans. It is time we give them the help they need.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. SLOTKIN), my good friend.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act. I am incredibly proud to be coleading this bipartisan bill to connect veterans with service dogs in their communities and improve outcomes for veterans' mental health and well-being.

There are two amazing organizations in Livingston County in my district that train dogs and place them with veterans in need: Veteran Service Dogs in Howell, Michigan, and Blue Star Service Dogs in Pinckney.

In December, I had the chance to visit Blue Star Service Dogs for myself. It was incredible to see these dogs in action and hear directly from veterans about how service dogs are helping them heal from depression, PTSD, and so many other invisible service-related wounds.

Both organizations are doing amazing work for veterans in our community, and I want to salute them.

This bill before us today sets up a pilot program through the VA to partner with local nonprofits, just like the ones in my district, to create work-therapy programs for veterans to help expand the number of veterans who can access the benefits of training and adopting a service dog.

This issue is particularly personal to me. I am an Army wife. I am married to a 30-year Army officer, an Apache pilot. I have a step-daughter currently on Active Duty, a son-in-law on Active Duty, and my other step-daughter is a physician at the VA.

While we make the decision to send men and women to fight for our country, we make the decision to support them for the rest of their lives. That is a nonpartisan responsibility, and it couldn't be more clear or more urgent, especially as we recognize the staggering rate of suicide in the veteran community.

□ 1245

Every day, an average of 17 veterans are victims of suicide. Think about that. Within the community of veterans that served in Iraq and Afghanistan, more veterans have been lost to suicide than to combat, which is both devastating and unacceptable.

The PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act will have a real impact on improving the well-being of our veterans. All you need to do is talk to a veteran suffering from depression or PTSD to understand what adopting a dog does for their lives.

I am incredibly proud of what this bill represents: a group of Democrats and Republicans finding an area of strong common ground and pushing legislation to a vote that could have significant impact.

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. JOHN W. ROSE), my good friend and fellow colleague.

Mr. JOHN W. ROSE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers for Veterans Therapy Act, or PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act.

I thank the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee for yielding me this time and for his service to the good people of Tennessee.

I also wholeheartedly thank Representative STIVERS for approaching me about cosponsoring this outstanding policy proposal. His leadership on this issue is truly appreciated by me, but more importantly, by America's veterans.

While we are enjoying a time of unparalleled economic growth in my lifetime, a safer and more secure Nation, and 243 years of enduring freedom made possible in no small part by the sacrifice of our servicemembers, we also live in a time when approximately 20 veterans are lost to suicide every day.

This heartbreaking reality calls us to action. Research has demonstrated the powerful effect of service dogs in the lives of those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. These loyal companions have been shown to lead to stronger mental health, greater purpose in life, and renewed hope.

Today, I stand up for our veterans in Tennessee and all of our veterans across the country who would find support from PAWS. I invite my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to

join us in supporting our veterans and vote for the PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act.

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

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WALTZ), an Army veteran from Florida's Sixth Congressional District.

Mr. WALTZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of this important legislation, H.R. 4305, the PAWS Act.

As a combat veteran, I have personally relied on service dogs in battle. We all recently witnessed the important role that service dogs play in combat roles and in national security when we saw Conan, the Belgian Malinois, who participated in the raid that killed ISIS leader al-Baghdadi. Service dogs also play an important role in transitioning veterans back to civilian life.

There is no denying these connections. The support they provide our veterans puts that connection on an entirely different level of importance. Many of our veterans return back from their service not the same as when they left, and I can personally attest to that.

They have three bad choices: either they don't come home, they come home missing limbs, or they certainly come home—when you have been in combat—different mentally than when they left.

These invisible wounds often make life very difficult for our veterans who have served. We owe them. The least we can do is to provide a full menu of options to their medical providers when they need help, whether those are medicines, whether those are unconventional treatments like hyperbaric chambers, or whether they are service dogs. That should be one of the options that our providers can provide.

I had the personal opportunity to meet with several veterans who have benefited from these service animals in my district last year and their stories were just incredible.

The common theme amongst all of them was that they either completely eliminated or drastically reduced the amount of medication that they were on as a result of PTSD, depression, and anxiety.

Almost all of these veterans who had service dogs in their lives not only reduced their medications, but they got out more and they socialized more. The dog served as an important and positive forcing function in their lives.

I think this legislation is long overdue. This is long overdue for the VA to provide. I love the fact that it engages our veteran service organizations like K9s for Warriors which is just north of my district in St. Johns County, and others.

These dogs can be life changing, and they have been life changing, and they should continue to be, and they should be provided by us, by our society that owes these vets so much.

Our veterans deserve to live happy lives after their service, and we should do everything that we can to ensure their well-being. I urge my colleagues to pass this important bill.

I thank my colleagues Representative ROE and Representative STIVERS for their leadership, and we all should let them know and let these veterans know that we have their six and the House of Representatives stands with them on their path to healing.

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

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time, as I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this needed legislation and I associate my remarks with what Mr. WALTZ just stated.

Anyone who has ever had the joy—as I have through my entire life—to have those animals associated with you knows how uplifting and helpful it can be to these people. As has been mentioned many times, we have not been making a dent in our suicide rate, and it is time to start thinking out of the box.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

I ask my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 4305, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4305, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROTECT AND RESTORE AMERICA'S ESTUARIES ACT

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4044) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the National Estuary 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. 4044

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 "Protect and Restore America's Estuaries Act".

SEC. 2. MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE.

Section 320(a)(2)(B) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(a)(2)(B)) is amended by striking "and Peconic Bay, New York" and inserting "Peconic Bay, New York; Casco Bay, Maine; Tampa Bay, Florida; Coastal Bend, Texas; San Juan Bay,

Puerto Rico; Tillamook Bay, Oregon; Piscataqua Region, New Hampshire; Barnegat Bay, New Jersey; Maryland Coastal Bays, Maryland; Charlotte Harbor, Florida; Mobile Bay, Alabama; Morro Bay, California; and Lower Columbia River, Oregon and Washington".

SEC. 3. PURPOSES OF CONFERENCE.

Section 320(b)(4) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(b)(4)) is amended—

(1) by striking "management plan that recommends" and inserting "management plan that—

"(A) recommends"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(B) addresses the effects of recurring extreme weather events on the estuary, including the identification and assessment of vulnerabilities in the estuary and the development and implementation of adaptation strategies; and

"(C) increases public education and awareness of the ecological health and water quality conditions of the estuary;"

SEC. 4. MEMBERS OF CONFERENCE.

Section 320(c)(5) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(c)(5)) is amended by inserting "nonprofit organizations," after "educational institutions,".

SEC. 5. GRANTS.

Section 320(g)(4)(C) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(g)(4)(C)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(A) by inserting "emerging," after "urgent"; and

(B) by striking "coastal areas" and inserting "the estuaries selected by the Administrator under subsection (a)(2), or that relate to the coastal resiliency of such estuaries";

(2) by redesignating clauses (vi) and (vii) as clauses (viii) and (ix), respectively, and inserting after clause (v) the following:

"(vi) stormwater runoff;

"(vii) accelerated land loss;" and

(3) in clause (viii), as so redesignated, by inserting "extreme weather," after "sea level rise".

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 320(i)(1) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(i)(1)) is amended by inserting "and \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026," after "2021".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 4044, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to lead this bipartisan reauthorization of the National Estuary Program, a successful nonregulatory program to improve the water quality and ecological integrity of our Nation's estuaries, a program with a long history of support on both sides of the aisle.

Estuaries are extraordinarily productive ecosystems where fresh water from rivers and streams mixes with salt-water from the ocean.

In my district in my home State of New Jersey, the New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program encompasses some 250 square miles of open water, including parts of the Raritan, Rahway, Elizabeth, and Hackensack Rivers.

My bill, the Protect and Restore America's Estuaries Act, makes several important improvements to this program. First, it nearly doubles funding for the program's 28 estuaries of national significance, including the New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program.

It ensures that management plans governing nationally significant estuaries consider the effects of recurring extreme weather events and that they develop and implement appropriate adaptation strategies. It expands eligibility for grants under the program to organizations working to address stormwater runoff, coastal resiliency, and accelerated land loss issues.

It requires the NEP management, the regional conferences that are part of the NEP, to develop and implement strategies to increase local awareness about the ecological health and water quality of estuaries.

It is hard to overstate just how important estuaries are to the broader marine ecology. They are sometimes referred to as the nurseries of the sea because of the vast and diverse array of marine animals that spend the early parts of their lives in them, with their calm waters providing a safe habitat for smaller birds and other animals, as well as for spawning and nesting.

Further, estuaries act as stopover sites for migratory animals including ducks, geese, and salmon. They filter out pollutants from rivers and streams before they flow into the ocean, and they protect inland areas from flooding, with their broad and shallow waters able to absorb sudden storm surges.

They are the natural infrastructure that protects human communities from flooding. And of course, they also help the economies of every community that relies on fishing and tourism and recreation.

So it is my privilege to play a role in protecting and strengthening these critical ecosystems and in preserving the natural beauty of my State of New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Congressman GRAVES for teaming up with me on this bill. Congressman GRAVES is a long-time champion for the estuarine system in his district, and I am glad to partner with him.

I want to thank Congresswoman NAPOLITANO for her leadership of the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee. I want to thank Congresswoman FLETCHER for her support

as an original cosponsor, and Congressman LARSEN for making the bill even stronger, as well as more than two dozen of my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans alike, who have cosponsored this bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support as well of H.R. 4044, the Protect and Restore American's Estuary Act.

I also want to thank my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) for introducing this legislation; our chairwoman, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. GRAVES, and everybody who has worked on this outstanding bill that we want to see move forward here that has moved forward so many other times.

H.R. 4044, reauthorizes the National Estuary Program which focuses on estuaries of national significance across the Nation, including one in my own backyard, very literally, the Indian River Lagoon, the heart and soul of my district.

Estuaries are not just critical natural habitats that provide enormous economic benefits, but they are a part of our way of life for those of us who live anywhere near them or around them. They are where we go fishing, where we see our children recreate and wade in the waters. It is where we see dolphin and manatee. That is where we see people spend their summers, travel to come see the blue waters and the fish and everything else that thrives in those ecosystems.

The National Estuary Program is pivotal to the preservation of these very unique ecosystems, and it provides an enormous return on the taxpayer's investment. On average, the estuary program raises \$19 for every \$1 provided by the Environmental Protection Agency.

It is because of this and many other reasons that I see on a day-to-day basis with the estuaries in my backyard that I want to urge support of this legislation.

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

□ 1300

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. LARSEN).

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4044, the Protect and Restore America's Estuaries Act, a bipartisan piece of legislation to reauthorize and improve the National Estuary Program, the NEP. I thank Representative MALINOWSKI for his leadership on preserving our Nation's estuaries as well.

Puget Sound, where I am from, is the largest estuary by water volume in the contiguous United States, and the waters and wildlife that call it home are one of the cornerstones of north-west Washington's environment, culture, and maritime economy.

As co-chair of the Congressional Estuary Caucus, I strongly support ef-

forts to ensure robust Federal investment in the National Estuary Program and its vital projects, which is why I am proud and very pleased to support the Protect and Restore America's Estuaries Act. This critical legislation reauthorizes the National Estuary Program through fiscal year 2026 and increases funding for this critical program to \$50 million annually.

H.R. 4044 also includes language I authored making clear that NEP competitive funds must be allocated for NEP-listed estuaries or projects that relate to these estuaries' coastal resiliency. This will help ensure that the Environmental Protection Agency follows congressional intent for NEP dollars to support local estuary restoration projects.

I look forward to voting for H.R. 4044 to ensure local communities across the country can continue their work to protect and restore estuaries.

On a related note, I also want to rise in support of the PUGET SOS Act, which will be considered later today. Introduced by my colleagues in the Washington delegation, Representatives HECK and KILMER, this bill will improve and expand Federal engagement in Puget Sound recovery efforts.

At a time when the impacts of climate change threaten coastal communities throughout the Pacific Northwest and the U.S., endanger iconic species such as the southern resident killer whale, and decimate critical habitats, federal engagement and investment in estuary restoration must be a priority.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN).

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman MAST for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4044, the Protect and Restore America's Estuaries Act, of which I am a proud cosponsor.

The National Estuary Program is an initiative committed to protecting and restoring the water quality and ecological integrity of 28 estuaries across the country, including the San Juan Bay Estuary Program in my congressional district.

This estuary is the only tropical estuary in the program and the only one outside the continental U.S. It also provides habitat to 160 species of birds, 200 species of wetland plants, 124 species of fish, and 20 species of amphibians and reptiles, including endangered animals such as the Antillean manatee and the hawksbill and leatherback turtles.

The San Juan Bay annually receives 80 percent of imports for Puerto Rico through docks and ports throughout the system, playing a crucial role for the island's economy. Last year alone, the estuary received 9.5 million visitors, numbers only expected to increase as the island recovers from past hurricanes. The estuary aids in flood

prevention for the island's metropolitan area, which is located within the boundaries of the estuary.

I thank the chairman and the ranking member for bringing this bill forward. Of course, I am going to be for it, and I think it is a great initiative not just to protect but also care for all our wetlands in the Nation.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO.)

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) for H.R. 4044, the reauthorization of the very popular National Estuary Program, or NEP. It allows more proactive measures to be eligible under the program.

The strong bipartisan support this bill has received is evidence of its widespread popularity and success. I am very pleased that several members of this committee have all cosponsored the bill. The bill represents the commitment to our coastal areas and the vital role they play in economic drivers, natural water filters, and protection from flooding events.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge the EPA and States to work together to designate more national estuaries that can be eligible for this program, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill, H.R. 4044.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4044 will have a profound impact on districts across America. That is a fact. It is why I am here to support it today. It includes my own district, by increasing public education and awareness around the health conditions of estuaries.

The Indian River Lagoon I spoke about is one of the most biologically diverse estuaries in all of North America and a major economic driver for the five counties that it borders. The lagoon faces enormous challenges year after year and summer after summer, but through the National Estuary Program, there has been a pilot-scale demonstration of seagrass restoration, which is one of the biggest challenges that we face. The destruction of our seagrass each year is like a forest fire underneath the waters of our estuary.

Storm water quality improvement projects, septic-to-sewer projects, and many other projects and initiatives that are vital to our estuary are all implemented here.

With the Protect and Restore America's Estuaries Act, we will build on the enormous success of the National Estuary Program. It is why I couldn't be more proud to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support and adoption of this bipartisan piece of legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support for H.R. 4044 from the New York-New Jersey Harbor and Estuary Program, Barataria-Terrebonne National Estu-

ary Program, San Francisco Estuary Partnership, Puget Sound Partnership, Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program, and Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership.

NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY
HARBOR & ESTUARY PROGRAM,
New York, NY, February 4, 2020.

Hon. PETER A. DEFAZIO,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure, House of Representa-
tives, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO,
Chairman, Water Resources and Environment
Subcommittee, Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure, House of Representa-
tives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, Water Resources and Envi-
ronment Subcommittee, Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure, House
of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMEN DEFAZIO AND NAPOLITANO,
RANKING MEMBERS YOUNG AND WESTERMAN:
Thank you for your leadership in support of
the cooperative conservation and manage-
ment of our nation's vital estuaries, and in
particular for the unanimous approval in
your committee for HR 4044, a bill to reau-
thorize the National Estuary Program.

This legislation invests directly in the
stewardship of our nation's coasts. It empow-
ers local communities in a non-regulatory,
collaborative and science based strategy to
safeguard the places where we live, work and
recreate. The 28 National Estuary Programs
(NEP) located around the nation's coastline
engage industries, businesses, and other
community members to develop solutions for
tough problems. The NEP's public-private
partnerships stretch federal dollars to pro-
vide successful on-the-ground results driven
by diverse stakeholders. NEP partners in-
clude wastewater utilities; port authorities,
shippers, and related maritime industry;
local restaurants & tourist businesses; de-
sign, engineering and construction profes-
sionals; state and local governments; col-
leges and universities, and community and
environmental organizations.

NEPs around the country are extremely ef-
ficient at leveraging funds to increase their
ability to restore and protect their coastal
ecosystems. The NEPs have obtained over
\$19 for every \$1 provided, generating over \$4
billion for on-the-ground efforts since 2003.
HR 4044 would amplify and improve on the
reforms signed into law in the 114th Congress
that created a competitive program to ad-
dress urgent challenges while streamlining
the administrative costs of the program.

PROGRESS ON THE GROUND

NEPs have collectively restored and pro-
tected more than 2,000,000 acres of vital habi-
tats since 2000 alone. Consistent Congres-
sional funding of the National Estuary Pro-
grams is essential—resulting in clean water,
healthy estuaries, and strong coastal com-
munities. This investment in our national
estuaries will help strengthen America's
economy and support thousands of jobs, and
will secure the future of our coastal com-
munities.

Here in New York and New Jersey, we can
report on how funds already invested in this
program are being put to extremely good
purpose in protecting and restoring estuaries
and coastal communities:

Working with communities in the Bronx,
Harlem, Passaic, and Hackensack River wa-
tersheds to track down sources of floatable
trash before they enter the water;

Helping local governments in New Jersey
and New York identify and right-size cul-
verts and bridges to improve habitat and re-
duce street flooding;

Working with wastewater utilities in Eliz-
abeth and Ridgefield Park to prioritize and
make critical investments in outfalls needed
to address rising sea levels;

Restoring shoreline ecology and improving
fisheries in the Hudson and East River by
creating oyster reefs and other restoration
efforts

The value of our oceans, estuaries and
coasts to our nation is immense, and has
never been more important. Over half the US
population lives in coastal watershed coun-
ties, many of these in estuaries of national
significance. Roughly half the nation's gross
domestic product is generated in those coun-
ties and adjacent ocean waters. According to
NOAA's 2019 report on the ocean economy,
ocean industries contributed \$320 billion to
U.S. economy, while employment in the
ocean economy increased by 14.5 percent by
2016, compared to 4.8 percent in the U.S.
economy as a whole.

Thank you again for your efforts to ad-
vance this visionary legislation and look for-
ward to working with you to reauthorize this
successful program.

Sincerely,

ROBERT PIRANI,
Director, NYNJHEP.

BARATARIA-TERREBONNE,
NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM,
Thibodaux, LA, February 4, 2020.

Hon. PETER A. DEFAZIO,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure, House of Representa-
tives, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO,
Chairman, Water Resources and Environment
Subcommittee, Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure, House of Representa-
tives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, Water Resources and Envi-
ronment Subcommittee, Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure, House
of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMEN DEFAZIO AND NAPOLITANO,
RANKING MEMBERS YOUNG AND WESTERMAN:
Thank you for your leadership in support of
the National Estuary Program, and in par-
ticular for your unanimous approval in your
committee for HR 4044, a bill to reauthorize
this highly successful program. I understand
this bill may be considered by the full House
of Representatives, and applaud your efforts
to advance this legislation. We at the
Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Pro-
gram strongly applaud the leadership of Rep-
resentative Graves to advance this legisla-
tion to address Louisiana's land loss crisis.
Funding from this program empowers local
people and their ongoing love of the land,
water, culture, and each other to use the
best science available to address the
estuary's perils.

This legislation invests directly in the
stewardship of our nation's coasts. It empow-
ers local communities in a non-regulatory,
collaborative and science-based strategy to
safeguard the places where we live, work,
and recreate. Of all federally funded coastal
programs, only NEPs organize local stake-
holders as partners in a unique decision-
making framework to address local prior-
ities. NEPs provide technical, management,
and communication assistance to develop
priorities and implement comprehensive ac-
tions: storm water and infrastructure
projects, seagrass and shellfish restoration

which support fishing and tourist industries, science and monitoring to guide decision-making, and innovative education programs designed for the next generation of Americans.

NEPS: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERS

The NEP consists of 28 unique, voluntary programs established by the Clean Water Act to protect and improve estuaries of national significance. Each NEP engages its local community in a non-regulatory, consensus-driven, and science-based process. For every federal dollar, NEPs collectively leverage \$19 in local funds to protect and improve coastal environments, communities, and economies. This investment in our national estuaries strengthens America's economy and supports thousands of jobs, and will secure the future of our coastal communities.

NEPs engage industries, businesses, and other community members to develop solutions for tough problems. NEP's public-private partnerships stretch federal dollars to provide on-the-ground results driven by diverse stakeholders. NEP partners include commercial agriculture and fisheries, energy and water utilities, local businesses, construction and landscaping professionals, state and local governments, academic institutions, and community groups.

The value of our oceans, estuaries and coasts to our nation is immense. Over half the U.S. population lives in coastal watershed counties. Roughly half the nation's gross domestic product is generated in those counties and adjacent ocean waters. In 2019 alone, ocean industries contributed \$320 billion to U.S. economy.

RESULTS ON THE GROUND

NEPs have had great success in protecting and restoring estuaries and coastal communities:

The Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) is restoring maritime forest ridges along coastal Louisiana with public and private partnerships. These ridges are vital habitat for wildlife and provide storm surge protection for business, industry, and homeowners.

Morro Bay National Estuary Program is restoring underwater eelgrass meadows after precipitous decline in the last decade. Promising restoration results show that collaborative research, community outreach, and adaptive management make a difference for healthy estuary habitats on the California's Central Coast.

All three California National Estuary Programs are partnering to improve the status and use of resources for boaters to pump out waste from their boats. These stations are critical to keeping bacteria and other pollution from entering sensitive coastal waters.

The NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program is working with the Bronx River Alliance and other community groups to track down sources of floatable trash in the River.

The Center of the Inland Bays in Delaware is bringing the oyster back, using living shorelines to stop erosion, protect property and restore habitat.

NEPs have collectively restored and protected more than 2,000,000 acres of vital habitats since 2000 alone.

Important reforms were made to the National Estuary Program in the reauthorization during the 114th Congress, including the creation of a competitive program to address urgent challenges and the streamlining of administrative costs. HR 4044 amplifies and improves on these reforms. We thank you again for your efforts to advance this visionary legislation and look forward to working with you to reauthorize this successful program.

Sincerely,

DEAN BLANCHARD,
BTNEP Acting Director.

SAN FRANCISCO ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP,
San Francisco, CA, February 4, 2020.

Hon. PETER A. DEFAZIO,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO,
Chairman, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMEN DEFAZIO AND NAPOLITANO, RANKING MEMBERS YOUNG AND WESTERMAN: I am writing to thank you for your leadership in support of the National Estuary Program (NEP). For over 30 years, NEPs have advanced national priorities through a place-based, non-regulatory, collaborative approach. NEP's promote efficient partnerships to achieve on-the-ground success, engaging industries, businesses, local communities, scientists, regulatory agencies and other stakeholders.

Communities and businesses depend on our nation's estuaries. Loss of coastal habitats, pollutants entering our waters, and increased coastal flooding are challenging our coasts and affecting the critical economies we rely on. Over 82% of the nation's population live in the coastal areas that NEPs directly support. The 28 NEPs are leading the way in using a non-regulatory approach to working with industry and communities on innovations to protect life, business, and property from loss, damage, flooding, and drought.

NEPs leverage federal funds to build the capacity of local partners to implement innovative and beneficial projects. For every dollar EPA provides, NEPs leverage \$19 in local funds to protect and improve coastal environments, communities and economies. Recent examples of NEP successes include:

The San Francisco Estuary Partnership is collaborating with wastewater treatment facilities to advance innovative nature-based solutions along the shoreline to remove contaminants, secure potable water resources, increase flood protection, and restore habitat

All three California National Estuary Programs are partnering to reduce raw sewage disposal into the water from recreational boats, keeping bacteria and other pollution from entering coastal waters and threatening public health

The Center of the Inland Bays in Delaware is bringing the oyster back, with all its ecological and economic benefits, after it nearly disappeared in the last century. The Center is using living shorelines to stop erosion, protect property and restore habitat

The NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program is working with the Bronx River Alliance and other community groups to track down sources of floatable trash in the River, including locations in upstream Westchester County

NEPs have collectively restored and protected more than 2,000,000 acres of vital habitats since 2000 alone

Thank you again for your strong support of this program over the years.

Sincerely,

CAITLIN SWEENEY,
Director.

PUGET SOUND PARTNERSHIP,
Tacoma, WA, February 4, 2020.

Hon. PETER A. DEFAZIO,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO,
Chairman, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMEN DEFAZIO AND NAPOLITANO, RANKING MEMBERS YOUNG AND WESTERMAN: Thank you for your leadership in support of the National Estuary Program, and in particular for your unanimous approval in your committee for HR 4044, a bill to reauthorize this highly successful program. I understand this bill may be considered by the full House of Representatives, and applaud your efforts to advance this legislation.

In particular I would like to recognize and applaud the leadership of Representative Larson on this issue. He has been a stalwart supporter of this program nationally, and in particular a champion of Puget Sound. I appreciate his efforts as a senior member of your committee to advance this legislation that is so important to Washington.

Puget Sound is a complex ecosystem encompassing mountains, farmlands, cities, rivers, forests, and wetlands. Sixteen major rivers flow to Puget Sound and 20 treaty tribes call the region home. Currently, 4.5 million people live in the Puget Sound area, with another 1.3 million expected to live here by 2040. Seattle was the second fastest growing city in the nation in 2018, and the fastest in 2017. We are a region of innovators and entrepreneurs: 11 Fortune 500 companies are headquartered in the Puget Sound area, many of which have shaped 21st century life. Our economy is roaring, and the region's natural beauty and recreational opportunities help businesses and companies attract top talent.

On the surface, Puget Sound looks healthy and inviting, but, in fact, Puget Sound is in grave trouble. Southern Resident orcas, Chinook salmon, and steelhead are all listed under the Endangered Species Act. Toxic chemicals and pharmaceuticals continue to pollute our waterways, and shellfish beds are routinely closed to commercial and recreational harvest due to fecal contamination. Habitat degradation continues to outpace restoration. While this situation at times seems impossibly gloomy, the hundreds of passionate people who are devoted to seeing the return of a healthy and resilient Puget Sound give us hope.

Scientists say that we can still recover Puget Sound, but only if we act boldly now. We know what we need to do. The primary barriers between us and more food for orcas, clean and sufficient working water for people and fish, sustainable working lands, and harvestable shellfish are funding and political fortitude.

The single greatest step we could take to ensure a durable, systematic, and science-based effort for Puget Sound recovery is to fully fund the implementation of habitat protection and restoration, water quality protection, and salmon recovery programs. The National Estuary Program (NEP) is a vital piece of this funding puzzle.

Of all federally funded coastal programs, only NEPs organize local stakeholders as

partners in a unique decision-making framework to address local priorities. NEPs provide technical, management, and communication assistance to develop priorities and implement comprehensive actions: stormwater and infrastructure projects, seagrass and shellfish restoration which support fishing and tourist industries, science and monitoring to guide decision-making, and innovative education programs designed for the next generation of Americans.

The NEP consists of 28 unique, voluntary programs established by the Clean Water Act to protect and improve estuaries of national significance. Each NEP engages its local community in a non-regulatory, consensus-driven, and science-based process. For every dollar EPA provides, NEPs leverage \$19 in local funds to protect and improve coastal environments, communities and economies.

NEPs have collectively restored and protected more than 2,000,000 acres of vital habitats since 2000 alone. Consistent Congressional funding of the National Estuary Programs is essential resulting in clean water, healthy estuaries, and strong coastal communities. This investment in our national estuaries will help strengthen America's economy and support thousands of jobs, and will secure the future of our coastal communities.

Thank you for your strong support of this program over the years. Funds already invested in this program are being put to extremely good purpose in protecting and restoring estuaries and coastal communities.

Recent examples include the following:

Our partners are restoring forage fish spawning, which is critically important in the Puget Sound food web—back to large areas of shoreline, and reducing the flow of stormwater containing toxic pollutants into Puget Sound.

The NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program is working with the Bronx River Alliance and other community groups to track down sources of floatable trash in the River, including locations in upstream Westchester County.

The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership in Maine, along with partners, is monitoring nutrients around Casco Bay to provide real-time data on nutrient processes. CBEP's nutrient analyzer has been automatically collecting nitrate, nitrite and ammonium samples and working collaboratively to assure safe levels in the bay.

The Center of the Inland Bays in Delaware is bringing the oyster back, with all its ecological and economic benefits, after it nearly disappeared in the last century. The Center is using living shorelines to stop erosion, protect property and restore habitat.

As you know, important reforms were made to the National Estuary Program (NEP) in the reauthorization that was signed into law in the 114th Congress. These reforms created a competitive program to address urgent challenges and maximize funds received by our national estuaries, while streamlining the administrative costs of the program.

HR 4044 would amplify and improve on these reforms, and continue the cost-effective streamlining begun in the 114th Congress.

We are running out of time: the Center for Whale Research reported this weekend that another Southern Resident orca, L41, has gone missing. With its loss, the population will drop to 72 animals, the lowest in 40 years. Your action now to pass HR 4044 can help.

Sincerely,

LAURA L. BLACKMORE,
Executive Director.

SANTA MONICA BAY
NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM,
February 3, 2020.

Hon. PETER A. DEFAZIO,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO,
Chairman, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMEN DEFAZIO AND NAPOLITANO, RANKING MEMBERS YOUNG AND WESTERMAN: I am writing to thank you for your leadership in support of the National Estuary Program, and in particular for your unanimous approval in your committee for HR 4044, a bill to reauthorize this highly successful program. I also like to recognize the efforts of California Representatives Salud Carbajal, Harley Rouda, and Eric Swalwell for their co-sponsorship of this bill. We understand this bill may be considered by the full House of Representatives and applaud your efforts to advance this legislation.

The National Estuary Program consists of 28, voluntary and geographically specific partnerships to promote the vitality of the United States Estuaries of National Significance. Each NEP engages its local community in a non-regulatory, consensus-driven, and science-based process. For every dollar EPA provides, NEPs leverage \$19 in local funds to protect and improve coastal environments, communities, and economies.

NEPs provide a suite of skills to advance the technical, management, and communication needs of their consensus driven Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans. These plans seek to implement coordinated actions such as: storm water and infrastructure projects, seagrass, dune, wetland, and shellfish restoration, and the conservation of open spaces. NEPs also support and conduct scientific monitoring to identify and address sources of environmental harm that are detrimental to public health and coastal economies.

NEPs engage industries, businesses, and other community members to develop solutions for tough problems. The NEPs' public-private partnerships stretch federal dollars to provide successful on-the-ground results driven by diverse stakeholders. NEP partners include commercial agriculture and fisheries, energy and water utilities, local restaurants & tourist businesses, construction and landscaping professionals, engineering and mining companies, state and local governments, colleges and universities, and other community organizations.

The value of our oceans, estuaries and coasts to our nation is immense. According to NOAA's 2019 report on the ocean economy, ocean industries contributed \$320 billion to U.S. economy, while employment in the ocean economy increased by 14.5 percent by 2016, compared to 4.8 percent in the U.S. economy as a whole. NEPs work to protect and enhance these nationally significant economic engines.

Thank you for your strong support of this program over the years. Funds already invested in this program are being put to extremely good purpose in protecting and restoring estuaries and coastal communities.

Recent examples include:

The Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program has restored 51.9 acres of kelp for-

est, off the Palos Verdes Peninsula in the past six years. This restoration effort has helped reverse an 80% decline in this vital ecosystem which supports several of California's most lucrative fisheries and allows for the recovery of endangered abalone.

The Puget Sound Partnership is restoring forage fish spawning—which are critically important in the Puget Sound foodweb—back to large areas of shoreline and reducing the flow of stormwater containing toxic pollutants into Puget Sound.

The NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program is working with the Bronx River Alliance and other community groups to track down sources of floatable trash in the River, including locations in upstream Westchester County.

The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership in Maine, along with partners, is monitoring nutrients around Casco Bay to provide real-time data on nutrient processes. CBEP's nutrient analyzer has been automatically collecting nitrate, nitrite and ammonium samples and working collaboratively to assure safe levels in the bay.

As you know important reforms were made to the National Estuary Program in the reauthorization that was signed into law in the 114th Congress. These reforms created a competitive program to address urgent challenges and maximize funds received by our national estuaries, while streamlining the administrative costs of the program. HR 4044 would amplify and improve on these reforms, and continue the cost-effective streamlining begun in the 114th Congress.

Thank you again for your visionary leadership, and that of the three California Representatives Salud Carbajal, Harley Rouda, and Eric Swalwell who have cosponsored this bill to reauthorize this successful program.

Sincerely,

TOM FORD,
Director, Santa Monica Bay
National Estuary Program.

LOWER COLUMBIA
ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP,
Portland, OR, February 5, 2020.

Hon. PETER A. DEFAZIO,
Chair, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO,
Chair, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRS DEFAZIO AND NAPOLITANO, RANKING MEMBERS YOUNG AND WESTERMAN: Thank you for your leadership and strong support of the National Estuary Program (NEP), and for your unanimous approval in your committee for HR 4044, a bill to reauthorize this highly successful program. I understand this bill may be considered by the full House of Representatives and appreciate your efforts to support this legislation.

The NEP stands out as one of the most effective federal programs. The National Program creates a framework—and accountability—for local partners, representing diverse interests to address the physical, chemical, social, biological, economic and cultural challenges that threaten our nation's estuaries. It is this collaborative framework that allows NEPs to tackle issues that no agency or state can tackle alone.

Of all federally funded coastal programs, only NEPs implement a community-based decision framework to address local and national priorities. NEPs and their partners address:

Stormwater and infrastructure projects; Eelgrass and shellfish restoration, supporting aquaculture, fishing, and tourist industries;

Land and wildlife conservation; Science and monitoring to guide decision-making; and

Innovative education programs designed for the next generation of Americans.

The NEP consists of 28 unique, voluntary programs established by the Clean Water Act to protect and improve estuaries of national significance. Each NEP engages its local community in a non-regulatory, consensus-driven, and science-based process. For every federal dollar, NEPs collectively leverage \$19 in local funds to protect and improve coastal environments, communities, and economies. This investment in our national estuaries strengthens America's economy and supports thousands of jobs and secures the future of our coastal communities.

NEPs engage local industries, businesses, and other community members to develop—and implement—solutions for tough problems. NEP's public-private partnerships stretch federal dollars to provide on-the-ground results driven by diverse stakeholders. NEP partners include commercial agriculture and fisheries, energy and water utilities, local businesses, construction and landscaping professionals, state and local governments, academic institutions, teachers, students, and community groups.

The value of our oceans, estuaries and coasts to our nation is immense. Over half the U.S. population lives in coastal watershed counties. Roughly half the nation's gross domestic product is generated in those counties and adjacent ocean waters. In 2019 alone, ocean industries contributed \$320 billion to U.S. economy.

RESULTS ON THE GROUND

NEPs are focused on results on the ground and have had great success in protecting and restoring estuaries and coastal communities:

In the lower Columbia River since 2000, we have:

Restored 28,387 acres of habitat with 100 partners to help recover threatened and endangered fish.

Provided 81,485 students with over 407,704 hours of outdoor science learning, helping teachers meet benchmarks, and fill in gaps in science education.

Planted 144,721 native trees along riparian corridors with students and volunteers of all ages.

Raised more than \$76 million—100% of those funds stay in Oregon and Washington addressing local priorities. These are monies local entities cannot access on their own and we can't raise without the NEP funds.

Leverage \$11.5 million in federal NEP funds to bring a total of \$76 million to our region, 100% spent in Oregon and Washington.

Generated 1,524 family wage jobs, mostly in construction, restoring habitat, that cannot be exported.

These results are repeated around the nation in each of the 28 national estuary programs:

Morro Bay National Estuary Program is restoring underwater eelgrass meadows after a precipitous decline in the last decade. Promising restoration results show that collaborative research, community outreach, and adaptive management make a difference for healthy estuary habitats on the California's Central Coast.

All three California National Estuary Programs are partnering to improve the status

and use of resources for boaters to pump out waste from their boats. These stations are critical to keeping bacteria and other pollution from entering sensitive coastal waters.

The NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program is working with the Bronx River Alliance and other community groups to track down sources of floatable trash in the River.

The Center of the Inland Bays in Delaware is bringing the oyster back, using living shorelines to stop erosion, protect property and restore habitat.

NEPs have collectively restored and protected more than 2,000,000 acres of vital habitats since 2000 alone.

Important reforms were made to the National Estuary Program in the reauthorization during the 114th Congress, including the creation of a competitive program to address urgent challenges and the streamlining of administrative costs. HR 4044 amplifies and improves on these reforms.

Despite these great outcomes, threats to our waters and our communities remain. Toxics from stormwater contaminate clean water and habitat and cause cancer and neurological damage to humans and river species. Changes in precipitation, temperature, and storminess increase sea levels, increase erosion, and intensify flood events, leaving many of our rural communities and much our local infrastructure vulnerable to these variabilities. Micro plastics are pervasive in our rivers and streams; they are filling the bellies of ocean species and impair human immune systems, disrupt hormones, and cause cancer. Disparities in education and lack of opportunities for hands-on outdoor learning exist for too many in our communities.

We thank you again for your efforts to advance this legislation and look forward to working with you to reauthorize this successful program.

Sincerely yours,

DEBRAH MARRIOTT,
Executive Director.

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

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 4044. I want to thank Mr. MALINOWSKI and Chairwoman NAPOLITANO for their leadership in crafting this legislation and bringing it to the floor today for consideration by the full House of Representatives. It is vital that we, as a nation, focus on preserving and restoring our estuaries.

I am especially pleased that the bill almost doubles the amount of funding available to support national estuaries. This should finally allow the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to move forward with adding more of these critical ecosystems to the National Estuary Program.

As one of only five or six hypersaline lagoons in the world and the only one in the nation, the Laguna Madre has unique conservation requirements. Adjacent to the longest barrier island in the world, Padre Island, the Laguna Madre is home to five species of endangered sea turtle and a critical migratory bird habitat for dozens of endangered or threatened bird species. The EPA previously designated the Upper Laguna Madre as a national estuary, and with this additional funding, we can now move forward with adding the Lower Laguna Madre to the existing designation.

Having grown up in Brownsville, Texas, Chairwoman Napolitano knows the beauty and importance of this national treasure. On behalf of my constituents, I want to express the grati-

tude of South Texas for the hard work and dedication of the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Members and staff to conserving the Lower Laguna Madre for future generations.

I look forward to working with our Senators to help pass this legislation, and with our local officials, especially Cameron County Commissioner David Garza, and our governor, so we can finally secure a National Estuary Program designation for the Lower Laguna Madre. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4044.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4044, the Protect and Restore America's Estuaries Act. As Co-Chair of the Congressional Estuary Caucus, I am pleased to support this bill to reauthorize the National Estuary Program through Fiscal Year 2026. The Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership, in my home state of Oregon, is one of the twenty-eight National Estuary Programs across the country. The Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership is leading outstanding resiliency efforts in the Pacific Northwest to restore and protect habitat, improve water quality, restore flood plains, and address marine debris. This bill will help the National Estuary Programs consider the effects of extreme weather events that are increasingly common in the climate crisis, and implement appropriate adaptation strategies in their management plans. Additionally, this bill takes important steps to allow the NEPs to better address storm water runoff, coastal resiliency, and accelerate land loss mitigation efforts. This past weekend, we celebrated World Wetlands Day. Our coastal wetlands and estuaries are often overlooked and undervalued, but they are on the frontlines of the climate crisis. We can help support and safeguard our National Estuary Programs by passing the Protect and Restore America's Estuaries Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4044, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. 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.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION ACT

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1132) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to establish a grant program to support the restoration of San Francisco Bay, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1132

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 "San Francisco Bay Restoration Act".

SEC. 2. SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM.

Title I of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 124. SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP.—The term ‘Estuary Partnership’ means the San Francisco Estuary Partnership, designated as the management conference for the San Francisco Bay under section 320.

“(2) SAN FRANCISCO BAY PLAN.—The term ‘San Francisco Bay Plan’ means—

“(A) until the date of the completion of the plan developed by the Director under subsection (d), the comprehensive conservation and management plan approved under section 320 for the San Francisco Bay estuary; and

“(B) on and after the date of the completion of the plan developed by the Director under subsection (d), the plan developed by the Director under subsection (d).

“(b) PROGRAM OFFICE.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator shall establish in the Environmental Protection Agency a San Francisco Bay Program Office. The Office shall be located at the headquarters of Region 9 of the Environmental Protection Agency.

“(2) APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR.—The Administrator shall appoint a Director of the Office, who shall have management experience and technical expertise relating to the San Francisco Bay and be highly qualified to direct the development and implementation of projects, activities, and studies necessary to implement the San Francisco Bay Plan.

“(3) DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY; STAFFING.—The Administrator shall delegate to the Director such authority and provide such staff as may be necessary to carry out this section.

“(c) ANNUAL PRIORITY LIST.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—After providing public notice, the Director shall annually compile a priority list, consistent with the San Francisco Bay Plan, identifying and prioritizing the projects, activities, and studies to be carried out with amounts made available under subsection (e).

“(2) INCLUSIONS.—The annual priority list compiled under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

“(A) Projects, activities, and studies, including restoration projects and habitat improvement for fish, waterfowl, and wildlife, that advance the goals and objectives of the San Francisco Bay Plan, for—

“(i) water quality improvement, including the reduction of marine litter;

“(ii) wetland, riverine, and estuary restoration and protection;

“(iii) nearshore and endangered species recovery; and

“(iv) adaptation to climate change.

“(B) Information on the projects, activities, and studies specified under subparagraph (A), including—

“(i) the identity of each entity receiving assistance pursuant to subsection (e); and

“(ii) a description of the communities to be served.

“(C) The criteria and methods established by the Director for identification of projects, activities, and studies to be included on the annual priority list.

“(3) CONSULTATION.—In compiling the annual priority list under paragraph (1), the Director shall consult with, and consider the recommendations of—

“(A) the Estuary Partnership;

“(B) the State of California and affected local governments in the San Francisco Bay estuary watershed;

“(C) the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority; and

“(D) any other relevant stakeholder involved with the protection and restoration of the San Francisco Bay estuary that the Director determines to be appropriate.

“(d) SAN FRANCISCO BAY PLAN.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Director, in conjunction with the Estuary Partnership, shall review and revise the comprehensive conservation and management plan approved under section 320 for the San Francisco Bay estuary to develop a plan to guide the projects, activities, and studies of the Office to address the restoration and protection of the San Francisco Bay.

“(2) REVISION OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY PLAN.—Not less often than once every 5 years after the date of the completion of the plan described in paragraph (1), the Director shall review, and revise as appropriate, the San Francisco Bay Plan.

“(3) OUTREACH.—In carrying out this subsection, the Director shall consult with the Estuary Partnership and Indian tribes and solicit input from other non-Federal stakeholders.

“(e) GRANT PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director may provide funding through cooperative agreements, grants, or other means to State and local agencies, special districts, and public or nonprofit agencies, institutions, and organizations, including the Estuary Partnership, for projects, activities, and studies identified on the annual priority list compiled under subsection (c).

“(2) MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF GRANTS; NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—

“(A) MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—Amounts provided to any entity under this section for a fiscal year shall not exceed an amount equal to 75 percent of the total cost of any projects, activities, and studies that are to be carried out using those amounts.

“(B) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—Not less than 25 percent of the cost of any project, activity, or study carried out using amounts provided under this section shall be provided from non-Federal sources.

“(f) FUNDING.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

“(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the amount made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year, the Director may not use more than 5 percent to pay administrative expenses incurred in carrying out this section.

“(3) PROHIBITION.—No amounts made available under this section may be used for the administration of a management conference under section 320.

“(g) ANNUAL BUDGET PLAN.—In each of fiscal years 2021 through 2025, the President, as part of the annual budget submission of the President to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, shall submit information regarding each Federal department and agency involved in San Francisco Bay protection and restoration, including—

“(1) a report that displays for each Federal agency—

“(A) the amounts obligated in the preceding fiscal year for protection and restoration projects, activities, and studies relating to the San Francisco Bay; and

“(B) the proposed budget for protection and restoration projects, activities, and studies relating to the San Francisco Bay; and

“(2) a description and assessment of the Federal role in the implementation of the San Francisco Bay Plan and the specific role of each Federal department and agency in-

involved in San Francisco Bay protection and restoration, including specific projects, activities, and studies conducted or planned to achieve the identified goals and objectives of the San Francisco Bay Plan.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1132, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1132. Introduced by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER), H.R. 1132 builds off existing bay restoration work under EPA's National Estuary Program.

In my home State of California, the importance of a healthy watershed and improved water quality has never been more apparent. In fact, the San Francisco Bay estuary drains more than 40 percent of our State's waters.

That is why I am thankful to see several of my colleagues from California as original cosponsors, including members of this committee: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. DESAULNIER.

At our June hearing, the subcommittee learned about the ongoing sources of pollution to this 1,600-square-mile estuary. Simultaneously, habitat destruction has forever changed the geography of the bay area. More than 90 percent of shoreline wetlands and 40 percent of the total aquatic ecosystem have been lost.

This new EPA program office will concentrate Federal efforts to address water quality challenges and ecosystem health in the bay. This will improve the environment and economy for the bay area region that is home to 8 million people and an annual GDP of \$775 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 1132, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters in support of H.R. 1132, the San Francisco Bay Restoration Act, from the National Audubon Society and Save the Bay.

AUDUBON,
September 18, 2019.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE NAPOLITANO,
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Water Resources
and Environment, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Water Re-
sources and Environment, Washington, DC.

On behalf of the National Audubon Soci-
ety's more than 1 million members, our mis-
sion is to protect birds and the places they
need for today and tomorrow. We write to
offer our support for the following bills re-
lated to important coastal and water con-
servation issues that will be the subject of
the September 19, 2019 Markup before the
Committee on Transportation and Infra-
structure Committee.

HR 4031—GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE
ACT OF 2019

The Great Lakes are home to 30 million
people and 350 species of birds, but increasing
challenges are on the horizon for the world's
largest body of freshwater. Fluctuating
water levels exacerbated by climate change,
invasive exotic species and excess nutrients
are putting even more stress on this eco-
system that is so important for birds and
people. The Great Lakes Restoration Initia-
tive has helped clean up toxic pollutants,
protect wildlife by restoring critical habitat,
and help combat devastating invasive spe-
cies.

HR 4031 would increase funding for con-
servation projects to \$475 million over five
years, by increasing the Great Lakes Res-
toration Initiative's authorization incremen-
tally from \$300 million per year to \$475 mil-
lion per year.

HR 1132—SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION ACT

The San Francisco Bay Area, home to the
Pacific Coast's largest estuary, is also home
to a rapidly growing population of 8 million
people, and provides for a host of social and
economic values through ports and industry,
agriculture, fisheries, archaeological and
cultural sites, recreation, and research. How-
ever, San Francisco Bay has lost 90% of its
tidal wetlands and more than 50% of its
eelgrass and mudflat habitat. Climate
change exacerbates these conditions through
drought that alters the salinity balance,
ocean acidification that reduces species
abundance and diversity, increasing water
temperatures, and rising seas causing flood-
ing that eliminates living shorelines and
puts communities at risk. Many species of
waterbirds forage in the San Francisco Bay,
including Brant Geese and Surf Scoters, un-
derscoring the value of this ecosystem.

HR 1132 would authorize a San Francisco
Bay Restoration Grant Program in EPA and
funding of up to \$25m per year to support the
restoration of this estuary.

HR 1620—CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM
REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Salt marshes are special places to birds
and other wildlife, but sea level rise has ele-
vated the waters in the Chesapeake Bay by
one foot during the 20th century and is accel-
erating due to climate change. Salt marshes
provide valuable "ecosystem services", in-
cluding nurseries for the Chesapeake Bay's
commercially important fish, a buffer pro-
tecting coastal communities against storm
surge, a filter that stops nutrient and sedi-
ment pollution from entering the Bay, and a
recreational resource attracting visitors who
contribute millions of dollars to local econo-
mies. Chesapeake Bay's salt marshes host

globally significant populations of both
Saltmarsh Sparrow and Black Rail.

HR 1620 would increase the authorization
of appropriations for the Chesapeake Bay
Program to more than \$90m per year.

HR 2247—PROMOTING UNITED GOVERNMENT
EFFORTS TO SAVE OUR SOUND ACT

Despite significant investments in Puget
Sound ecosystem health by state, federal,
tribal and local governments, concerned
members of the public, and conservation or-
ganizations, progress towards ecosystem re-
covery targets remains slow. The number of
marine birds wintering in Puget Sound has
declined significantly in the last 30 years and
migratory, fisheating birds appear to be at
the greatest risk.

HR 2247 would authorize up to \$50 million
in funding for Puget Sound recovery. The
PUGET SOS Act also aligns federal agency
expertise and resources, ensuring that fed-
eral agencies are coordinated, setting goals,
and holding each other accountable will help
increase their effectiveness and provide a
boost to Puget Sound recovery.

HR 3779—RESILIENCE REVOLVING LOAN FUND ACT
OF 2019

Pre-disaster planning can help commu-
nities adapt to the changing flood patterns
that threaten people and birds species de-
pendent on shoreline and riverine areas.
These changes have led to more frequent in-
stances of "nuisance flooding," as well as
catastrophic events. NOAA has found that
"nuisance" or "sunny day" flooding is up
300% to 900% than it was 50 years ago. In
addition, catastrophic flooding events have in-
creased in both frequency and intensity.
These trends have been particularly pro-
nounced in the Northeast, Midwest and
upper Great Plains, where the amount of pre-
cipitation in large rainfall events has in-
creased more than 30 percent above the aver-
age observed from 1901-1960. As sea level rise
accelerates, it only exacerbates these im-
pacts, which further compounds vulner-
ability in flood-prone communities.

HR 3779 would amend the 1988 Stafford Act
to offer low-interest loans to states for "dis-
aster mitigation projects", including invest-
ments in natural infrastructure projects,
which would help communities prepare and
recover from natural disasters.

We urge you to support and advance the
bills listed above. Please feel free to contact
us with any questions.

Sincerely,

JULIE HILL-GABRIEL,
Vice President, Water Conservation,
National Audubon Society.

SAVE THE BAY,
February 3, 2020.

Hon. JACKIE SPEIER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

HR 1132: SUPPORT

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SPEIER: Save The
Bay applauds your introduction of HR 1132,
the San Francisco Bay Restoration Act, and
encourages all Members of Congress to vote
for its passage on the House Floor this week.
This initiative will enhance the U.S. Envi-
ronmental Protection Agency's efforts ca-
pacity to improve the health of San Fran-
cisco Bay, with resources that are des-
perately needed at a time of accelerating cli-
mate change.

Save The Bay is the oldest and largest
membership organization working exclu-
sively to protect and restore San Francisco
Bay, with 50,000 members and supporters. As
the Bay's leading champion since 1961, Save
The Bay is committed to making the Bay
cleaner and healthier for people and wildlife,
and HR 1132 would significantly advance that
goal.

Over the last 150 years, the water quality
and health of the San Francisco Bay estuary
have been diminished by pollution, invasive
species, loss of wetland habitat and other
factors. Improving bay water quality, restor-
ing critical habitat, and adapting to climate
change in San Francisco Bay, are urgent fed-
eral, state and regional priorities that re-
quire additional funding. The Bay region is
fortunate to have in place well-developed
science-based plans, agencies, and collabo-
rative structures to improve the Bay's
health, but more resources for implementa-
tion are essential in the crucial decade
ahead. The San Francisco Bay Restoration
Act would provide significant additional ca-
pacity to improve the Bay, building effi-
ciently on elements already in place to im-
prove our economy and the region's quality
of life.

In 2016, San Francisco Bay Area voters
agreed to make an unprecedented invest-
ment in San Francisco Bay Restoration, ap-
proving a nine-county parcel tax specifically
to accelerate Bay tidal marsh restoration.
Measure AA was approved by more than 70
percent of the region's voters, and is raising
\$500 million over 20 years for grants to re-
storation projects, most of which are occur-
ring on federal property with the San Fran-
cisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Match-
ing federal investment for this and other re-
storation work is overdue, and HR 1132 would
begin to address that need by authorizing \$25
million annually for those purposes.

HR 1132 also would address the inequity in
funding for U.S. EPA Geographic Programs,
which are annually providing orders of mag-
nitude higher funding to other national estu-
aries under strong statutory authority with-
in the Clean Water Act. San Francisco Bay
deserves similar support and commitment as
the federal government currently provides to
Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound and other lo-
cations, and HR 1132 begins to rectify that
disparity.

Each month provides evidence of added ur-
gency and need for the San Francisco Bay
Program and resources that HR 1132 creates.
Tidal marsh restoration is essential to pro-
tect Bay wildlife habitat, and adjacent
shoreline communities and infrastructure
from sea level rise. The recent Baylands
Habitat Goals Update underscored that tidal
marsh revegetation must be initiated wher-
ever possible within the next decade to stay
ahead of rising seas, and the recent Cali-
fornia Legislative Analyst's Office report
further underscores the urgency of adapta-
tion and resilience actions. And as California
Governor Gavin Newsom stated in January,
"We are experiencing a global climate crisis.
One that has irreversible impacts and is hap-
pening right now. This is not something to
deal with 10 years from now. Or 5 years from
now. Or 2 years from now. we need action.
Now."

We deeply appreciate the strong support
from Speaker Pelosi and the entire San
Francisco Bay delegation for HR 1132. We en-
courage the House of Representatives pass
this bill swiftly, and we pledge our continued
assistance toward its enactment. Thank you
again for your leadership!

Sincerely,

DAVID LEWIS,
Executive Director.

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I yield my-
self such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of
H.R. 1132. It represents good govern-
ance by codifying the EPA's existing
work in the San Francisco Bay Area.
The bay area watershed provides a pri-
mary source of drinking water for over

25 million people and irrigation for 7,000 square miles of agriculture. It includes important economic resources, such as water supply infrastructure, ports, deepwater shipping channels, major highway and railway corridors, and energy lines.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER).

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, today, we are taking up the San Francisco Bay Restoration Act. This is legislation I have introduced every year since 2010. Since then, the environmental conditions of the bay have only grown worse. The bay is the heart of the region, with a vibrant ecosystem that is home to the largest estuary on the West Coast. It generates more than \$370 billion in goods and services annually and is home to more than 3½ million jobs.

Forty percent of the land in California drains to the estuary, as my colleagues have mentioned. It also is home to more than 100 endangered and threatened species. The region's tidal and seasonal wetlands comprise a significant portion of America's coastal resources, yet over the past 200 years, 90 percent of the bay's wetlands have been destroyed by human activity.

Increased pollution from cars, homes, and communities in San Francisco have absorbed into various creeks, rivers, and streams that flow into the bay and the Pacific Ocean. By 2030, the expected sea-level rise in the bay area will exceed the rate at which the marshes can elevate and move, effectively drowning them.

Despite the impending threats, Federal efforts for bay restoration and pollution mitigation systems have failed to meet the enormous need. Between 2008 and 2016, EPA's geographic programs invested only \$45 million into the San Francisco Bay, while Puget Sound received over \$260 million and Chesapeake Bay \$490 million. That is 10 times as much, and the disparity becomes even more pronounced when you consider the populations served. A mere \$6 was spent on the bay for each resident of the bay area, while almost \$30 was spent for each resident living near Chesapeake Bay and almost \$60 per resident near Puget Sound.

In the most recent round of appropriations in early 2018, the San Francisco Bay's appropriations remained at \$4.8 million while smaller geographic programs received substantially more, including Lake Champlain with \$8.3 million and Long Island Sound with \$12 million.

The San Francisco Bay Restoration Act will authorize \$25 million annually for 5 years to fund water quality improvement efforts, wetland and estuary restoration, endangered species recovery, and adaption to climate change. We are just asking for our fair share of the dollars set aside for estuary restoration.

□ 1315

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time, and I commend my colleague, JACKIE SPEIER, for her leadership on this issue. And thanks also to the ranking member for recognizing the importance, the critical national importance, of the San Francisco Bay Estuary.

I have the fortune of representing a beautiful district that starts at the Oregon border but goes all the way down to the Golden Gate Bridge. That means I represent a good portion of San Francisco Bay, the North Bay, where we understand all too well how much we have lost—90 percent of the Bay's wetlands have been destroyed.

Starting a century and-a-half ago, there has been incredible degradation of this vital estuary beginning with the Gold Rush, continuing to massive water diversions and pollution inputs, the diking of wetlands, and so on. But despite all of that degradation, San Francisco Bay continues to play a vital role ecologically in our region and an even greater role economically.

We have hundreds of billions of dollars in economic activity every year as a product of San Francisco Bay—outdoor recreation, commercial and recreational fishing, travel and tourism. And we also see the very real benefits in the San Francisco Bay area of coastal resiliency, using natural systems as a buffer against rising sea levels.

The citizens of the nine-county Bay area have stepped up. We recognize the national importance of this resource, and we have supported a ballot measure to support climate adaption and restoration funding. And now it is time for the Federal Government to do its part. That is why I am so pleased to support Congresswoman SPEIER's bill, the San Francisco Bay Restoration Act, to provide the much-needed Federal partnership to help improve water quality in this important estuary to revive the Bay's wetlands and to protect our coastal communities and our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for the time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this important legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I do urge all my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HECK). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1132, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROMOTING UNITED GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO SAVE OUR SOUND ACT

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2247) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to provide assistance for programs and activities to protect the water quality of Puget Sound, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2247

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 "Promoting United Government Efforts to Save Our Sound Act" or the "PUGET SOS Act".

SEC. 2. PUGET SOUND COORDINATED RECOVERY.

Title I of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 124. PUGET SOUND.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following definitions apply:

"(1) COASTAL NONPOINT POLLUTION CONTROL PROGRAM.—The term 'Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program' means the State of Washington's Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program approved by the Secretary of Commerce as required under section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990.

"(2) DIRECTOR.—The term 'Director' means the Director of the Program Office.

"(3) FEDERAL ACTION PLAN.—The term 'Federal Action Plan' means the plan developed under subsection (d)(2)(B).

"(4) INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION.—The term 'International Joint Commission' means the International Joint Commission established by the United States and Canada under the International Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 (36 Stat. 2448).

"(5) PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION.—The term 'Pacific Salmon Commission' means the Pacific Salmon Commission established by the United States and Canada under the Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada Concerning Pacific Salmon, signed at Ottawa, January 28, 1985 (commonly known as the 'Pacific Salmon Treaty').

"(6) PROGRAM OFFICE.—The term 'Program Office' means the Puget Sound Recovery National Program Office established by subsection (c).

"(7) PUGET SOUND ACTION AGENDA; ACTION AGENDA.—The term 'Puget Sound Action Agenda' or 'Action Agenda' means the most recent plan developed by the Puget Sound National Estuary Program Management Conference, in consultation with the Puget Sound Tribal Management Conference, and approved by the Administrator as the comprehensive conservation and management plan for Puget Sound under section 320.

"(8) PUGET SOUND FEDERAL LEADERSHIP TASK FORCE.—The term 'Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force' means the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force established under subsection (d).

"(9) PUGET SOUND FEDERAL TASK FORCE.—The term 'Puget Sound Federal Task Force'

means the Puget Sound Federal Task Force established in 2016 under a memorandum of understanding among 9 Federal agencies.

“(10) PUGET SOUND NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE; MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE.—The term ‘Puget Sound National Estuary Program Management Conference’ or ‘Management Conference’ means the management conference for Puget Sound convened pursuant to section 320.

“(11) PUGET SOUND PARTNERSHIP.—The term ‘Puget Sound Partnership’ means the State agency that is established under the laws of the State of Washington (section 90.71.210 of the Revised Code of Washington), or its successor agency, that has been designated by the Administrator as the lead entity to support the Puget Sound National Estuary Program Management Conference.

“(12) PUGET SOUND REGION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘Puget Sound region’ means the land and waters in the northwest corner of the State of Washington from the Canadian border to the north to the Pacific Ocean on the west, including Hood Canal and the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

“(B) INCLUSION.—The term ‘Puget Sound region’ includes all of the water that falls on the Olympic and Cascade Mountains and flows to meet Puget Sound’s marine waters.

“(13) PUGET SOUND TRIBAL MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE.—The term ‘Puget Sound Tribal Management Conference’ means the 20 treaty Indian tribes of western Washington and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

“(14) SALISH SEA.—The term ‘Salish Sea’ means the network of coastal waterways on the west coast of North America that includes the Puget Sound, the Strait of Georgia, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

“(15) SALMON RECOVERY PLANS.—The term ‘Salmon Recovery Plans’ means the recovery plans for salmon and steelhead species approved by the Secretary of the Interior under section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

“(16) STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The term ‘State Advisory Committee’ means the advisory committee established by subsection (e).

“(17) TREATY RIGHTS AT RISK INITIATIVE.—The term ‘Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative’ means the report from the treaty Indian tribes of western Washington entitled ‘Treaty Rights at Risk: Ongoing Habitat Loss, the Decline of the Salmon Resource, and Recommendations for Change’ and dated July 14, 2011, or its successor report, which outlines issues and offers solutions for the protection of Tribal treaty rights, recovery of salmon habitat, and management of sustainable treaty and nontreaty salmon fisheries, including through tribal salmon hatchery programs.

“(b) CONSISTENCY.—All Federal agencies represented on the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall act consistently with the protection of Tribal, treaty-reserved rights and, to the greatest extent practicable given such agencies’ existing obligations under Federal law, act consistently with the objectives and priorities of the Action Agenda, Salmon Recovery Plans, the Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative, and the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program, when—

“(1) conducting Federal agency activities within or outside Puget Sound that affect any land or water use or natural resources of Puget Sound and its tributary waters, including activities performed by a contractor for the benefit of a Federal agency;

“(2) interpreting and enforcing regulations that impact the restoration and protection of Puget Sound;

“(3) issuing Federal licenses or permits that impact the restoration and protection of Puget Sound; and

“(4) granting Federal assistance to State, local, and Tribal governments for activities related to the restoration and protection of Puget Sound.

“(c) PUGET SOUND RECOVERY NATIONAL PROGRAM OFFICE.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Environmental Protection Agency a Puget Sound Recovery National Program Office to be located in the State of Washington.

“(2) DIRECTOR.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Program Office shall be a career reserved position, as such term is defined in section 3132(a)(8) of title 5, United States Code.

“(B) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Director of the Program Office shall have leadership and project management experience and shall be highly qualified to—

“(i) direct the integration of multiple project planning efforts and programs from different agencies and jurisdictions; and

“(ii) align numerous, and often conflicting, needs toward implementing a shared Action Agenda with visible and measurable outcomes.

“(3) DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY; STAFFING.—Using amounts made available pursuant to subsection (i), the Administrator shall delegate to the Director such authority and provide such staff as may be necessary to carry out this section.

“(4) DUTIES.—The Director shall—

“(A) coordinate and manage the timely execution of the requirements of this section, including the formation and meetings of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force;

“(B) coordinate activities related to the restoration and protection of Puget Sound across the Environmental Protection Agency;

“(C) coordinate and align the activities of the Administrator with the Action Agenda, Salmon Recovery Plans, the Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative, and the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program;

“(D) promote the efficient use of Environmental Protection Agency resources in pursuit of Puget Sound restoration and protection;

“(E) serve on the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force and collaborate with, help coordinate, and implement activities with other Federal agencies that have responsibilities involving Puget Sound restoration and protection;

“(F) provide or procure such other advice, technical assistance, research, assessments, monitoring, or other support as is determined by the Director to be necessary or prudent to most efficiently and effectively fulfill the objectives and priorities of the Action Agenda, Salmon Recovery Plans, the Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative, and the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program consistent with the best available science and to ensure the health of the Puget Sound ecosystem;

“(G) track the progress of the Environmental Protection Agency towards meeting the Agency’s specified objectives and priorities within the Action Agenda and the Federal Action Plan;

“(H) implement the recommendations of the Comptroller General, set forth in the report entitled ‘Puget Sound Restoration: Additional Actions Could Improve Assessments of Progress’ and dated July 19, 2018;

“(I) serve as liaison and coordinate activities for the restoration and protection of the Salish Sea, with Canadian authorities, the Pacific Salmon Commission, and the International Joint Commission; and

“(J) carry out such additional duties as the Administrator determines necessary and appropriate.

“(d) PUGET SOUND FEDERAL LEADERSHIP TASK FORCE.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force.

“(2) DUTIES.—

“(A) GENERAL DUTIES.—The Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall—

“(i) uphold Federal trust responsibilities to restore and protect resources crucial to Tribal treaty rights, including by carrying out government-to-government consultation with Indian tribes when requested by such tribes;

“(ii) provide a venue for dialogue and coordination across all Federal agencies on the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force to align Federal resources for the purposes of carrying out the requirements of this section and all other Federal laws that contribute to the restoration and protection of Puget Sound, including by—

“(I) enabling and encouraging the Federal agencies represented on the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force to act consistently with the objectives and priorities of the Action Agenda, Salmon Recovery Plans, the Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative, and the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program;

“(II) facilitating the coordination of Federal activities that impact the restoration and protection of Puget Sound;

“(III) facilitating the delivery of feedback given by Federal agencies to the Puget Sound Partnership during the development of the Action Agenda;

“(IV) facilitating the resolution of inter-agency conflicts associated with the restoration and protection of Puget Sound among the agencies represented on the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force;

“(V) providing a forum for exchanging information among agencies regarding activities being conducted, including obstacles or efficiencies found, during Puget Sound restoration and protection activities; and

“(VI) promoting the efficient use of government resources in pursuit of Puget Sound restoration and protection through coordination and collaboration, including by ensuring that the Federal efforts relating to the science necessary for restoration and protection of Puget Sound are consistent, and not duplicative, across the Federal Government;

“(iii) catalyze public leaders at all levels to work together toward shared goals by demonstrating interagency best practices coming from the members of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force;

“(iv) provide advice and support on scientific and technical issues and act as a forum for the exchange of scientific information about Puget Sound;

“(v) identify and inventory Federal environmental research and monitoring programs related to Puget Sound, and provide such inventory to the Puget Sound National Estuary Program Management Conference;

“(vi) ensure that Puget Sound restoration and protection activities are as consistent as practicable with ongoing restoration and protection and related efforts in the Salish Sea that are being conducted by Canadian authorities, the Pacific Salmon Commission, and the International Joint Commission;

“(vii) establish any necessary working groups or advisory committees necessary to assist the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force in its duties, including public policy and scientific issues;

“(viii) raise national awareness of the significance of Puget Sound;

“(ix) work with the Office of Management and Budget to give input on the crosscut budget under subsection (h); and

“(x) submit a biennial report under subsection (g) on the progress made toward carrying out the Federal Action Plan.

“(B) PUGET SOUND FEDERAL ACTION PLAN.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall develop and approve a Federal Action Plan that leverages Federal programs across agencies and serves to coordinate diverse programs on a specific suite of priorities on Puget Sound recovery.

“(ii) REVISION OF PUGET SOUND FEDERAL ACTION PLAN.—Not less often than once every 5 years after the date of completion of the Federal Action Plan described in clause (i), the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall review, and revise as appropriate, the Federal Action Plan.

“(C) FEEDBACK BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.—In facilitating feedback under subparagraph (A)(ii)(III), the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall request Federal agencies to consider, at a minimum, possible Federal actions designed to—

“(i) further the goals, targets, and actions of the Action Agenda, Salmon Recovery Plans, the Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative, and the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program;

“(ii) implement and enforce this Act, the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and all other Federal laws that contribute to the restoration and protection of Puget Sound, including those that protect Tribal treaty rights;

“(iii) prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species;

“(iv) prevent the destruction of marine and wildlife habitats;

“(v) protect, restore, and conserve forests, wetlands, riparian zones, and nearshore waters that provide marine and wildlife habitat;

“(vi) promote resilience to climate change and ocean acidification effects;

“(vii) conserve and recover endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973;

“(viii) restore fisheries so that they are sustainable and productive;

“(ix) preserve biodiversity;

“(x) restore and protect ecosystem services that provide clean water, filter toxic chemicals, and increase ecosystem resilience; and

“(xi) improve water quality and restore wildlife habitat, including by preventing and managing stormwater runoff, incorporating erosion control techniques and trash capture devices, using sustainable stormwater practices, and mitigating and minimizing nonpoint source pollution, including marine litter.

“(3) PARTICIPATION OF STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND PUGET SOUND TRIBAL MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall carry out its duties with input from, and in collaboration with, the State Advisory Committee and Puget Sound Tribal Management Conference.

“(B) SPECIFIC ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall seek the advice and recommendations of the State Advisory Committee and Puget Sound Tribal Management Conference on the actions, progress, and issues pertaining to restoration and protection of Puget Sound.

“(4) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(A) QUALIFICATIONS.—Members appointed under this paragraph shall have experience and expertise in matters of restoration and protection of large watersheds and bodies of water or related experience that will benefit the restoration and protection effort of Puget Sound.

“(B) COMPOSITION.—The Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall be composed of the following members:

“(i) SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE.—The following individuals appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture:

“(I) A representative of the National Forest Service.

“(II) A representative of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

“(ii) SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.—A representative of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration appointed by the Secretary of Commerce.

“(iii) SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.—The following individuals appointed by the Secretary of Defense:

“(I) A representative of the Corps of Engineers.

“(II) A representative of the Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

“(III) A representative of the Navy Region Northwest.

“(iv) DIRECTOR.—The Director of the Program Office.

“(v) SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY.—The following individuals appointed by the Secretary of Homeland Security:

“(I) A representative of the Coast Guard.

“(II) A representative of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“(vi) SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.—The following individuals appointed by the Secretary of the Interior:

“(I) A representative of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

“(II) A representative of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

“(III) A representative of the United States Geological Survey.

“(IV) A representative of the National Park Service.

“(vii) SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION.—The following individuals appointed by the Secretary of Transportation:

“(I) A representative of the Federal Highway Administration.

“(II) A representative of the Federal Transit Administration.

“(viii) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—Representatives of such other agencies, programs, and initiatives as the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force determines necessary.

“(5) LEADERSHIP.—The Co-Chairs shall ensure the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force completes its duties through robust discussion of all relevant issues. The Co-Chairs shall share leadership responsibilities equally.

“(6) CO-CHAIRS.—The following members of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force appointed under paragraph (5) shall serve as Co-Chairs of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force:

“(A) The representative of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

“(B) The representative of the Puget Sound Recovery National Program Office.

“(C) The representative of the Corps of Engineers.

“(7) MEETINGS.—

“(A) INITIAL MEETING.—The Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall meet not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section—

“(i) to determine if all Federal agencies are properly represented;

“(ii) to establish the bylaws of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force;

“(iii) to establish necessary working groups or committees; and

“(iv) to determine subsequent meeting times, dates, and logistics.

“(B) SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS.—After the initial meeting, the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall meet, at a minimum, twice per year to carry out the duties of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force.

“(C) WORKING GROUP MEETINGS.—Meetings of any established working groups or committees of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall not be considered a biannual meeting for purposes of subparagraph (B).

“(D) JOINT MEETINGS.—The Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall offer to meet jointly with the Puget Sound National Estuary Program Management Conference and the Puget Sound Tribal Management Conference, at a minimum, once per year. A joint meeting under this subparagraph may be considered a biannual meeting of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force for purposes of subparagraph (B), if agreed upon.

“(E) QUORUM.—A majority number of the members of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall constitute a quorum.

“(F) VOTING.—For the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force to pass a measure, a two-thirds percentage of the quorum must vote in the affirmative.

“(8) PUGET SOUND FEDERAL LEADERSHIP TASK FORCE PROCEDURES AND ADVICE.—

“(A) ADVISORS.—The Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force, and any working group of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force, may seek advice and input from any interested, knowledgeable, or affected party as the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force or working group, respectively, determines necessary to perform its duties.

“(B) COMPENSATION.—A member of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall receive no additional compensation for service as a member on the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force.

“(C) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Travel expenses incurred by a member of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force in the performance of service on the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force may be paid by the agency or department that the member represents.

“(9) PUGET SOUND FEDERAL TASK FORCE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—On the date of enactment of this section, the 2016 memorandum of understanding establishing the Puget Sound Federal Task Force shall cease to be effective.

“(B) USE OF PREVIOUS WORK.—The Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force shall, to the extent practicable, use the work product produced, relied upon, and analyzed by the Puget Sound Federal Task Force in order to avoid duplicating the efforts of the Puget Sound Federal Task Force.

“(e) STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a State Advisory Committee.

“(2) MEMBERSHIP.—The committee shall consist of up to 7 members designated by the governing body of the Puget Sound Partnership, in consultation with the Governor of Washington, who will represent Washington State agencies that have significant roles and responsibilities related to Puget Sound recovery.

“(f) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force, State Advisory Committee, and any working group of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force, shall not be considered an advisory committee under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

“(g) PUGET SOUND FEDERAL LEADERSHIP TASK FORCE BIENNIAL REPORT ON PUGET SOUND RECOVERY ACTIVITIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and biennially thereafter, the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force, in collaboration with the Puget Sound Tribal Management Conference and the State Advisory Committee, shall submit to the President, Congress, the Governor of Washington, and

the governing body of the Puget Sound Partnership a report that summarizes the progress, challenges, and milestones of the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force on the restoration and protection of Puget Sound.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The report under paragraph (1) shall include a description of the following:

“(A) The roles and progress of each State, local government entity, and Federal agency that has jurisdiction in the Puget Sound region toward meeting the identified objectives and priorities of the Action Agenda, Salmon Recovery Plans, the Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative, and the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program.

“(B) If available, the roles and progress of Tribal governments that have jurisdiction in the Puget Sound region toward meeting the identified objectives and priorities of the Action Agenda, Salmon Recovery Plans, the Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative, and the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program.

“(C) A summary of specific recommendations concerning implementation of the Action Agenda and Federal Action Plan, including challenges, barriers, and anticipated milestones, targets, and timelines.

“(D) A summary of progress made by Federal agencies toward the priorities identified in the Federal Action Plan.

“(h) CROSSCUT BUDGET REPORT.—

“(1) FINANCIAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and every 5 years thereafter, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force, shall, in conjunction with the annual budget submission of the President to Congress for the year under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, submit to Congress and make available to the public, including on the internet, a financial report that is certified by the head of each agency represented by the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The report shall contain an interagency crosscut budget relating to Puget Sound restoration and protection activities that displays—

“(A) the proposed funding for any Federal restoration and protection activity to be carried out in the succeeding fiscal year, including any planned interagency or intra-agency transfer, for each of the Federal agencies that carry out restoration and protection activities;

“(B) the estimated expenditures for Federal restoration and protection activities from the preceding 2 fiscal years, the current fiscal year, and the succeeding fiscal year; and

“(C) the estimated expenditures for Federal environmental research and monitoring programs from the preceding 2 fiscal years, the current fiscal year, and the succeeding fiscal year.

“(3) INCLUDED RECOVERY ACTIVITIES.—With respect to activities described in the report, the report shall only describe activities that have funding amounts more than \$100,000.

“(4) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall submit the report to—

“(A) the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Natural Resources, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

“(B) the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Environment and Public Works, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

“(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to any other funds authorized to be appropriated for activities related to Puget Sound, there is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

“(j) PRESERVATION OF TREATY OBLIGATIONS AND EXISTING FEDERAL STATUS.—

“(1) TRIBAL TREATY RIGHTS.—Nothing in this section affects, or is intended to affect, any right reserved by treaty between the United States and 1 or more Indian tribes.

“(2) OTHER FEDERAL LAW.—Nothing in this section affects the requirements and procedures of other Federal law.

“(k) CONSISTENCY.—Actions authorized or implemented under this section shall be consistent with—

“(1) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and the Salmon Recovery Plans of the State of Washington;

“(2) the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 and the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program;

“(3) the water quality standards of the State of Washington approved by the Administrator under section 303; and

“(4) other applicable Federal requirements.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HIGGINS of New York). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2247, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2247 would establish a new program office within EPA to enhance rehabilitation efforts for Puget Sound in Washington State. Introduced by the gentlemen from Washington, Mr. HECK and Mr. KILMER, H.R. 2247 builds off an existing program for the Sound under EPA's National Estuary Program.

The bill authorizes \$50 million annually over 5 years to establish a Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force that will be responsible for coordinating the wide-ranging priorities for recovery of the region.

We heard in our subcommittee hearing in June that human development has degraded the water quality and habitat of the Sound. We need to do more to protect our iconic waters, like Puget Sound, on which 4.5 million people rely for food, clean water, and other ecosystem services.

We also know that the health of these waterways impacts critical species, such as salmon and the orca whales and a variety of other wildlife across the State. The Sound has been a member of the National Estuary Pro-

gram since 1988, engaging in a wide range of habitat protection, water quality improvement and monitoring, but a recent GAO study found that the threat the Sound faces outpace efforts to combat them. In short, we must support a more directed approach to helping the entire Puget Sound recover.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2247, and I include in the RECORD letters of support from Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, Puget Sound Partnership, and the National Audubon Society.

NORTHWEST INDIAN
FISHERIES COMMISSION,

Olympia, Washington, August 22, 2019.

Re NWIFC Support for H.R. 2247—Promoting United Government Efforts to Save Our Sound Act.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN DEFAZIO, RANKING MEMBER GRAVES, AND HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE: The Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission wishes to express our support for H.R. 2247 and respectfully requests passage of this important bill referred to your committee. The Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission is comprised of the 20 treaty Indian tribes in western Washington, who have constitutionally protected, federally adjudicated, treaty-reserved rights to harvest, manage, and consume salmon and shellfish in their usual and accustomed areas. These treaty-reserved resources are inextricably linked to the health of Puget Sound. If we cannot recover Puget Sound, we will not recover salmon, we will not maintain our culturally and economically significant shellfish fishery, and we will not protect our treaty-reserved rights.

We support H.R. 2247 because it recognizes the role of tribes as sovereign governments working collaboratively to restore our shared waters. The bill also provides a logical approach to Puget Sound recovery, by encouraging a more efficient use of government through improved federal agency coordination on Puget Sound actions. It is only logical that government agencies would align their related activities to compliment the significant contribution of federal funding directed toward restoration and not undermine those investments or our treaty-reserved rights.

We also support H.R. 2247 because it authorizes much needed increases to Puget Sound funding. We greatly appreciate the Geographic Program-Puget Sound appropriations Congress continues to provide. However, funding for Puget Sound recovery needs to be significantly increased to address the numerous threats that the Sound and our reserved-rights face.

For these reasons, we respectfully request you support passage of H.R. 2247 and thank you for taking the time to consider the bill and the important issues it addresses. We also extend our gratitude to Representative Heck for his leadership in introducing H.R. 2247, recognizing the important role of tribes and treaty rights in Puget Sound recovery, and taking the initiative to advance Puget Sound recovery as a national priority.

Sincerely,

LORRAINE LOOMIS,
Chairperson.

AUGUST 13, 2019.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
*Chairman, Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, Washington, DC.*

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
*Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN DEFAZIO AND RANKING MEMBER GRAVES: We, the undersigned, are writing to urge your support to pass H.R. 2247, the “Promoting United Government Efforts To Save Our Sound” (PUGET SOS) Act, introduced earlier this year by Congressman Denny Heck and Congressman Derek Kilmer to strengthen federal support for actions that are essential to Puget Sound recovery.

Puget Sound is a complex ecosystem encompassing mountains, farmlands, cities, rivers, forests, and wetlands. Sixteen major rivers flow to Puget Sound and 20 treaty tribes call the region home.

Currently, 4.5 million people live in the Puget Sound area, with another 1.3 million expected to live here by 2040. In May, the Seattle Times reported that Seattle was the second fastest growing city in the nation in 2018, and the fastest in 2017. We are a region of innovators and entrepreneurs: 11 Fortune 500 companies are headquartered in the Puget Sound area, many of which have shaped 21st century life. Our economy is roaring, and the region’s natural beauty and recreational opportunities help businesses and companies attract top talent.

On the surface, Puget Sound looks healthy and inviting, but, in fact, Puget Sound is in grave trouble. Southern Resident orcas, Chinook salmon, and steelhead are all listed under the Endangered Species Act. Toxic chemicals and pharmaceuticals continue to pollute our waterways, and shellfish beds are routinely closed to commercial and recreational harvest due to fecal contamination. Despite a significant investment of energy and resources from federal, tribal, state, and local governments, habitat degradation continues to outpace restoration.

While this situation at times seems impossibly gloomy, the hundreds of passionate people who are devoted to seeing the return of a healthy and resilient Puget Sound give us hope.

Scientists say that we can still recover Puget Sound, but only if we act boldly now. We know what we need to do. The primary barriers between us and more food for orcas, clean and sufficient water for people and fish, sustainable working lands, and harvestable shellfish are funding and political fortitude.

The single greatest step we could take to ensure a durable, systematic, and science-based effort for Puget Sound recovery is to fully fund the implementation of habitat protection and restoration, water quality protection, and salmon recovery programs.

The PUGET SOS Act (H.R. 2247) would authorize up to \$50 million in funding for Puget Sound recovery, a significant and very welcome jump from the \$28 million per year that Congress has appropriated for the last several fiscal years.

The PUGET SOS Act also aligns federal agency expertise and resources. These are tremendous assets. Ensuring that federal agencies are coordinated, setting goals, and holding each other accountable will help increase their effectiveness and provide yet another boost to Puget Sound recovery. Establishing the Puget Sound Program Office at the EPA and codifying a Federal Task Force promises that these goals will be met.

Passage of the PUGET SOS Act would demonstrate to the nation that Puget Sound is vital to the economic, cultural, and environmental security of the United States. By investing significantly in the health and wellbeing of Puget Sound, federal decision-

makers demonstrate to the nation that Puget Sound is worth saving.

Thank you for your past support of Puget Sound recovery. We urge you to support H.R. 2247, the PUGET SOS Act, to ensure that the federal government is a viable, willing partner in this race against time.

Sincerely,

LAURA L. BLACKMORE,
*Executive Director,
Puget Sound Partnership.*

Eoin Doherty, Independent Contractor; Nicholas Georgiadis, PhD, Sr. Research Scientist, Puget Sound Institute, University of Washington; Tansy Schroeder, Island County Planning & Community Development; Steve Dubiel, Executive Director, EarthCorps; Jeanette Dornier, Chair, Pierce Conservation District; Jesse Salomon, Senator, 32nd Legislative District; Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive; Diane Buckshnis, Edmonds City Council Position #4, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council; Stephanie Wright, Snohomish County Councilmember.

Katherine Walton, Livable Communities Coordinator, Futurewise; Helen Price Johnson, Board of Island County Commissioner; Dennis McLerran, Cascadia Law Group; Terry Williams, Co-chair, Snohomish Basin Salmon, Recovery Forum; James W. Miller, Co-chair, Snohomish Basin Salmon, Recovery Forum; Norm Dicks, Former United States Representative, House Appropriations Committee, Defense Sub; Mark Phillips, City of Lake Forest Park Councilmember, Vice Chair of WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council; Stephanie Solien, Co-chair, Southern Resident Orca Task Force; Will Hall, Mayor for City of Shoreline.

John Hoekstra on behalf of Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust; Denis Law, Mayor, City of Renton; Teresa Mosqueda, Seattle City Councilmember; Stephanie Buffum, Executive Director, Friends of the San Juans; Teresa Mosqueda, Seattle City Councilmember; John Stokes, City of Bellevue Councilmember, Chair of WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council; Jacques White, Executive Director, Long Live the Kings; Commissioner Janet St. Clair, Board of Island County Commissioners, District 3; John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH, Secretary, Department of Health.

Stephanie Wright, Executive Director, RE Sources for Sustainable Communities; Shari Tarantino, Board President, Orca Conservancy; Robert Davidson, President & CEO, Seattle Aquarium; David Baker, Mayor, City of Kenmore; Director Alison Studley on behalf of Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group; Allan Elkberg, Mayor, City of Tukwila; Mindy Roberts, Program Director, WA Environmental Council; Kathy Lambert, King County Councilmember.

Nancy Backus, Mayor, City of Auburn; Howard Garrett, Orca Network President; Dow Constantine, King County Executive; David O. Earling, Mayor, City of Edmonds; Lunell Haught, President, League of Women Voters of Washington; Wendy D. McDermott, Director, Rivers of Puget Sound-Columbia Basin; Hilary Franz, Commissioner of Public Lands; Charlotte Garrido, Kitsap County Commissioner; Stephanie Bowman, Commission President, Port of Seattle.

Clare Petrich, Commission President, Port of Tacoma, Co-Chair, The Northwest Seaport Alliance; Maia D. Belion, Director, WA State Department of Ecology; Gail Gatton on behalf of Audubon Washington, Executive Director and Vice President; Senator Derek Stanford, Washington State Senate, 1st Leg District; Jamie Stephens, San Juan County Council Chair; Jay Manning, Chair, Leadership Council, Puget Sound Partnership; Mayor Jim Ferrell on behalf of City of Federal Way; Councilmember Keith Scully, City of Shoreline; Chairman Jeromy Sullivan on

behalf of Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe; John Marchione, Mayor, City of Raymond.

Matt Pina, Mayor, City of Des Moines; Joshua Morris, Urban Conservation Manager, Seattle Audubon Society; Kelly Susewind, Director, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife; Colleen Weiler, Jessica Rekos Fellowship, Whale and Dolphin Conservation; Sam Merrill, Chair, Conservation Committee, Black Hills Audubon Society; Jimmy Matta, Major, City of Burien; Representative Cindy Ryu, Washington House of Representatives, 32nd Leg District; Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor, City of Tacoma; Jeff Wagner, Mayor, City of Covington.

Penny Sweet, Mayor, Kirkland City Council; Michael Dawson, Water Quality Manager, Jefferson County Public Health; Matt Deniston, Managing Partner, Sitka Tech Group; President Arthur Campbell, N. Central Washington Audubon Society; Director Rachel Vasak on behalf of Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Assoc.; Karen Larkin, Chair, Tacoma Public Utility Board; Austin Bell, Deputy Mayor, City of Burien; Secretary Kurt Fremont, Puyallup River Watershed Council on behalf of President Carrie Hernandez and the Board of Directors for the Puyallup River Watershed Council; Nancy Tosta, Councilmember, City of Burien, Chair, Burien Airport Committee; Bob Edgar, Councilmember, City of Burien.

Lucy Krakowiak, Councilmember, City of Burien; Nate Nehring, Councilmember, Snohomish County; Representative Steve Tharinger, Washington State House of Representatives, 24th District, Co-Chair of the Strait Ecosystem Recovery Local Integrating Organization; Krystal Marx, Councilmember, City of Burien; Pedro Qlguin, Councilmember, City of Burien; Deborah Jensen, Principal, D Jensen & Associates; Jessie Israel, Director, Puget Sound Conservation, The Nature Conservancy in Washington; Karen Affeld, Executive Director, N. Olympic Peninsula Resource Conservation & Dev. Council; Commissioner Kate Dean, Jefferson County, Co-Chair of Strait Ecosystem Recovery Network Local Integrating Organization.

Other Individuals and Organizations:

Richard Brocksmith, Executive Director, Skagit Watershed Council; Zero Waste Washington; Liz Christeleit, Sitka Technology Group; Peggen Frank, Executive Director, Salmon Defense; Michael Messina, Director, Market Development & Business Affairs, Whooshh Innovations; Jennifer Grathwol Thomas, MES Principal Ecologist Water & Land Natural Resource Consulting; Heidi M. Kirk, Processing Manager, Evergreen Home Loans; Jim Wilcox, Wilcox Farms; Rebecca Benjamin, Executive Director, North Olympic Salmon Coalition; Aaron Peterson, Managing Director, Regional Fisheries Coalition; Auburn City Council.

Diana Gale, Puget Sound Partnership, Board of Directors, 2007–2016; Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society; Dana C. Ward, Co-Chair Conservation Committee on behalf of Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society; Bill Blake, Co-chair, Stillaguamish Watershed; Bill Dewey, Taylor Shellfish Farms; Cindy Spiry, Snoqualmie Tribe, on behalf of Snoqualmie Watershed Forum; Neala Kendall, PhD, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; Tessa Francis, University of Washington; Larry Franks, Friends of the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery; Don Hunger, Executive Director, Northwest Straits Foundation; David Bestock, Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association; Laurie Gogic, Whale Scout.

Chris Garcia, City Council—City of North Bend; Jim Ribail, Carnation City Council, Position 2; Terry Ryan, Snohomish County Council Chair; Puget Soundkeeper Alliance; Toby Murray, Leadership Council Member,

Puget Sound Partnership; Robert Kaye, Conservation Committee Chair, North Cascades Audubon; John Burk, Division Manager, City of Tacoma; Nan McKay, Member, Northwest Straits Commission, Member, Northwest Straits Foundation Board of Directors, Past Chair, Puget Sound Action Team, Past Executive Director, Puget Sound Water Quality Authority; Rodney Pond, Executive Director, Sound Salmon Solutions; Mendy Harlow, Executive Director, Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group; Lance Winecka, Executive Director, South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group; Jan Newton, Co-Director, Washington Ocean Acidification Center; Terrie Klinger, Co-Director, Washington Ocean Acidification Center; Alan Clark, Chair, Northwest Straits Commission; Snohomish Conservation District; Jeff Osmundson, President, Skagit Audubon Society; Deborah Stinson, Mayor, City of Port Townsend.

Private Citizens:

Elizabeth Chapple, Donna J. Nickerson, Kimi Izzi, Natasha Lozano, Holly Powers, Jennifer Stock, Phil Arminger, Linda Studley, Lynn Stansbury, Raven Skyriver, Fred Rowley, Angela Liljegren, Tamara Stepas, Leah Zuckerman, James Nichols, Kathy Jacobs, Joan Alworth, JP Kemmick, Jessica Baird, Sheida Sahandy, Gina Abernathy, Dany Border, Betsy Adams, Joni K. Dennison, Richard Noll, Scott Patrick, Annika Fain, Cat Martinez, Rebecca Canright, Mary Simkin-Maass, Joan Miller, Katie Devlin, Desi Nagyfy, Barbara Rosenkotter, Pam Barber, Kate Pflaumer, Matt Nunn, Sharon Truax, Emily Norland, Marjorie Millner.

Stacey McKinley, Brenda Michaels, Chris Tompkins, Curtis Cawley, Jane Jaehning, Randy Collins, Amy Mower, Anne Hawkins, Chris Marrs, Matt McKenna, John Smith, David Taft, Bea Kelleigh, Peg Peterson, Julia Buck, Donna Mason, Pamela Harris, John Koblinsky, Tamara Wood, Marian Wineman, Sue Froeschner, Ashley Song, Rich Bergner, Walt Tabler, MaryJane Gasdick, Benjamin Premack, Richard Kimball, Brie Gyncild, John Pottle, Lynn Barker, Charles Barker, Roseann Seeley, Ara Bijl Kobara, Dorrie Jordan, Jeanette Kors, Brandon Herman, Lyle Anderson, Mike Snow, Shannon Markley, John Lundquist, Doris Wilson.

Vicky Gannon, Corinne Salcedo, Pam Borscope, Tom Putnam, Rebecca Putnam, Joanne Mayhew, Maradel Gale, Donielle Stevens, Aaron Hussmann, Barbara Stevenson, Linda Story, Shane Kostka, Mary Jo Wilkins, Phyllis Farell, Fay Payton, Anne Ryland, Philip Ratcliff, Joe Ginsburg, Carey Falter, Jeffrey Pancier, Hilary Thomas, Matthew Hilliard, Jennifer Nelson, Mark D. Blitzer, Katherine Balles, Delorse Lovelady, Cornelia B Teed, Natalie Chapin, Kristin Felix, Nikki Nichols, Robert Hannigan, Tess Morgan, Katie Stansell, Michael Hoffman, Laurie Kadet, Miranda Marti, Serena Winham, Len Elliot, Matt Anderson, Norman Baker, Patrick Conn, Margot Rosenberg.

Elizabeth Shoemaker, Ronnie Bush, Francis Lenski, Paul Roberts, Aaron Flaster, Marco Constans, Ginny Davis, Marilyn Smith, Richard Horner, Vanessa Jamison, Ann Lazaroff, Donna Alexander, Phyllis Oshikawa, Emily Rahlmann, Robert Triggs, Don Thomsen, Sandra Boren, Alex Logan, Chris Burdett, Cathy O'Shea, Julie Lakey, Mary Cunningham, Kathleen Schaeffer, Richard Weiss, Janice Sears, Linda Massey, Paul Shelton, Jim McRoberts, Maria DeLeo, Rebecca Sisson, Terence McDonald, George Keefe, Connie Nelson, Janet Wynne, Yolanda Sayles, James Hipp, Michael Garten, Liz Campbell, Pike Oliver, Jonny Layesky, Laurette Culbert.

Danielle Zitomer, Valerie Chu, Jim Pier-son, Jennifer Lutz, Suzanne Steel, Thomas

Keefer, Lyn Gardner, Kenneth Davis, Charlie Butt, Barbara Vigars, Neeyati Johnson, David Law, Carol Fillman, Jenna Judge, Dan Calvert, Hayley Mathews, Janet Williams, Derek Buchner, Kanit Cottrell, Mona McNeil, Lina Gleason, Cottie Warner, Susann Daley, Karina Morgan, Toni Howard, Brendan DeMelle, Patrick Hickey, Alexandra Stote, Michael Tucker, Warren Wilkins, Priscilla Martinez, Tracey Ouellette, Glen Anderson, Walter Gerber, Mary Gerber, Bonnie Rochman, Peggy Printz, Ashley Couch, Ivan Storck, Elizabeth F. Nedeff, Sherrell Cuneo.

Bob Zeigler, Eleanor Dowson, Carole Henry, Chris Knoll, Deborah Gandolfo, Jonathan Frodge, Deborah Engelmeyer, Stuart Mork, Susan MacGregor, Thom Peters, Sherry McCabe, Amanda Sue Rudisill, Margot Rosenberg, Linda Ellingboe, Asphodel Denning, Katrina Sukola, Glen Anderson, Sylvie Karlsda, Mona McNeil, Bill McFerren, Todd W Currie, Sylvie C Currie, Sharron Coontz, Tonya Stiffler, Matt Anderson, Gordon Wood, Robert Jensen, Jeni Woock, Sarah McCoy, Roger Martin, Shelia Roth, Jacqueline Jacoby, Peter Marshall, Bill Lavelly, Janet Walworth, Robert Richards, James Grimes, Pam Borso, Kathryn Jean Seymour, Sandra Gehri Bergman, Natalie Van Leekwijck, Sabine Doeninghaus.

Ann Seiter, Laura Ferguson, Marta Green, Steve Tholl, Brent Barnes, Denise Ross, Jon Bridgman, Jeff Parsons, Carrie Byron, Leah Kintner, Michael Johnson, Don Gourlie, Stephanie Suter, Heather Saunders, Kristin Hayman, Todd Hass, Kari Stiles, Nathalie Hamel, Kaitlin Harris, Leska Fore.

AUDUBON, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS,

Washington, DC, September 18, 2019.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,

Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,

Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE NAPOLITANO,

Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,

Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Washington, DC.

On behalf of the National Audubon Society's more than 1 million members, our mission is to protect birds and the places they need for today and tomorrow. We write to offer our support for the following bills related to important coastal and water conservation issues that will be the subject of the September 19, 2019 Markup before the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

HR 4031—GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE ACT OF 2019

The Great Lakes are home to 30 million people and 350 species of birds, but increasing challenges are on the horizon for the world's largest body of freshwater. Fluctuating water levels exacerbated by climate change, invasive exotic species and excess nutrients are putting even more stress on this ecosystem that is so important for birds and people. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has helped clean up toxic pollutants, protect wildlife by restoring critical habitat, and help combat devastating invasive species.

HR 4031 would increase funding for conservation projects to \$475 million over five years, by increasing the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative's authorization incrementally from \$300 million per year to \$475 million per year.

HR 1132—SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION ACT

The San Francisco Bay Area, home to the Pacific Coast's largest estuary, is also home

to a rapidly growing population of 8 million people, and provides for a host of social and economic values through ports and industry, agriculture, fisheries, archaeological and cultural sites, recreation, and research. However, San Francisco Bay has lost 90% of its tidal wetlands and more than 50% of its eelgrass and mudflat habitat. Climate change exacerbates these conditions through drought that alters the salinity balance, ocean acidification that reduces species abundance and diversity, increasing water temperatures, and rising seas causing flooding that eliminates living shorelines and puts communities at risk. Many species of waterbirds forage in the San Francisco Bay, including Brant Geese and Surf Scoters, underscoring the value of this ecosystem.

HR 1132 would authorize a San Francisco Bay Restoration Grant Program in EPA and funding of up to \$25m per year to support the restoration of this estuary.

HR 1620—CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Salt marshes are special places to birds and other wildlife, but sea level rise has elevated the waters in the Chesapeake Bay by one foot during the 20th century and is accelerating due to climate change. Salt marshes provide valuable "ecosystem services", including nurseries for the Chesapeake Bay's commercially important fish, a buffer protecting coastal communities against storm surge, a filter that stops nutrient and sediment pollution from entering the Bay, and a recreational resource attracting visitors who contribute millions of dollars to local economies. Chesapeake Bay's salt marshes host globally significant populations of both Saltmarsh Sparrow and Black Rail.

HR 1620 would increase the authorization of appropriations for the Chesapeake Bay Program to more than \$90m per year.

HR 2247—PROMOTING UNITED GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO SAVE OUR SOUND ACT

Despite significant investments in Puget Sound ecosystem health by state, federal, tribal and local governments, concerned members of the public, and conservation organizations, progress towards ecosystem recovery targets remains slow. The number of marine birds wintering in Puget Sound has declined significantly in the last 30 years and migratory, fish-eating birds appear to be at the greatest risk.

HR 2247 would authorize up to \$50 million in funding for Puget Sound recovery. The PUGET SOS Act also aligns federal agency expertise and resources, ensuring that federal agencies are coordinated, setting goals, and holding each other accountable will help increase their effectiveness and provide a boost to Puget Sound recovery.

HR 3779—RESILIENCE REVOLVING LOAN FUND ACT OF 2019

Pre-disaster planning can help communities adapt to the changing flood patterns that threaten people and birds species dependent on shoreline and riverine areas. These changes have led to more frequent instances of "nuisance flooding," as well as catastrophic events. NOAA has found that "nuisance" or "sunny day" flooding is up 300% to 900% than it was 50 years ago. In addition, catastrophic flooding events have increased in both frequency and intensity. These trends have been particularly pronounced in the Northeast, Midwest and upper Great Plains, where the amount of precipitation in large rainfall events has increased more than 30 percent above the average observed from 1901-1960. As sea level rise accelerates, it only exacerbates these impacts, which further compounds vulnerability in flood-prone communities.

HR 3779 would amend the 1988 Stafford Act to offer low-interest loans to states for “disaster mitigation projects”, including investments in natural infrastructure projects, which would help communities prepare and recover from natural disasters.

We urge you to support and advance the bills listed above. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

JULIE HILL-GABRIEL,
Vice President, Water Conservation,
National Audubon Society.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2247.

H.R. 2247 represents good governance by codifying the Environmental Protection Agency’s restoration activities in the Puget Sound. The Puget Sound is the Nation’s second largest estuary, supporting more than 4.5 million people, more than \$365 million in gross domestic product, and a wide variety of species.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK).

Mr. HECK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California.

Mr. Speaker, I do indeed rise in strong support of H.R. 2247, the Promoting United Government Efforts to Save Our Sound, or the PUGET SOS Act.

As indicated, Puget Sound is, in fact, located in western Washington, but it is a national treasure. Indeed, to modify just slightly what my friend from Florida suggested, by water volume it is actually the largest estuary in the United States of America.

Puget Sound and its tributaries are one of the most ecologically diverse in all of North America, and it is, as has been indicated, the economic engine for the western part of our State, supporting maritime industry, commercial and recreational fishing, shellfish growers, tourism, and recreation.

But it is more than that. It is also absolutely critical to the Tribes that reside in Washington State who have stewarded it for literally millennia. And need I remind you; they have treaty-reserved rights to its natural resources.

Above and beyond that, it is central to the identity of anyone from western Washington. I ask you this: For those of you who have been to Seattle and have made the comment or a post from an August visit, it is beautiful. What is the image that comes to your mind? It is of Mount Rainier, above the shimmering waters of the Puget Sound. Or—and more about this later—it is of that magnificent black and white fish, the orca, breaching the surface of the water.

But here is the deal, Puget Sound is dying. Slowly but surely, it is under serious threat. Water and air pollution,

sediment contamination, and water flow disruption continue to devastate the fish, marine, mammal, bird, and shellfish populations of Puget Sound.

Indeed, that orca, the Southern Resident orca, population is down to 72, arguably not sustainable because we need to save the Sound. And if these trends continue, we will lose much of what makes Puget Sound a national treasure so special. And that should concern us all.

Fortunately, there have been many people across the Puget Sound region that have been treating these deteriorating conditions as a call to action. Tribes, State governments, local groups and private sector people are investing in recovery efforts.

Back in 2013, I teamed up with my good friend, roommate and colleague, Congressman KILMER, to establish the Puget Sound Recovery Caucus to promote Puget Sound preservation at the Federal level.

And in 2016, the Obama administration created the Puget Sound Federal Task Force, by executive action, to coordinate recovery efforts more efficiently among the Federal agencies. Still, we must bring more attention to bear on Puget Sound recovery, and that is why we introduced the PUGET SOS Act.

The bill will simply codify the Federal task force to ensure that coordination among Federal agencies continue—and we all want that—into the future and it also creates the Puget Sound Recovery National Program office at the EPA, elevating Puget Sound recovery efforts and putting them on a par with those deservedly of the Great Lakes and Chesapeake Bay.

And for the first time, the bill authorizes funding for Federal Puget Sound recovery actions. This is a product of years of collaboration between Tribal, State, and local stakeholders, including private sector investors.

Specifically, I thank the members of the committee. I especially thank my friend, Congressman KILMER. And I most especially thank my friends across the aisle, who joined in cosponsorship in support of this.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and the Puget Sound Partnership for their effort. The threats facing the Puget Sound are numerous and they are existential, but I believe that with a strong Federal partnership role and smart investments, we can act before it is too late. We can help recover the Puget Sound and preserve its ecological, economic, and cultural significance for generations to come.

The PUGET SOS Act is a strong first step towards recovery, and I encourage my colleagues to support the bill.

And again, I extend my gratitude to all of those who have put your shoulders to the wheel and gotten it this far in the process.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman.

We are all saddened, and deeply frustrated, to see the iconic Puget Sound continue to devolve into a dumping ground of human waste and sewage. It is no wonder, the species in our Nation’s largest estuary are facing increasing odds of extinction. We must do more to address this environmental crisis.

An aquatic toxicologist working with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has found that growth rates for salmon species in Puget Sound are stunned, metabolisms are distorted to the point of starvation, and physiological functions are disrupted when exposed to high levels of Prozac, caffeine, cholesterol medication, ibuprofen, bug spray, cocaine, birth control pills, and dozens of other drugs and personal care products present in Puget Sound.

Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to see my friends from the west side of the State, Mr. HECK, who has spent a great deal of his illustrious career working on this issue, as well as Mr. KILMER, who has also spent an inordinate amount of time working on this very, very important issue, working to address the debilitating impact the environmental degradation in Puget Sound is having on shellfish, on the endangered salmon, and on steelhead. And, as was mentioned, on our iconic Southern Resident killer whales, which are truly on the verge of extinction.

□ 1330

As my colleague CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS and I have been saying for years, we must focus on solutions that the science tells us will directly aid fish species now and not waste our precious resources and time on political motivations like the efforts to tear down our dams. This is a deadly distraction from the actual science-based solutions to support salmon recovery.

I want to continue to work with my colleagues to address problems facing endangered fish species throughout our region in a comprehensive manner. The challenges are many:

We must continue to tackle the pinniped issue, the avian predation issue, but we also must ensure that a robust hatchery program is in place;

We must continue to prioritize the world-class fish passage in our hydroelectric infrastructure;

We must continue to take a serious and thoughtful look at fishing and other human-caused impacts; and

We must build upon the habitat improvements and greater ecological conservation measures.

Mr. Speaker, we must focus on the science, not the politics. We must focus on the facts, not ideology or emotions. While I support the passage of this legislation—and I do—that we are voting on today, I believe it can and should only move forward as part of a much more comprehensive discussion and effort in the Pacific Northwest to address the needs of our iconic species;

the protection of our environment; the reliability of our clean, renewable energy infrastructure; and, certainly, the future of our region's economy and livelihood.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER).

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I rise today in support of the PUGET SOS Act, and I want to thank my good friend and colleague from the State of Washington, Representative HECK, for his tireless leadership on this important legislation, and his partnership in working to recover this iconic body of water.

Those of us who are lucky enough to call Washington State home know that the Puget Sound is a truly special body of water. Generations of our friends and neighbors have built their lives and made livelihoods on Puget Sound. Tribes, since time immemorial, have called the Sound their home.

We know that Puget Sound is critical to the environment and to our economic future in our region as well. Our economy is stronger because of the Sound. Our maritime industry is stronger, our fisheries, tourism because—listen—people want to come there. They want to boat or kayak on it. They want to go fishing or crabbing on it. They want to dig for clams and hike along the Sound's beaches. In fact, those experiences are vital to people from near and far, including my own family. It is one of our natural treasures.

Some of our region's most culturally important species, including salmon and orca and Dungeness crab, rely on a healthy Sound. And despite years and years of effort to protect and restore Puget Sound, we still have a lot of work to do to address the significant challenges, including stormwater runoff and habitat loss and harmful algal blooms that continue to threaten the crown jewel of our region's identity and economy. That is why I am proud to see the House advance this critical bill, which will bring to bear the coordinated Federal resources necessary to save Puget Sound.

If we are going to recover our salmon and orca populations, if we are going to ensure future generations can dig for clams, if we are going to respect and uphold Tribal treaty rights, we need the Federal Government to step up and support the work already being done by the State and Tribes and local communities and businesses that all depend on a healthy Sound. We need all oars in the water rowing in the same direction. I am proud that, by passing this bill, we will make meaningful progress toward those goals.

Mr. Speaker, I am not just here speaking on this bill as a Representative, I am here today as a dad. If future generations, including my two little girls, are going to have the opportunities to enjoy these treasures and to build their livelihoods in our region, we

have got to act now and protect and restore the Sound.

So, again, I thank my colleague and friend, DENNY HECK, for his leadership on this issue.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS).

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation. I rise in support of the PUGET SOS Act, Save Our Sound Act, important legislation to clean up the Puget Sound.

I join as someone who represents a district in eastern Washington. My district actually borders Idaho, but I believe that we need to be locking arms. We need to be working together to clean up Puget Sound.

For decades, we have invested billions of dollars, billions of dollars in research and technology, to recover salmon in the Pacific Northwest and save our orcas, and we need to continue that work to look for the best science to recover salmon and to save our orcas.

I am proud of the work that we have done. We see salmon returns improving. When you look at where we started to where we are today, we are at record levels.

Now, in Washington State, some are suggesting that we need to tear out our dams in order to save salmon and to save our orcas. It is a solution that is not backed by science.

The reason that I am in such support of helping save the Sound and cleaning up Puget Sound is because it is the number one watershed, right now, for salmon and for saving our orcas.

And if we really want to focus on getting results, we need to come together and figure out how we clean up Puget Sound, how we get the salmon returns improved, and, ultimately, how we all save the salmon.

So, for those of us in eastern Washington, we often feel like some in the State are looking to us. We want to lock arms and figure out how we actually make a difference, and one of those is going to be cleaning up the Puget Sound.

So, in eastern Washington, we have been on the forefront of policy to ensure strong salmon runs and clean up our rivers and lakes. I represent the city of Spokane, the second largest city in Washington State.

The people of the city of Spokane have committed to over \$300 million to clean up Spokane River so that we will no longer be dumping raw sewage. The mayor, David Condon, brought people together for an innovative water storage system, and President Barack Obama brought him to the White House to celebrate and honor this innovative approach.

Inland Empire Paper Company has spent nearly a billion dollars on technology to clean up and ensure that the

water that goes into the Spokane River is clean.

We are spending millions and millions of dollars to clean up Lake Roosevelt behind Grand Coulee Dam. We are on track to have Lake Roosevelt meet clean drinking water standards so that we can enjoy Lake Roosevelt, we can fish, and we can enjoy the beaches.

It breaks my heart, though, when I hear what is going on in Puget Sound and the impact that Puget Sound is having on recovering salmon and orcas: In 2009, 10 million gallons of raw sewage spilled into Puget Sound; in 2017, 250 million gallons of raw sewage spilled into Puget Sound; in 2019, 4.5 million gallons. We have been warned that stormwater is killing coho salmon before they even spawn.

As the Seattle Times said during the 2017 failure that spilled 250 million gallons of sewage into the Sound: "Not a single person from an environmental group or the public turned out to testify or demand action on the crippled West Point Treatment Plant, or even take notice of one of the largest local public infrastructure failures in decades."

Mr. Speaker, we are failing. We are failing to meet our obligation and the high standards that we expect for every body of water; yet, nearly every week, we have to defend our dams from the same environmental groups that have refused to look at the facts.

So I am stepping forward today, as a Representative from eastern Washington, with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, to say let's focus on what is actually going to get the results, what is going to recover salmon, and what is going to save our orcas.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. SCHRIER).

Ms. SCHRIER. Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to be standing on the floor today speaking in support of the PUGET SOS Act. The passage of the bill in this House is something that our State has been collectively working toward for years.

I thank Representative HECK and Representative KILMER and the other Members of the Puget Sound Recovery Caucus for their leadership.

The challenges facing our Sound are great and are compounded by our State's growth and climate change. Chinook populations remain far below recovery goals, despite having been listed as threatened since 1999 under the Endangered Species Act.

As the only member from Washington State on the House Agricultural Committee, I plan to use my position to highlight the importance of responsible farming practices, ecosystem recovery, and riparian habitats.

Mr. Speaker, the narrative that we can have farms or fish is false—we can have both. State- and county-level agencies are also doing their part to help both fish and farmers.

The Washington State conservation Commission is doing some amazing

work in the agricultural world. Our conservation districts work statewide to implement natural resource improvement projects and build landowner engagement and commitment.

Just one example is the work that the Pierce County conservation District did when they partnered with local farmers to address management practices and were able to have a substantial impact on the health of 278 acres for shellfish harvesting.

The Puget Sound needs protecting. Other bodies of water like the Chesapeake Bay and the Great Lakes have formal program status under the Clean Water Act, which helps ensure their consistent Federal funding. The Puget Sound and all of the wildlife in it deserve the same status under the Clean Water Act.

It is shortsighted and irresponsible to not fight for the Sound and its future. We owe it to the species whose futures are imperiled because of human activity. We owe it to our children and generations we will never know. We absolutely must protect Puget Sound.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close. I urge support of this important legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, with all of the support from the Washington delegation, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HECK. Mr. Speaker, several important considerations underlie the purpose and intent of the Puget SOS Act. Puget Sound and its tributary waters are one of the most ecologically diverse ecosystems in North America with natural resources that have ecological, economic, and cultural importance to the United States and the many Tribal nations that have stewarded it for millennia. The health and productivity of Puget Sound is not only the cornerstone of the region's quality of life and vibrant economy, but its worldclass salmon fishery, commercial aquaculture, agriculture, and port activities ripple throughout the Nation.

Threats to Puget Sound, such as water pollution, sediment contamination, environmental degradation, and habitat loss, jeopardize the economic productivity and natural resources that support the increasing population of the region. For nearly a decade, State, local, and Tribal governments, cooperative partnerships, and concerned citizens have worked together in a deliberate and coordinated way to direct and manage public resource allocation toward habitat restoration, improving water quality and shellfish farms, and developing a body of scientific knowledge, all of which have advanced the Puget Sound recovery efforts.

Tribal governments with treaty-reserved rights in the natural resources of Puget Sound have long served as co-managers of fishery resources, have engaged in Puget Sound Partnership processes and public forums to encourage a holistic and scientific approach to recovery efforts, and have continued in their role as stewards of Puget Sound, including by engaging with multi-faceted restoration and protection actions, and are thus an indispensable, equal partner in all Puget Sound recovery actions.

Despite significant and nationally recognized accomplishments, the rate of damage to Puget Sound still exceeds the rate of recovery. To outpace mounting pollutants and other cascading negative impacts, the next step in fortifying the recovery system is to align Federal recovery and protection efforts seamlessly with State, local, and Tribal investments, as the Puget SOS Act would do.

Water and air pollution, sediment contamination, habitat loss and decline, and water flow disruption continue to devastate the fish, marine mammal, bird, and shellfish populations of Puget Sound, threatening local economies, and Tribal treaty rights, and contributing to:

Significant declines in the populations of wild Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon, Summer Chum Salmon, Steelhead, and Pacific Herring, which are essential food sources for humans, fish, seabirds, mammals, and other wildlife;

Risks to the sustainability of fish and shellfish populations, and their food chains, reproductive cycles, and habitats, which also threaten Federal obligations to protect Tribal resources, culture, traditions, and economies;

Marine species being listed as at-risk or vulnerable to extinction, according to State, Federal, and provincial lists that identify the species of Puget Sound and surrounding areas, including the iconic population of southern resident Orca whales;

Sediment contaminated with toxic substances—such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), heavy metals (mercury), and oil (grease)—polluting Puget Sound, threatening public health, and posing significant dangers to humans, fish, and wildlife;

Rivers and beaches failing to meet water quality standards and becoming unsafe for salmon, as well as business and recreational activities, such as fishing and swimming;

The closing of shellfish beds from contaminated pollution caused by sources such as stormwater and agricultural runoff; and

Mortalities and morbidity in shellfish due to the acidification of Puget Sound.

Puget Sound is a national treasure and its recovery and protection will significantly contribute to the environmental, cultural, and economic well-being of the United States and the many Tribal nations that have stewarded it for millennia.

The PUGET SOS Act underscores the recognition that Federal Government should align its efforts and resources to fully implement and enforce the goals of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, including State implementation of non-point source water quality standards for salmon, the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and all other Federal laws that contribute to the recovery and protection of Puget Sound. The Act also recognizes that the Federal Government should uphold Federal trust responsibilities to restore and protect resources crucial to Tribal treaty rights—including by carrying out government-to-government consultation—as well as support regional, local, and Tribal efforts to address environmental challenges.

The PUGET SOS Act is intended, among other things, to ensure that the recovery and protection programs, projects, and initiatives that the Federal Government undertakes in, or that otherwise impact, Puget Sound shall be actively coordinated and aligned with the protection of Tribal treaty rights and resources, the Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative, Salmon

Recovery Plans, the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program, and the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to all stakeholders who have come together to advocate for the recovery and protection of Puget Sound. The PUGET SOS Act is an important step towards those goals, and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KEATING). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2247, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1345

CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1620) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1620

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 “Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM.

Section 117(j) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1267(j)) is amended by striking “\$40,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2005” and inserting “\$90,000,000 for fiscal year 2021, \$90,500,000 for fiscal year 2022, \$91,000,000 for fiscal year 2023, \$91,500,000 for fiscal year 2024, and \$92,000,000 for fiscal year 2025”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1620, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1620. Introduced by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. LURIA), H.R. 1620 authorizes the funding for the program for the next five fiscal years, with increased funding levels to better advance Bay restoration protection efforts. This includes \$90 million for the

upcoming fiscal year, incrementally rising to \$92 million for fiscal year 2025.

Since its funding in 1983, EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program has been working toward improving the water quality and ecosystem health of the single largest estuary in the U.S. Reaching to six States, and the District of Columbia, I might add, the Bay is a cherished water and the number of people and local economies impacted by its health make a program like this very essential.

However, as stakeholders noted in our June 2019 hearing, the ecosystem remains under major stress. The Bay is threatened by nutrient and sediment loads from sources like agricultural runoff, wastewater treatment facilities, land-use changes, urban stormwater runoff and atmospheric deposition. We must continue to prioritize programs like the Chesapeake Bay Program and the protection of our Nation's water. This bill will support the continued cooperative efforts of all involved to achieve the protection of the Chesapeake Bay.

I would like to recognize several of the bipartisan committee members co-sponsoring the bill, including the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN), and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK), and also a former Member of Congress, God rest his soul, Mr. Cummings.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support of H.R. 1620 from: Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, the National Audubon Society, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

SEPTEMBER 17, 2019.

Hon. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO,
Chairman, House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN NAPOLITANO AND RANKING MEMBER WESTERMAN: The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) is a national coalition of sportsmen, conservation, and outdoor industry organizations that seeks to ensure all Americans have access to quality places to hunt and fish. We partner with 60 hunting, fishing, and conservation organizations to unite and amplify the voices of America's more-than 40 million sportsmen and women whose activities help sustain the \$887-billion outdoor recreation economy.

Today, we write in support of the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1620). The legislation would reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Program and increase its authorized funding level to \$90,000,000 for fiscal year 2020 and then increase its authorized funding level by half a million dollars each year through fiscal year 2024. The Chesapeake Bay Program provides critical federal investment, which is then leveraged several-fold by state and local dollars, to improve the quality of water and wetlands habitat in the Bay watershed.

The Chesapeake Bay Program is important to the continued conservation and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. While the health

of the Bay had been consistently improved over the last decade, the 2018 State of the Bay Report showed that the health of the Bay declined over the past year due to an incredible amount of rainfall that greatly increased the amount of nitrogen, phosphorous, sediment, and debris that flowed into the Bay. Without a significant increase in funding for federal programs that help to restore the Bay, such as the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program, this iconic waterbody will not be able to recover.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with your subcommittee to help increase funding in order to conserve and restore our iconic waterbodies.

Respectfully,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT
CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP.

AUDUBON, NATIONAL AND
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS,
September 18, 2019.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE NAPOLITANO,
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Washington, DC.

On behalf of the National Audubon Society's more than 1 million members, our mission is to protect birds and the places they need for today and tomorrow. We write to offer our support for the following bills related to important coastal and water conservation issues that will be the subject of the September 19, 2019 Markup before the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

HR 4031—GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE
ACT OF 2019

The Great Lakes are home to 30 million people and 350 species of birds, but increasing challenges are on the horizon for the world's largest body of freshwater. Fluctuating water levels exacerbated by climate change, invasive exotic species and excess nutrients are putting even more stress on this ecosystem that is so important for birds and people. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has helped clean up toxic pollutants, protect wildlife by restoring critical habitat, and help combat devastating invasive species.

HR 4031 would increase funding for conservation projects to \$475 million over five years, by increasing the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative's authorization incrementally from \$300 million per year to \$475 million per year.

HR 1132—SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION ACT

The San Francisco Bay Area, home to the Pacific Coast's largest estuary, is also home to a rapidly growing population of 8 million people, and provides for a host of social and economic values through ports and industry, agriculture, fisheries, archaeological and cultural sites, recreation, and research. However, San Francisco Bay has lost 90% of its tidal wetlands and more than 50% of its eelgrass and mudflat habitat. Climate change exacerbates these conditions through drought that alters the salinity balance, ocean acidification that reduces species abundance and diversity, increasing water temperatures, and rising seas causing flooding that eliminates living shorelines and puts communities at risk. Many species of waterbirds forage in the San Francisco Bay, including Brant Geese and Surf Scoters, underscoring the value of this ecosystem.

HR 1132 would authorize a San Francisco Bay Restoration Grant Program in EPA and funding of up to \$25m per year to support the restoration of this estuary.

HR 1620—CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM
REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Salt marshes are special places to birds and other wildlife, but sea level rise has elevated the waters in the Chesapeake Bay by one foot during the 20th century and is accelerating due to climate change. Salt marshes provide valuable "ecosystem services", including nurseries for the Chesapeake Bay's commercially important fish, a buffer protecting coastal communities against storm surge, a filter that stops nutrient and sediment pollution from entering the Bay, and a recreational resource attracting visitors who contribute millions of dollars to local economies. Chesapeake Bay's salt marshes host globally significant populations of both Saltmarsh Sparrow and Black Rail.

HR 1620 would increase the authorization of appropriations for the Chesapeake Bay Program to more than \$90m per year.

HR 2247—PROMOTING UNITED GOVERNMENT
EFFORTS TO SAVE OUR SOUND ACT

Despite significant investments in Puget Sound ecosystem health by state, federal, tribal and local governments, concerned members of the public, and conservation organizations, progress towards ecosystem recovery targets remains slow. The number of marine birds wintering in Puget Sound has declined significantly in the last 30 years and migratory, fish-eating birds appear to be at the greatest risk.

HR 2247 would authorize up to \$50 million in funding for Puget Sound recovery. The PUGET SOS Act also aligns federal agency expertise and resources, ensuring that federal agencies are coordinated, setting goals, and holding each other accountable will help increase their effectiveness and provide a boost to Puget Sound recovery.

HR 3779—RESILIENCE REVOLVING LOAN FUND ACT
OF 2019

Pre-disaster planning can help communities adapt to the changing flood patterns that threaten people and birds species dependent on shoreline and riverine areas. These changes have led to more frequent instances of "nuisance flooding," as well as catastrophic events. NOAA has found that "nuisance" or "sunny day" flooding is up 300% to 900% than it was 50 years ago. In addition, catastrophic flooding events have increased in both frequency and intensity. These trends have been particularly pronounced in the Northeast, Midwest and upper Great Plains, where the amount of precipitation in large rainfall events has increased more than 30 percent above the average observed from 1901–1960. As sea level rise accelerates, it only exacerbates these impacts, which further compounds vulnerability in flood-prone communities.

HR 3779 would amend the 1988 Stafford Act to offer low-interest loans to states for "disaster mitigation projects", including investments in natural infrastructure projects, which would help communities prepare and recover from natural disasters.

We urge you to support and advance the bills listed above. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

JULIE HILL-GABRIEL,
*Vice President, Water Conservation,
National Audubon Society.*

BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS & ANGLERS,
Missoula, MT, September 18, 2019.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Chairman, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Ranking Member, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN DEFAZIO AND RANKING MEMBER GRAVES: On behalf of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers (BHA), the fastest growing organization that represents sportsmen and women in North America, I encourage you to support House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and floor passage of Rep. Elaine Luria's (D-VA) Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1620) and Rep. David Joyce's (R-OH) Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act (H.R. 4031).

Over the last decade the health of the Bay's ecosystem has improved. However, with increased rainfall in the region and the amount of sediment, phosphorous, debris and nitrogen eroding into the Chesapeake watershed, the water quality is on the decline.

H.R. 1620 reauthorizes an important conservation and restoration program that safeguards the Chesapeake Bay watershed and increases the funding level to \$90 million for fiscal year 2020 and grows by \$500,000 each year until fiscal year 2024. Lawmakers funded the Chesapeake Bay Program at \$73 million annually for the past few years. The additional funds will restore the health of the Bay and boost the regional economy that depends on it for agricultural and outdoor recreation opportunities.

The second bill, H.R. 4031 reauthorizes funding to conserve and restore the Great Lakes, the largest bodies of fresh water in the world by incremental increases of \$25 million annually until fiscal year 2026. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is a successful program that strategically targets critical areas through multiple action plans and public input. Increasing funds will furthermore expand fish and habitat rehabilitation and implement collaborative projects between federal, state and local stakeholders.

The Chesapeake Bay and Great Lakes programs provide necessary federal investments that leverage state and local dollars to improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat for Canada geese, speckled trout and other game species. BHA believes H.R. 1620 and H.R. 4031 are essential to the health of fish and wildlife and the general public who depend on clean water for agriculture and municipal needs at home.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act. We look forward to working with you to advance the legislation through the House.

Sincerely,

JOHN W. GALE,
Conservation Director,
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers.

CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION,
Annapolis, MD, November 5, 2019.

Hon. ELAINE LURIA,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN LURIA: Thank you for sponsoring H.R. 1620, the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act. As the pre-eminent organization dedicated to Saving the Bay, we're proud to support this legislation. As you know, the Chesapeake Bay Program is the glue that holds the Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Blueprint together and provides essential oversight to ensure that all are doing their part.

H.R. 1620 reauthorizes this program and provides a steady annual increase in funding

over the next five years. This demonstrates Congress's continued bipartisan commitment to restoring the Bay and acknowledges the accelerated efforts that are needed to ensure that the requirements of the Blueprint are met by 2025.

This is essential at this critical juncture. The partnership has proven to be effective: dead zones are getting smaller; bay grasses are rebounding; oyster restoration is underway; and local economies are improving. However, the Bay is facing new challenges due to threats from the impacts of climate change, increased loads from the Conowingo Dam, regulatory rollbacks, and shortfalls in funding (including the over \$320 Million annual shortfall identified by Pennsylvania in its latest Watershed Implementation Plan). Simply stated, there is still significant work to be done and the leadership role of the federal government and the Executive Council at this stage is paramount. Passing H.R. 1620, and its companion bill, S. 701, will be an important piece to ensure that the Bay jurisdictions fulfill their obligations under the Blueprint.

We look forward to working with you and your fellow cosponsors to pass this vital bipartisan legislation. Again, thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

WILL BAKER,
President & CEO.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1620, the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act.

H.R. 1620 represents good governance to reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Program and passed out of the committee with strong bipartisan support.

The Chesapeake Bay watershed is one of the largest estuaries in the United States, covering 64,000 square miles; is home to more than 18 million people; hosts two major ports as major international gateways for trade; and produces about 500 million pounds of seafood each year, some of which I enjoyed just the other day.

I want to thank Members for their continued support for the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay, including Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia, Mr. RIGGLEMAN of Virginia, and Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania. I know this issue is very important to their districts, their constituencies, and to the entire region and, frankly, the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. LURIA), the lead sponsor.

Mrs. LURIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act. This bipartisan bill will reauthorize \$455 million for the Chesapeake Bay Program over the next 5 years.

The Chesapeake Bay is one of our Nation's greatest national treasures. It helps generate \$33 billion in economic value annually and is home to spectacular natural beauty and ecological diversity. The EPA's Chesapeake Bay

Program coordinates regional conservation efforts, but Congress has not reauthorized this critical program since 2005.

Thanks to innovative partnerships between local, State, and Federal agencies and NGOs, the health of the Bay has improved in recent years. But this progress is fragile, and unless Congress acts, we risk losing these gains.

In 2014, all States within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and the District of Columbia signed the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. This partnership committed these States to work together and with the EPA to put in place all the necessary conservation practices by 2025.

Part of this agreement includes setting a limit, called the Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL, on pollution from chemicals like nitrogen and phosphorus.

The EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program supports the work of States in meeting their commitments under this agreement. Funding for the Bay program goes directly to localities to improve local conservation efforts.

By passing the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act, Congress will reaffirm that all States in the watershed and the EPA must work together to achieve these restoration goals. This includes ensuring that all States have plans in place to comply with the TMDL and all other necessary conservation goals.

I want to thank my friends and colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Congressman BOBBY SCOTT, Congressman ROB WITTMAN, and Congressman JOHN SARBANES for working with me to achieve this bipartisan victory for the Bay.

I also thank Chairwoman NAPOLITANO and Ranking Member WESTERMAN for their support in bringing this bill to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this critical bill.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support today of H.R. 1620, the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act, that will extend and fund the Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program until 2024.

I am proud to have joined my colleagues from the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, Representatives ELAINE LURIA, BOBBY SCOTT, and JOHN SARBANES in introducing this important legislation.

The Chesapeake Bay is, indeed, a national treasure and a centerpiece of the culture and economy of many communities in Virginia and neighboring States.

A clean and healthy Bay is the right thing to do for future generations, but it will also support local economies and provide numerous other economic and quality-of-life benefits.

The commercial seafood industry alone employs 34,000 in Virginia and

Maryland and generates \$3.4 billion in sales.

A clean and healthy Bay also supports a vibrant tourism and outdoor recreational industry. These industries in the watershed support over 820,000 jobs and \$13 billion in income.

EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program does important work in partnership with Bay States to control pollution and manage nutrient runoff into the rivers feeding into the Bay.

Through the Chesapeake Bay Program, we see the overall health of the Bay has improved significantly over the last 30 years. We are seeing better water quality, more rockfish, more blue crabs, more oysters, and the list goes on and on.

However, without continued collaboration among stakeholders and Federal support, progress in the Bay is indeed threatened. With today's actions, we are one step closer to ensuring that the Chesapeake Bay remains the economic foundation of our region that will be enjoyed for generations to come.

We all enjoy the Bay, whether we are in the Bay watershed or outside the Bay watershed. It really is, indeed, a national treasure.

If you look and think about the Bay, the workboats that you see there on a daily basis, the great way of life of folks in these waterside communities, it really is, I think, incumbent upon all of us to work hard and make sure we continue, not just to preserve the Bay, but make sure we see the Bay improve in water quality.

It plays an important role in my family. My son is a commercial fisherman, what we call in our area, a waterman, so he lets me know on a daily basis what is right and what is not right with the Chesapeake Bay, and encourages me to make sure we are doing everything we can to continue as good stewards of that fantastic resource, to make sure it continues to provide for those people that make their living off of the water; but also provides for the quality of life of those folks that live in the watershed, and continues to be a national treasure.

Even today under the stress, it is, indeed, one of the most productive water bodies in the entire world. If we continue on this path of improving the water quality there, I believe it can be even more productive and provide even more economic value, as well as just that intrinsic value that it provides to all of us; not just those in the watershed but to us as a Nation.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this measure and continuing the vital work of saving the Chesapeake Bay.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I wish to inquire if my colleague is ready to close.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I am ready to close.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I urge everyone to think of what Mr. WITTMAN and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle stated; that this Chesapeake Bay, it is a tremendous resource to our Nation, recreational opportunities, the shipping opportunities in it, never mind the wonderful seafood.

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

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

I am glad that this bill gets bipartisan support from Members of Congress and I intend to support the bill. I urge all my colleagues to support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1620, the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act. I commend my colleague and fellow Virginian, Congresswoman ELAINE LURIA, for introducing this bill which will further the Chesapeake Bay's ongoing restoration. As a co-chair of the bipartisan Chesapeake Bay Task Force, I recognize the critical role that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and its Chesapeake Bay Program play in coordinating the multi-state restoration effort. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this legislation.

Deterioration of the Bay and how to best address the problem has been a concern for almost half a century. While serving as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, I was part of a joint Virginia-Maryland legislative advisory commission focused on determining what actions were necessary to address Bay issues. We concluded that restoring the Bay would require more than just Virginia and Maryland, but rather, the collaboration of the entire 64,000 square-mile watershed.

The EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program, which was created during the Reagan Administration and ratified by Congress in 1987, facilitates the cooperation between the watershed states and the federal government to restore the Bay. Re-authorization of the critical Chesapeake Bay Program is long overdue.

Increases in underwater grasses and the blue crab population indicate our efforts are working, however more resources and continued coordination efforts are necessary to ensure that these gains are maintained and that the Chesapeake Bay is protected. The Total Maximum Daily Load, sometimes referred to as a "pollution diet," was established in 2010 and is a key part of the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program and the EPA's role in establishing and enforcing those limits are an essential part of the ongoing restoration process.

The Chesapeake Bay is a national commercial, recreational, ecological treasure and we have a moral responsibility to preserve it. I commend the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for reporting this bill favorably to the full House and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1620, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE ACT OF 2019

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4031) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4031

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 "Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2019" or the "GLRI Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE REAUTHORIZATION.

Section 118(c)(7)(J)(i) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1268(c)(7)(J)(i)) is amended—

(1) by striking "is authorized" and inserting "are authorized";

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(3) by striking "this paragraph \$300,000,000" and inserting the following: "this paragraph—

"(I) \$300,000,000"; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

"(II) \$375,000,000 for fiscal year 2022;

"(III) \$400,000,000 for fiscal year 2023;

"(IV) \$425,000,000 for fiscal year 2024;

"(V) \$450,000,000 for fiscal year 2025; and

"(VI) \$475,000,000 for fiscal year 2026.".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4031.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 4031 would reauthorize Federal appropriations for EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

Introduced by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOYCE), H.R. 4031 authorizes total appropriations of approximately \$2.5 billion over the next 5 years for restoration efforts under EPA's GLRI program. The wide support for this bipartisan program is evidenced by the diversity of cosponsors of the bill, including many of the committee members, such as Mr. GIBBS, Mr. CARSON, Mr. KATKO, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. GALLAGHER, and Mr. STAUBER.

The Great Lakes region encompasses eight different States and is home to more than 30 million people. These

waters are a national treasure and contain 84 percent of the fresh water of all North America.

As a Representative of a State where the availability of water is always, always an issue, I recognize why the Great Lakes Members are so devoted to protecting the water supply. So are we. Congress needs to renew its commitment to these types of programs which protect and restore our Nation's water.

We all know the current challenges facing our States to protect our water resource, including harmful effects of algal blooms. Many of our States are dealing with these challenges as we speak, and the Great Lakes are no exception. One such bloom in 2014 forced a drinking water ban that affected half a million people.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has been a critical tool for EPA and Great Lakes States to address ongoing challenges on local water quality, including algal blooms. So H.R. 4031 is necessary to support these efforts.

I urge all Members to support this very bipartisan bill to continue efforts for rehab on our precious Great Lakes.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from: Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, the National Audubon Society, and Healing Our Waters Great Lakes Coalition.

BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS & ANGLERS,
Missoula, MT, September 18, 2019.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Chairman, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Ranking Member, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN DEFAZIO AND RANKING MEMBER GRAVES: On behalf of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers (BHA), the fastest growing organization that represents sportsmen and women in North America, I encourage you to support House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and floor passage of Rep. Elaine Luria's (D-VA) Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1620) and Rep. David Joyce's (R-OH) Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act (H.R. 4031).

Over the last decade the health of the Bay's ecosystem has improved. However, with increased rainfall in the region and the amount of sediment, phosphorous, debris and nitrogen eroding into the Chesapeake watershed, the water quality is on the decline.

H.R. 1620 reauthorizes an important conservation and restoration program that safeguards the Chesapeake Bay watershed and increases the funding level to \$90 million for fiscal year 2020 and grows by \$500,000 each year until fiscal year 2024. Lawmakers funded the Chesapeake Bay Program at \$73 million annually for the past few years. The additional funds will restore the health of the Bay and boost the regional economy that depends on it for agricultural and outdoor recreation opportunities.

The second bill, H.R. 4031 reauthorizes funding to conserve and restore the Great Lakes, the largest bodies of fresh water in the world by incremental increases of \$25 million annually until fiscal year 2026. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is a successful program that strategically targets critical areas through multiple action plans and public input. Increasing funds will furthermore expand fish and habitat rehabilitation and implement collaborative projects

between federal, state and local stakeholders.

The Chesapeake Bay and Great Lakes programs provide necessary federal investments that leverage state and local dollars to improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat for Canada geese, speckled trout and other game species. BHA believes H.R. 1620 and H.R. 4031 are essential to the health of fish and wildlife and the general public who depend on clean water for agriculture and municipal needs at home.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act. We look forward to working with you to advance the legislation through the House.

Sincerely,

JOHN W. GALE,
Conservation Director,
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers.

AUDUBON, NATIONAL AND
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS,
September 18, 2019.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE NAPOLITANO,
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Washington, DC.

On behalf of the National Audubon Society's more than 1 million members, our mission is to protect birds and the places they need for today and tomorrow. We write to offer our support for the following bills related to important coastal and water conservation issues that will be the subject of the September 19, 2019 Markup before the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

HR 4031—GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE
ACT OF 2019

The Great Lakes are home to 30 million people and 350 species of birds, but increasing challenges are on the horizon for the world's largest body of freshwater. Fluctuating water levels exacerbated by climate change, invasive exotic species and excess nutrients are putting even more stress on this ecosystem that is so important for birds and people. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has helped clean up toxic pollutants, protect wildlife by restoring critical habitat, and help combat devastating invasive species.

HR 4031 would increase funding for conservation projects to \$475 million over five years, by increasing the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative's authorization incrementally from \$300 million per year to \$475 million per year.

HR 1132—SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION ACT

The San Francisco Bay Area, home to the Pacific Coast's largest estuary, is also home to a rapidly growing population of 8 million people, and provides for a host of social and economic values through ports and industry, agriculture, fisheries, archaeological and cultural sites, recreation, and research. However, San Francisco Bay has lost 90% of its tidal wetlands and more than 50% of its eelgrass and mudflat habitat. Climate change exacerbates these conditions through drought that alters the salinity balance, ocean acidification that reduces species abundance and diversity, increasing water temperatures, and rising seas causing flooding that eliminates living shorelines and puts communities at risk. Many species of

waterbirds forage in the San Francisco Bay, including Brant Geese and Surf Scoters, underscoring the value of this ecosystem.

HR 1132 would authorize a San Francisco Bay Restoration Grant Program in EPA and funding of up to \$25m per year to support the restoration of this estuary.

HR 1620—CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM
REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Salt marshes are special places to birds and other wildlife, but sea level rise has elevated the waters in the Chesapeake Bay by one foot during the 20th century and is accelerating due to climate change. Salt marshes provide valuable "ecosystem services", including nurseries for the Chesapeake Bay's commercially important fish, a buffer protecting coastal communities against storm surge, a filter that stops nutrient and sediment pollution from entering the Bay, and a recreational resource attracting visitors who contribute millions of dollars to local economies. Chesapeake Bay's salt marshes host globally significant populations of both Saltmarsh Sparrow and Black Rail.

HR 1620 would increase the authorization of appropriations for the Chesapeake Bay Program to more than \$90m per year.

HR 2247—PROMOTING UNITED GOVERNMENT
EFFORTS TO SAVE OUR SOUND ACT

Despite significant investments in Puget Sound ecosystem health by state, federal, tribal and local governments, concerned members of the public, and conservation organizations, progress towards ecosystem recovery targets remains slow. The number of marine birds wintering in Puget Sound has declined significantly in the last 30 years and migratory, fish-eating birds appear to be at the greatest risk.

HR 2247 would authorize up to \$50 million in funding for Puget Sound recovery. The PUGET SOS Act also aligns federal agency expertise and resources, ensuring that federal agencies are coordinated, setting goals, and holding each other accountable will help increase their effectiveness and provide a boost to Puget Sound recovery.

HR 3779—RESILIENCE REVOLVING LOAN FUND ACT
OF 2019

Pre-disaster planning can help communities adapt to the changing flood patterns that threaten people and birds species dependent on shoreline and riverine areas. These changes have led to more frequent instances of "nuisance flooding," as well as catastrophic events. NOAA has found that "nuisance" or "sunny day" flooding is up 300% to 900% than it was 50 years ago. In addition, catastrophic flooding events have increased in both frequency and intensity. These trends have been particularly pronounced in the Northeast, Midwest and upper Great Plains, where the amount of precipitation in large rainfall events has increased more than 30 percent above the average observed from 1901-1960. As sea level rise accelerates, it only exacerbates these impacts, which further compounds vulnerability in flood-prone communities.

HR 3779 would amend the 1988 Stafford Act to offer low-interest loans to states for "disaster mitigation projects", including investments in natural infrastructure projects, which would help communities prepare and recover from natural disasters.

We urge you to support and advance the bills listed above. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,
JULIE HILL-GABRIEL,
Vice President, Water Conservation,
National Audubon Society.

HEALING OUR WATERS, GREAT LAKES
COALITION,
December 3, 2019.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: On behalf of the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition, I write to urge the House of Representatives to bring to the floor for consideration H.R. 4031, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2019, before the end of the year. The bill, which is led by Reps. David Joyce and Marcy Kaptur, has broad bipartisan support with 50 cosponsors almost evenly divided and was unanimously supported in the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee in September. The Great Lakes define our region's way of life, provide drinking water for over 30 million Americans, and is at the heart of a binational economy that is the 3rd largest in the world. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has been restoring these waters and protecting the health and well-being of those that rely on them.

H.R. 4031 reauthorizes the successful Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and helps meet the on-the-ground needs of communities by increasing the annual authorization over five years to \$475 million. Over the past decade the GLRI has improved lives across Great Lakes communities after decades of environmental damage threatened public health, the regional economy, and drinking water. The GLRI has allowed the 8-state region to undertake one of the world's largest freshwater ecosystem restoration projects. Since its inception, the initiative has resulted in economic returns of more than 3 to 1 across the region and made tremendous progress. For example, the GLRI has:

- Tripled the delisting of areas with extreme degradation (Areas of Concern or AOCs)

- Increased the remediation of environmental and public health impairments nearly sevenfold

- Doubled farmland acres under conservation, reducing nutrient and sediment runoff

- Invested in critical research and forecasting of toxic algal blooms

- Controlled and stopped the advance of invasive species

- Restored habitat connectivity to over 5,250 river miles

Even with these results, there is still much work to be done. Two-thirds of beneficial use impairments remain untreated across 19 AOCs, placing the health of communities at risk. Drinking water and coastal economies remain under threat from toxic algal blooms that have shut down entire water systems, as was seen in Toledo, Ohio in 2014. Invasive species, like Asian Carp, are knocking at the door of the lakes and threaten its \$7 billion fishery. Moreover, emerging contaminants and a changing climate continue to exacerbate the challenges we face, many of which disproportionately impact people that have historically borne the brunt of environmental injustice. This underscores the urgency for the GLRI to address these growing threats by working to ensure restoration investments lead to equitable outcomes for everyone in the region.

The GLRI has been an environmental and economic success, but much work remains. The region stands ready to continue this important federal partnership and ensure that all benefit from and enjoy these investments in restoration and protection.

Since 2004, the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition has been harnessing the collective power of more than 160 non-governmental organizations representing millions of people, whose common goal is to restore and protect the Great Lakes. We are pleased to offer our support for this much-needed bill

and urge House leadership to bring the bill to the floor for a vote.

Sincerely,

LAURA RUBIN,
Director.

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

□ 1400

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

I rise in support of H.R. 4031. H.R. 4031 is a critical bill to reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, an initiative near and dear to my heart and the Great Lakes Caucus.

The Great Lakes, as was noted, is the largest system of fresh surface water in the world. The GLRI, as it is known, has been a catalyst for unprecedented partnership between Federal, State, and local agencies for years to improve the ecosystem, to improve water quality, and to support the economy of the entire Great Lakes region and the Nation.

H.R. 4031 has broad and bipartisan support with nearly 50 cosponsors, and I am proud to be one of those cosponsors. I thank our Members for continued support for the restoration of our Great Lakes. This issue is very important to my district and many other Members' districts in our Congress here.

The Great Lakes have an incredible impact on our region's way of life that cannot be overstated. At one point in time when I was younger, we actually had a license plate that called Michigan the Water Wonderland because of the importance of the Great Lakes on our State.

States all along the Great Lakes rely on them as a freshwater resource, a driver of our local and national economy, and a world-renowned recreation destination. It impacts from Minnesota all the way to New York.

In my home State of Michigan, we have the most Great Lakes shoreline of any State, with more than 3,000 miles of our State shaped by four of the five Great Lakes. My district is nearly surrounded by the Great Lakes system.

The projects that the GLRI makes possible have a proven track record of success and impact in our communities.

Take the Marysville shoreline in Michigan's 10th District, my home district, as an example. The GLRI provided the funds to remove a failing seawall and replace it with a natural, sloping shore.

Additionally, further south of my district, the restoration of wetlands in the Harsens Island area provided habitat for waterfowl and fish that had been destroyed over the years.

These projects resulted in the creation of jobs in the region, habitat restoration for wildlife, and a pathway for people to walk along the river or the lake, to view and enjoy it. This is one of the countless examples that highlights the importance of the GLRI for Great Lakes communities like mine and throughout the region.

GLRI investments have delivered great outcomes, but there is more work to be done to protect our Great Lakes, including stopping the spread of invasive species, like Asian carp; protecting our drinking water, a critical and urgent need; and restoring habitat loss.

I have advocated for GLRI since I arrived here and recently spoke with the President about the importance of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. It is crucial that Congress continues to authorize this program that protects and restores the Great Lakes. It, like many other estuaries we have talked about today, is a national treasure that our country relies on for drinking water, commerce, and more.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4031 offers a chance to continue this support. I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GARCÍA).

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative JOYCE and Chairwoman NAPOLITANO for their leadership on this matter. I rise today in support of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act to protect and improve the health of the Great Lakes and directly benefit the surrounding region.

I hail from Chicago and the Nation's gold coast along Lake Michigan. We know how important a healthy Great Lakes system is. Lake Michigan is not only Chicago's primary drinking water source, it is part of the largest freshwater source in the world, our beloved Great Lakes. Lake Michigan is a tremendous recreational resource and economic asset for Chicago and the State of Illinois.

Longstanding concerns, like the potential of Asian carp migrating into the lake, underscore the importance of advancing this important legislation.

This bill will support many projects important to the region. Chicago public schools, for example, were able to install green infrastructure and new community space at four elementary schools. The project added 1.2 million gallons of onsite stormwater storage capacity to reduce stormwater runoff throughout Chicago.

In Beach Park, Illinois, a project helped stabilize and protect streambed habitat. This, in turn, reduced nutrient pollution, sediment runoff, and increased water quality in both Bull Creek and Lake Michigan.

This bill will provide a much-needed increase in funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to support the continued restoration of coastal wetlands, the preservation of water quality, and the control of invasive species.

H.R. 4031 will protect the Great Lakes for future generations. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. I thank Chairwoman NAPOLITANO and Representative JOYCE for advancing this important measure.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOYCE).

Mr. JOYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I rise today in support of my bill, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2019.

First, I thank Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR and the 48 other Members from both sides of the aisle who cosponsored this important legislation. These Members come from each of the eight Great Lakes States, and they have been instrumental in advancing this bill to the House floor.

I also thank my colleagues on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee who unanimously supported the GLRI Act of 2019 during its markup back in September.

I cherish my memories growing up on the shores of Lake Erie, fishing and swimming with my family and friends. Everyone in this Chamber knows that I am not shy about my commitment to protect and restore the Great Lakes, for both current and future generations of Americans.

The Great Lakes are a key economic driver for our Nation. More than 1.5 million jobs are directly connected to the lakes, generating \$62 billion in wages annually. That is not to mention the fact that the Great Lakes Basin is home to more than 30 million people and that the lakes hold roughly 21 percent of the entire world's freshwater supply.

That is why I was proud to introduce this bill to authorize this critically important Great Lakes Restoration Initiative for an additional 5 years and increase the program's annual authorized funding level, ensuring communities across the Great Lakes region, including those in my own district of northeast Ohio, can continue to address their on-the-ground needs.

Through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, also known as GLRI, EPA coordinates its efforts with other Federal partners like the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as State agencies, local communities, and non-profit organizations.

GLRI projects have led to significant environmental benefits in the Great Lakes region since the program was created, helping restore more than 50,000 acres of coastal wetlands and reduce nutrient runoff that leads to harmful algal blooms like the one that shut down Toledo's water system in 2014, impacting hundreds of thousands of Ohioans.

The program also provides for a wide range of economic benefits, like protecting the \$7 billion Great Lakes fishery from invasive species like the Asian carp.

In fact, a recent study showed that every dollar spent on GLRI projects through 2016 produces more than \$3 in additional economic activity in the region. This means jobs and economic development in waterfront communities

like Mentor, Ashtabula, and Conneaut, Ohio.

Simply put, without the GLRI, critical environmental restoration activities and strong economic growth would never have happened. The bill is a great example of the progress we can make when we work together to address the issues facing our communities.

While we have made progress in our efforts to address nearshore health, invasive species, toxic substances, and wildlife habitat, much more work remains to be done to protect the Great Lakes. That is why I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 4031, working across party lines to protect the invaluable natural resource and economic powerhouse that is the Great Lakes system.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS).

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to strongly support this bill, which would increase funding to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to \$475 million by the year 2026.

This funding is essential to the health of the Great Lakes. We have made incredible progress to restore plant and animal habitats, control invasive species, combat harmful algal blooms, improve water quality, and clean up the environment of this region.

The revitalization of the Buffalo River in my district, which was once declared ecologically dead, environmentally destroyed, it is now a destination for nature and recreation and is one of the great success stories of this program.

It has yielded impressive economic benefits. Every \$1 in funding generates \$3.35 in economic activity. In Buffalo, the number is greater than \$4.

Attacks on clean water now threaten the progress that we have already made, and there is still much work left to be done. I urge my colleagues to join me in enthusiastically supporting this bill.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS).

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, no question, the Great Lakes are an important environmental and economic resource of the United States—\$200 billion in economic activity. So many communities rely on the Great Lakes for drinking water, jobs, recreation, and more.

While the Great Lakes may have had a troubled environmental history, recent restoration and protection efforts have been successful.

The GLRI is a major factor in these efforts, funding projects that will ultimately leave the Great Lakes in a better condition for future generations to enjoy.

Several years ago, when I was chairman of the subcommittee with jurisdiction, we had some concerns, so in our oversight responsibility and to protect taxpayer dollars, I requested the GAO do a study of this program, and it came back with an excellent return. That is why I think we are getting some of these returns about what is going on. Also, it is important that that study gave us some helpful ideas to improve the program. We are seeing that today, and the program is working very well.

I feel good that we did that study, and we know what is going on. We know the taxpayer dollars are protected, and we did our oversight role.

Ohio is home to many important projects funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative: State commissions to reduce phosphorous, Asian carp prevention, and various habitat restoration projects. The GLRI remains an essential element in repairing and preserving the Great Lakes.

I thank my colleague from Ohio (Mr. JOYCE) for sponsoring this bill. I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 4031.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I am so very pleased to rise in support of this bipartisan legislation to reauthorize and strengthen the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the GLRI.

Twenty percent of the world's freshwater resides in the Great Lakes. It is a national treasure and a regional economic engine.

I remember when I was first elected in 2004. On election night, I was so excited because I said now I get to represent Lake Michigan. It is one of my favorite constituents.

In its mere one decade of existence, the GLRI has not only generated environmental benefits, but it is helping to generate economic development as waterways that were once polluted, unusable, and off-limits to the public have become attractive to not only recreational users but to businesses that are able to open their doors to the public.

GLRI investments have been used in over 4,000 projects across almost 300,000 square miles of the Great Lakes Basin. It is truly a win-win.

Mr. Speaker, this bill takes the next step to support the ongoing efforts and partnerships that are making this program so successful in Great Lakes communities.

While I don't have much time, I want to highlight a couple of efforts that my constituents who are hard at work to make use of the funds that protect Lake Michigan. Here is one story of a small business owner.

Beth Handle is the owner and operator of Milwaukee Kayak Company, located right on the Milwaukee River in downtown Milwaukee. She came to my

office to share how cleaning up this river has benefited her business. Cleaning up the river changed the river from a place that people didn't want to go.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to Ms. MOORE.

□ 1415

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, cleaning up the river changed the river from a place that people didn't want to go, and now it is where families go to paddle board, swim, and explore the river and our city. Of course, Milwaukee is A Great Place on a Great Lake.

The Milwaukee Water Commons, while not directly funded by the GLRI, has been working with grantees and others to make sure that communities that have been historically disengaged are in those conversations.

Our Metropolitan Sewerage District is using it to clean up the Milwaukee Estuary, where there is a gathering of three rivers: the Kinnickinnic, the Milwaukee, and the Menomonee Rivers. This estuary is one of 30 areas of pollution concerns in the Great Lakes. The GLRI would fund 65 percent of these projects.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this bill, and I am so delighted that we are debating it here on the floor in this bipartisan manner.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI), my colleague.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4031, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act.

GLRI is a vital program that coordinates Federal efforts among 15 agencies to address the most significant challenges facing the Great Lakes.

The Great Lakes are among our most precious natural resources and a key economic driver in my home State of Indiana. For instance, the recreational boating industry alone provides \$2 billion to Indiana's economy each year. Yet the environmental and economic health of our region is under threat from a host of issues facing the Great Lakes, including pollution, severe erosion, loss of native habitat, invasive species, and destructive algae blooms.

GLRI is a critical investment in preserving and protecting the Great Lakes as well as creating jobs and growing our economy. That is why I am proud to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 4031, which would reauthorize the program funding through fiscal year 2026.

Protecting and improving the Great Lakes means making sure current and future generations can experience the natural beauty and the recreational activities like fishing, boating, and hiking that have always been important to our part of the Midwest.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Representatives JOYCE and KAPTUR for

their hard work on this bipartisan legislation. I also want to thank my fellow Hoosier, Congressman PETE VISCLOSKEY, for his decades of service and his leadership in making the Indiana Dunes Indiana's first national park.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to protect the Great Lakes by voting for H.R. 4031.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I inquire how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California has 12 minutes remaining.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairwoman of the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee for yielding me this time, and I thank her for her unyielding support for water issues across this country, including in our very critical Great Lakes region. She has been a true and unyielding champion on these issues, and I thank her.

Today's package of bills includes key priorities for protecting not just our Great Lakes, but ecosystems across our country. H.R. 4031, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2019, enjoys broad support from the Great Lakes region. The 49 cosponsors of the bill represent every ideological perspective of our caucus, and today's bill, which is on suspension, is a testament of that bipartisan, bicameral critical support.

In that vein, Mr. Speaker, I must also commend my colleague from Ohio, Congressman DAVID JOYCE, for his steadfast effort to work collaboratively to collect signatures for H.R. 4031 so we could move it from 2019 to 2020.

This Great Lakes Act recognizes the enormous, unmet need for the region. The interagency collaborative effort has brought to bear resources, expertise, and stakeholders from across the local, State, and Federal portions of the region and helped to focus resources on a major hot spot.

The Maumee River is the largest river that flows into the entire Great Lakes and is also facing gigantic harmful algal blooms. The Maumee River dumps all of these nutrients into Lake Erie, which then feeds the most productive part of the lake, endangering, annually, native species and creating massive harmful algal blooms with the critical ingredient of microcystin, which is toxic.

Annually, the harmful algal blooms threaten Toledo's drinking water system, which had to be shut down 3 years ago. It threatens the safety of our beaches and longevity of our ecosystem.

This Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is assisting communities to address the root causes of the blooms.

Since 2010, over 4,000 projects have been completed across the basin, the largest watershed in the entire Great Lakes, and a recent University of

Michigan study revealed that each dollar spent on the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative will result in \$3.35 million in additional economic activity.

The long-term goals of the initiative are delisting of the areas of concern, ensuring that fish are safe to eat and the Asian carp is kept out, and control of numerous environmental problems across our lakes, the largest source of freshwater on our continent.

Today's legislation offers a ramp-up back to the level for the restoration initiative initially envisioned when the program was first funded in fiscal year 2010. So it is pretty new as Federal programs go. This gradual ramp-up represents a consensus across the delegation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation on final passage.

Again, I want to thank Chairwoman GRACE NAPOLITANO for her work across both sides of the aisle and with Members of this House from every region of the country.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA), my colleague and the co-chair of the Great Lakes Task Force.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of continued preservation and restoration of the Great Lakes through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, a very important initiative for the Great Lakes system.

For Michiganders, the Great Lakes are directly linked to our identity, our way of life, our history, and our future.

The Great Lakes basin is home to more than 30 million people, and it contains 90 percent of the Nation's fresh surface water supply. Many know that, but they don't always understand the economic impact. That provides the backbone of a \$6 trillion regional economy.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has a strong track record of success, specifically in west Michigan, where the work to clean up toxic hotspots in areas like Muskegon is estimated to have increased property values by nearly \$12 million and generated \$1 million in new recreational spending. This holds true across west Michigan and the entire region, as every dollar invested in the GLRI generates more than \$3 in additional long-term economic activity.

The GLRI is critical to our efforts to protect drinking water, prevent the spread of invasive species, and to accelerate the cleanup of areas of concern.

With the threat of Asian carp inundating our waters, high water levels and erosion threatening our shorelines, and the ongoing threat of PFAS contamination contaminating our water, we must be committed to bipartisan solutions to protect this critical resource.

Recently, my Republican colleagues and I had an opportunity to spend some time with the President, and he recommitting his support for the GLRI and

towards the Great Lakes, as well as making sure that Brandon Road and other efforts to keep invasive species out are happening.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 15 seconds to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, the GLRI is a bipartisan example of an effective and efficient use of taxpayer dollars that protects, preserves, and strengthens the Great Lakes today and for future generations.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL).

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman from California for yielding and for all of her hard work on this bill.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 4031, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative—or the GLRI, as we all call it—Act of 2019, which will reauthorize the GLRI for 5 years and increase authorized funding for the program to \$475 million, annually, by fiscal year 2026.

Through the GLRI program, we have been able to clean up and delist environmental areas of concern. We have been able to restore coastal wetlands, as many of my colleagues have talked about, mitigate harmful algae blooms, combat invasive species, and do much more to help protect, restore, and maintain the Great Lakes ecosystems and strengthen our regional economy. And, as people have seen on the floor today, this issue has shared strong bipartisan support at all times.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for helping to educate the President on the importance of the GLRI.

The Great Lakes are not only a treasured natural resource, but a way of life that supports communities and jobs throughout the region. They are 21 percent of the world's freshwater supply.

Building on what my colleague from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) was talking about, my colleague, Ms. TLAIB, and I were able to kayak on the Rouge River on the 50th anniversary of its having caught on fire. We were surrounded by industry, but we also saw bald eagles and herons, and she got the most beautiful picture of a painted turtle.

Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Great Lakes Task Force, I am proud to be an original cosponsor, and I thank my colleagues, Representatives DAVID JOYCE and MARCY KAPTUR, for their great leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this important bill to ensure our Great Lakes are protected for all future generations.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire of the balance of time on both sides, please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan has 9½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from California has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from

Michigan (Mr. WALBERG), another colleague.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4031, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2019, not just because my district has Lake Erie on its borders, but because of the impact of such a great proposal that has had bipartisan support and, now, thankfully, even as recently as just this last week, to talk with the President with my colleagues and know of his support as well.

The Great Lakes are something that we all treasure in Michigan, and they are central to our State's economy and way of life. As stewards of this natural resource, it is incumbent on us to take care of them so that future generations can enjoy their beauty, their bounty, and their economic benefits. That is why the bipartisan support for GLRI is so overwhelming.

For the past decade, the GLRI has been the driving force behind cleaning up and protecting the Great Lakes. Funds from this successful program go towards restoring wetlands, combating harmful algae blooms, stopping invasive species, and much, much more. With additional resources, we can accelerate and expand GLRI's impact even more for the citizens of not only our States, but of this great country.

I am proud to join my colleagues in this bipartisan effort to preserve the Great Lakes and continue it long into the future as beneficial for all who experience the greatness of what it is.

Let's pass this critical legislation.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act's reauthorization.

As has been mentioned before, I think, the Great Lakes represent 21 percent of the world's surface freshwater.

I am glad to see so many of my colleagues from the Great Lakes region here, but, really, all of us and the rest of the world have a stake in this.

The Great Lakes provide drinking water for 45 million Americans.

□ 1430

The lakes support one of the world's largest regional economies through agriculture, industry, fishing, and recreation.

For thousands of plants and animal species and millions of Americans, the Great Lakes are vital for life, and are our national treasure.

I wanted to say, this is really personal for me. The eastern border of my district, running from Chicago to the northern suburbs, is Lake Michigan. I live just a few blocks from the lake myself and have spent every summer of my childhood on the beach in Indiana enjoying the lake.

But we are threatened right now by climate change and pollution. Last year, the Midwest saw record flooding, worsening storms, harmful runoff, and toxic algae blooms that threaten drinking water and infrastructure.

Actually, we saw thousands of Americans who couldn't drink the water because of that algae bloom. And in my hometown of Evanston, beaches are closing or actually disappearing entirely because the levels of the lake are at record highs right now.

Just last month, these record water levels destroyed lakefront paths, and I was getting calls from condominium owners who were worried about their buildings getting—not demolished—but certainly damaged because of the high lake waters.

New estimates from the Army Corps of Engineers state that the lake levels could get even higher next year, and we are watching for that with great distress.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is absolutely essential to restoring the health and unpolluting the lake and protecting the grandeur of our lakes.

This is a bipartisan piece of legislation. People on both sides of the aisle are down here speaking eloquently about the meaning of the Great Lakes to them, and it is really refreshing. I think, for all of us to be able to join hands together asking for the reauthorization of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GONZALEZ).

Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4031, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2019.

First, I want to thank my good friends from Ohio, Mr. JOYCE and Ms. KAPTUR, for their leadership on this legislation. The Great Lakes are an essential natural resource, not only for my district and State, but for the entire country.

One of the world's largest bodies of fresh water, the Great Lakes provide fresh drinking water for over 30 million people. In addition, the Great Lakes serves as an economic engine, generating \$8.4 billion in wages, and supporting over 300,000 jobs.

But the Great Lakes are more than a source of revenue. Ask any of my constituents what the Great Lakes mean to them, and they will tell you they are an essential part of what makes northeast Ohio such a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

Over the past decade, both Democrats and Republicans have understood the importance of protecting the Great Lakes. Since 2010, the GLRI has catalyzed critical restoration action that both restores and protects the Great Lakes. In fact, for every dollar spent under the GLRI, an estimated \$3.35 in economic activity is produced.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4031 and ensure the preservation of our waterways and ecosystems for future generations.

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

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be able to speak on this initiative, given what is going on in the other house today where we have so much partisanship. This is the type of bipartisan work we should be doing.

I am honored to be a cosponsor of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. My district goes along Lake Michigan. I know it means so much for the communities of Port Washington, Sheboygan, Manitowoc and Two Rivers.

I would just like to clean up a little something here. I know a few years ago in 2013, there was a great deal of concern that the watermark in Lake Michigan was at an all-time low. People talked about climate change and how bad that was. It was good to report now in 2020 in January on the 30-year high on Lake Michigan. So maybe that is the reason for a crisis as well, but it is interesting to see how things kind of ebb and flow on Lake Michigan.

As previously has been said, about a fifth of the fresh water in lakes in the world is in Lake Michigan by itself. Lake Michigan is the fifth biggest lake in the world. We have had problems with invasive species, which is one of the major reasons why I am on this bill.

We want to keep the lakes clean not only for consuming water, but the fisheries, the fishing going on there is important, and recreation on Lake Michigan is important.

A lot of this money goes into the agriculture in places like Wisconsin. We do have to keep the lakes clean, and as we keep our farms clean, it results in less algae blooms and a healthier lake system.

So, in any event, I am honored to be a cosponsor on this. I am pleased that the Speaker has decided to put such a great bipartisan bill on the floor today.

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

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

Let me close with this: This bill passed committee with strong bipartisan support. As my colleagues have noted, including Mrs. WALORSKI, recreational use of the Great Lakes is an important component of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

As I close, I would like to quote the immortal words of country superstar, Craig Morgan. It is a little unusual, but I think it is appropriate today.

He said in a song:

I'm meetin' my buddies out on the lake
We're headed out to a special place we love
That just a few folks know
There's no signin' up, no monthly dues
Take your Johnson, your Mercury or your
Evinrude and fire it up
Meet us out at party cove
Come on in; the water's fine
Just idle on over, and toss us a line

Support reauthorization of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

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

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear that this has such great bipartisan support. It truly is an amazing bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4031.

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. MITCHELL. 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.

REAUTHORIZING LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN BASIN RESTORATION PROGRAM

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4275) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration 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. 4275

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

SECTION 1. LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN BASIN RESTORATION PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION.

(a) REVIEW OF COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN.—Section 121 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1273) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) ensure that the comprehensive conservation and management plan approved for the Basin under section 320 is reviewed and revised in accordance with section 320 not less often than once every five years, beginning on the date of enactment of this paragraph.”; and

(2) in subsection (d), by striking “recommended by a management conference convened for the Basin under section 320” and inserting “identified in the comprehensive conservation and management plan approved for the Basin under section 320”.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 121(e)(1) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1273(e)(1)) is amended by striking “, a 5,000 square mile”.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 121(f) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1273(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “2001 through 2012 and the amount appropriated for fiscal year 2009 for each of fiscal years 2013 through 2017” and inserting “2021 through 2025”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—The Administrator may use for administrative expenses not more than 5 percent of the amounts appropriated to carry out this section.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4275, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter in support of H.R. 4275 to reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program from the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation.

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN
BASIN FOUNDATION,

February 4, 2020.

Re H.R. 4275: Support to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI & MINORITY LEADER MCCARTHY: I would like to express our support for H.R. 4275—the reauthorization of the Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program within the Environmental Protection Agency. This program provides resources vital to the restoration of the ecological health of the Basin, as well as public education projects.

Although Lake Pontchartrain and its surrounding area continue to face environmental challenges, the Lake and its resources have made a tremendous comeback. Much of this success is due to interested and concerned citizens who want a clean, healthy Lake and Basin for this and future generations, all of which would not be possible without your support of this PRP funding.

Sincerely,

KRISTI L. TRAIL, P.E.,
Executive Director.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4275 will reauthorize EPA's Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program for the next 5 years.

Introduced by the gentlemen from Louisiana, Mr. GRAVES and Mr. RICHMOND, it reauthorizes the program for the next 5 years with continued funding of \$20 million annually over 5 years. It also caps EPA's administrative expenses at 5 percent.

At our June subcommittee hearing, we received testimony on current threats to the Lake Pontchartrain region and its watershed. Covering a 10,000-square-mile area, the basin faces

impacts from logging, urban, and agriculture runoff, sewage overflows and nonpoint source pollution.

This is an example of human development having an extreme impact on the entire watershed, capable of causing entire dead zones as we are now seeing. With impaired wetlands prevented from acting as natural filters for these pollutants, the entire lake is at risk.

This program represents a collaborative effort for Federal, State, and local entities to restore the ecological health of the basin.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4275, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4275. H.R. 4275 represents good governance to reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program. The Lake Pontchartrain Basin watershed is home to approximately 2.2 million people and covers 5,000 square miles.

In June of last year when the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing on many of these regional watershed programs, we invited Ms. Kristi Trail from the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation to testify on the need and importance of reauthorizing this program.

During that hearing, we heard that Lake Pontchartrain and its surrounding watershed play an integral part of the wetland ecosystem of the Gulf Coast, contributing over \$35 million to the local economy.

As a result of the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation's work through this program, the lake is making a tremendous comeback by constructing multiple reefs for fish habitats, improving previously impaired water bodies, and growing their community outreach programs.

I would like to thank Mr. GARRET GRAVES, the sponsor of this bill, for putting this forward and for his support.

I also would like to recognize the fact that we limit the EPA's administration to 5 percent. So the money goes to restore Lake Pontchartrain.

For these reasons and numerous others, I urge support of this program and this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I promise to conserve time and conserve the lake.

Mr. Speaker, Lake Pontchartrain is perhaps not a very well-known lake. It is actually the second largest saltwater lake in the United States, but it wasn't always this way.

Lake Pontchartrain, as a result of coastal land loss in Louisiana, has had this intrusion of saltwater that has

fundamentally changed the ecosystem of that lake and the communities.

This is a lake that serves as a watershed for 16 parishes in Louisiana, 4 counties in Mississippi, and most importantly, this lake takes the brunt of the surge from 2 Canadian provinces and 31 States.

Mr. Speaker, what happens is each time we have these high-water years on the Mississippi River system which drains 31 States and 2 Canadian provinces, there is an emergency relief valve that sends water through the Bonnet Carre Spillway into Lake Pontchartrain.

This isn't water that is coming from Louisiana. In fact, less than 1 percent of the water is even coming from the State of Mississippi. It is water coming from all of these States, from Montana, to New York, to Canada, and all of these States in this large watershed funnel in-between.

And so on average, the Bonnet Carre Spillway had been operated once every decade; once every 10 years. Yet, in recent years, we have had to open it four times, including last year. Last year, for the first time ever, it was opened in January, and for the first time ever, it was actually operated twice in 1 year.

And so this is in the State of Louisiana. This is this lake, this basin, this watershed that has been taking it on the chin for the rest of the country.

□ 1445

The reason this is important, Mr. Speaker, is because this lake is an incredibly productive ecosystem with recreational and commercial fishing. You see lots of folks out there in sailboats and other boats out there enjoying the lake.

What has been happening as a result of all the Nation's water's drainage coming into here is that the health of the lake has been compromised and challenged, which therefore affects our fisheries, both recreational and commercial, and the millions of pounds of crabs that are harvested out of the lake.

This lake bounds New Orleans and Jefferson Parish. It bounds the north shore and the river parishes, such as Saint John Parish and Saint Charles Parish over on the west side.

This is an important part of Louisiana. Because of the coastal land loss that we have experienced and the change in this ecosystem, we must make investments to maintain this as we help to manage this rapid and unfortunate transition from a freshwater lake into a brackish and saltwater lake that we now have.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank my good friend from California, the chair of the subcommittee, Congresswoman NAPOLITANO, and her staff, Ryan. I want to thank Congressman WESTERMAN, the ranking member of the subcommittee; Ian Bennitt as well as Maggie Ayrea on our staff for all the work they put into this; and, of course, Chairman DEFAZIO and Ranking Mem-

ber SAM GRAVES for all their work in ensuring that we get this bill right and that we have the right caps on here to ensure that the money goes to actually investing in the lake, as Congressman MITCHELL mentioned, as opposed to going toward bureaucracy.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bipartisan legislation that we have introduced with my friend, Congressman CEDRIC RICHMOND of New Orleans.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. I am prepared to close, Mr. Speaker, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, and all sponsors in support of this bill. As I indicated earlier, it has bipartisan support of the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I urge its adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank both sides' staff. They have been doing a marvelous job. Of course, I thank the chairmen and the ranking members of both committees for all the support they have gotten on all these important bills on water.

Water is the economy, and we realize that we have to clean it up and help the communities work with the States and other entities. We will get it done.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4275, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE FRAUD PREVENTION ACT OF 2019

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5214) to amend title 5, United States Code, to prevent fraud by representative payees.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5214

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 "Representative Payee Fraud Prevention Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE FRAUD.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—

(1) CSRS.—Section 8331 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (31), by striking "and" at the end;

(B) in paragraph (32), by striking the period at the end and inserting ";; and"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(33) ‘representative payee’ means a person (including an organization) designated under section 8345(e)(1) to receive payments on behalf of a minor or an individual mentally incompetent or under other legal disability.”.

(2) FERS.—Section 8401 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (37), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in paragraph (38), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(39) ‘representative payee’ means a person (including an organization) designated under section 8466(c)(1) to receive payments on behalf of a minor or an individual mentally incompetent or under other legal disability.”.

(b) EMBEZZLEMENT OR CONVERSION.—

(1) CSRS.—Subchapter III of chapter 83 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 8345 the following:

“§ 8345a. Embezzlement or conversion of payments

“(a) EMBEZZLING AND CONVERSION GENERALLY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—It shall be unlawful for a representative payee to embezzle or in any manner convert all or any part of the amounts received from payments received as a representative payee to a use other than for the use and benefit of the minor or individual on whose behalf such payments were received.

“(2) REVOCATION.—If the Office determines that a representative payee has embezzled or converted payments as described in paragraph (1), the Office shall promptly—

“(A) revoke the certification for payment of benefits to the representative payee; and

“(B) certify payment—

“(i) to another representative payee; or

“(ii) if the interest of the individual under this title would be served thereby, to the individual.

“(b) PENALTY.—Any person who violates subsection (a)(1) shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.”.

(2) FERS.—Subchapter VI of chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 8466 the following:

“§ 8466a. Embezzlement or conversion of payments

“(a) EMBEZZLING AND CONVERSION GENERALLY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—It shall be unlawful for a representative payee to embezzle or in any manner convert all or any part of the amounts received from payments received as a representative payee to a use other than for the use and benefit of the minor or individual on whose behalf such payments were received.

“(2) REVOCATION.—If the Office determines that a representative payee has embezzled or converted payments as described in paragraph (1), the Office shall promptly—

“(A) revoke the certification for payment of benefits to the representative payee; and

“(B) certify payment—

“(i) to another representative payee; or

“(ii) if the interest of the individual under this title would be served thereby, to the individual.

“(b) PENALTY.—Any person who violates subsection (a)(1) shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.”.

(3) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) The table of sections for chapter 83 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 8345 the following:

“8345a. Embezzlement or conversion of payments.”.

(B) The table of sections for chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 8466 the following:

“8466a. Embezzlement or conversion of payments.”.

(c) DEFERRAL OF PAYMENT PENDING APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE.—

(1) CSRS.—Section 8345(e) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by inserting “(1)” after “(e)”;

(B) in the first sentence, by inserting “(including an organization)” after “person”;

(C) in the second sentence—

(i) by inserting “(including an organization)” after “any person”; and

(ii) by inserting “and may appropriately receive such payments on behalf of the claimant” after “claimant” the second place it appears; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) If the Office determines that direct payment of a benefit to an individual mentally incompetent or under other legal disability would cause substantial harm to the individual, the Office may defer or suspend direct payment of the benefit until such time as the appointment of a representative payee is made. The Office shall resume payment as soon as practicable, including all amounts due.”.

(2) FERS.—Section 8466(c) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by inserting “(1)” after “(c)”;

(B) in the first sentence, by inserting “(including an organization)” after “person”;

(C) in the second sentence—

(i) by inserting “(including an organization)” after “any person”; and

(ii) by inserting “and may appropriately receive such payments on behalf of the claimant” after “claimant” the second place it appears; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) If the Office determines that direct payment of a benefit to an individual mentally incompetent or under other legal disability would cause substantial harm to the individual, the Office may defer or suspend direct payment of the benefit until such time as the appointment of a representative payee is made. The Office shall resume payment as soon as practicable, including all amounts due.”.

(d) LIMITATIONS ON APPOINTMENTS OF REPRESENTATIVE PAYEES.—

(1) CSRS.—Section 8345 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

“(f) The Office may not authorize a person to receive payments on behalf of a minor or individual of legal disability under subsection (e) if that person has been convicted of a violation of—

“(1) section 8345a or 8466a;

“(2) section 208 or 1632 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 408, 1383a); or

“(3) section 6101 of title 38.”.

(2) FERS.—Section 8466 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) The Office may not authorize a person to receive payments on behalf of a minor or individual of legal disability under subsection (c) if that person has been convicted of a violation of—

“(1) section 8345a or 8466a;

“(2) section 208 or 1632 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 408, 1383a); or

“(3) section 6101 of title 38.”.

SEC. 3. IMPLEMENTATION.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF PAYMENTS.—Section 8348(a)(1)(B) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting “in administering fraud prevention under sections 8345, 8345a, 8466, and 8466a of this title,” after “8465(b) of this title.”.

(b) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Office of Personnel Management—

(1) shall promulgate regulations to carry out the amendments made by section 2; and

(2) may promulgate additional regulations relating to the administration of the representative payee program.

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by section 2—

(1) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) apply on and after the effective date of the regulations promulgated under section 3(b)(1).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. 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 the measure before us.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Representative Payee Fraud Prevention Act is a commonsense bipartisan bill that would protect recipients of Federal pensions from unscrupulous representatives who use the money for their own benefit instead of the retirees'. Currently, representative payees can receive pension benefits on behalf of a recipient who is a minor, is designated mentally incompetent, or has another disability.

Embezzlement or conversion of Social Security and veterans benefits by a representative payee is a Federal felony. However, there is no Federal penalty in current law for representative payees who embezzle or convert Federal retirement benefits to their own use.

The Representative Payee Fraud Prevention Act would close this loophole and apply the same penalties to those representative payees who misuse Federal pension benefits. We must ensure that those who have spent their careers in public service receive the benefits they have earned.

I want to thank my friend and colleague, Representative TLAI, for her hard work, along with Representative MEADOWS. It is a bipartisan effort on this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5214, the Representative Payee Fraud Prevention Act.

Federal employees often dedicate decades of their lives to public service.

When they retire, those Federal employees receive their hard-earned retirement benefits. Currently, the Federal Government issues payments to more than 2 million retirees and more than half a million survivor annuitants each year. Annuitants receive an average of \$2,500 a month.

If a Federal annuitant becomes incapacitated in some way, a representative payee may be appointed. A representative payee is a person who receives and manages benefits on behalf of another person who is not fully capable of managing their own benefits. Certainly, things like mental illness, disability, or long-term illness are just a few examples of situations where a payee may step in and provide that counsel.

Obviously, as we look at this, a representative payee has a duty to use financial benefits to assist with the care and well-being of the intended beneficiary. Surprisingly, though, it is not a crime for a representative payee to commit financial fraud against an incapacitated Federal retiree. However, under the Social Security Act, it is a crime to do so.

I have always assumed that this type of financial abuse of retired Federal employees was also a crime. But right now, under Federal law, it is not.

As the chairwoman from New York mentioned, this is a commonsense piece of legislation. I would like to thank my colleague, Ms. TLAIB, for her leadership on this.

This bill will make it a crime to embezzle Federal retirement benefits as a representative payee. If convicted, the representative payee could be subject to criminal fines and up to 5 years in prison. Obviously, this is a protection for our Federal workforce.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this particular piece of legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB).

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking Congressman MEADOWS for partnering with me on the bill, as well as our Chairwoman MALONEY and her incredibly strong and talented staff for their leadership and for the continued support of the work that we have to do on behalf of our residents at home.

I also want to thank our forever chairman, the late Chairman Cummings, who is looking down on us from above, for his mentorship and for working with us on this bill that would help some of our most vulnerable retirees.

We all know that no one deserves to be scammed out of their money, but that is especially true for our retirees. This bill, the Representative Payee Fraud Prevention Act, is a bipartisan effort to protect those retirees who are recipients of Federal benefits.

Retirees who have been declared mentally incompetent or have another qualifying disability can have their

monthly benefits paid on their behalf through a representative, frequently referred to as the representative payee. In recent years, what we have seen in our country is there has been a sharp increase in the number of representative payees who have taken advantage of their position and committed fraud, hurting many of our residents.

We need to hold them accountable, and this bill does that. The bill would expand protection to over 2 million workers all across the United States.

In my home State of Michigan, there are nearly 40,000 Federal retirees who are currently unprotected from this crime, impacting their quality of life. They are supposed to be living in peace during their retirement years. They are becoming targets instead, and we need to push back together, in a bipartisan way.

I hear firsthand from our senior residents about their concerns, from feeling neglected in the assisted living facilities to unaffordable drug prices, and I want to ensure that our older Americans have one less worry about financial predators who will misuse their hard-earned money.

For far too long, this lack of Federal protection has left some of our, again, most vulnerable civil servants without legal recourse when they are taken advantage of and their retirement funds are misused. We must ensure that the most impacted communities are protected on every front.

That is what this legislation will do. It will prevent those who have committed representative payee fraud from serving as representative payees in the future and hold them accountable to their victims.

Let's really ensure that our public servants and our civil servants who have dedicated their lives to serving our country are protected against this fraud.

Again, I want to thank my beloved Chairman Cummings for coming to myself and my colleague, Congressman MEADOWS. When he did, we couldn't say no to him, so we worked together in trying to resolve this issue for so many folks, again, 2 million Federal employees across the country who need this protection.

Mr. Speaker, I really do urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I certainly would rise in support of this legislation. I thank the gentlewoman from Michigan for her kind words. Ms. TLAIB has been leading on this.

The gentlewoman is right. Chairman Cummings had an infectious way of bringing people together, and I rise in support of this legislation as a tribute to his leadership and to her leadership.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 5214. I thank Elijah Cummings for his hard work on this bill, too, and my colleagues, Mr. MEADOWS and Ms. TLAIB, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5214.

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.

TAXPAYERS RIGHT-TO-KNOW ACT

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3830) to provide taxpayers with an improved understanding of Government programs through the disclosure of cost, performance, and areas of duplication among them, leverage existing data to achieve a functional Federal program inventory, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3830

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 "Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act".

SEC. 2. INVENTORY OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS.

Section 1122(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively;

(2) by inserting before paragraph (2), as so redesignated, the following:

"(1) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

"(A) the term 'Federal financial assistance' has the meaning given that term under section 7501;

"(B) the term 'open Government data asset' has the meaning given that term under section 3502 of title 44;

"(C) the term 'program' means a single program activity or an organized set of aggregated, disaggregated, or consolidated program activities by 1 or more agencies directed toward a common purpose or goal; and

"(D) the term 'program activity' has the meaning given that term in section 1115(h).";

(3) in paragraph (2), as so redesignated—

(A) by striking "IN GENERAL.—Not later than October 1, 2012, the Office of Management and Budget shall" and inserting "WEBSITE AND PROGRAM INVENTORY.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall";

(B) in subparagraph (A), by inserting "that includes the information required under subsections (b) and (c)" after "a single website"; and

(C) by striking subparagraphs (B) and (C) and inserting the following:

"(B) include on the website described in subparagraph (A), or another appropriate Federal Government website where related information is made available, as determined by the Director—

"(i) a program inventory that shall identify each program; and

"(ii) for each program identified in the program inventory, the information required under paragraph (3);

"(C) make the information in the program inventory required under subparagraph (B)

available as an open Government data asset; and

“(D) at a minimum—

“(i) update the information required to be included on the single website under subparagraph (A) on a quarterly basis; and

“(ii) update the program inventory required under subparagraph (B) on an annual basis.”;

(4) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “described under paragraph (1) shall include” and inserting “identified in the program inventory required under paragraph (2)(B) shall include”;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at the end;

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting “and,”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) for each program activity that is part of a program—

“(i) a description of the purposes of the program activity and the contribution of the program activity to the mission and goals of the agency;

“(ii) a consolidated view for the current fiscal year and each of the 2 fiscal years before the current fiscal year of—

“(I) the amount appropriated;

“(II) the amount obligated; and

“(III) the amount outlayed;

“(iii) to the extent practicable and permitted by law, links to any related evaluation, assessment, or program performance review by the agency, an inspector general, or the Government Accountability Office (including program performance reports required under section 1116), and other related evidence assembled in response to implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-435; 132 Stat. 5529);

“(iv) an identification of the statutes that authorize the program activity or the authority under which the program activity was created or operates;

“(v) an identification of any major regulations specific to the program activity;

“(vi) any other information that the Director of the Office of Management and Budget determines relevant relating to program activity data in priority areas most relevant to Congress or the public to increase transparency and accountability; and

“(vii) for each assistance listing under which Federal financial assistance is provided, for the current fiscal year and each of the 2 fiscal years before the current fiscal year and consistent with existing law relating to the protection of personally identifiable information—

“(I) a linkage to the relevant program activities that fund Federal financial assistance by assistance listing;

“(II) information on the population intended to be served by the assistance listing based on the language of the solicitation, as required under section 6102;

“(III) to the extent practicable and based on data reported to the agency providing the Federal financial assistance, the results of the Federal financial assistance awards provided by the assistance listing;

“(IV) to the extent practicable, the percentage of the amount appropriated for the assistance listing that is used for management and administration;

“(V) the identification of each award of Federal financial assistance and, to the extent practicable, the name of each direct or indirect recipient of the award; and

“(VI) any information relating to the award of Federal financial assistance that is required to be included on the website established under section 2(b) of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note).”;

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) ARCHIVING.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall—

“(A) archive and preserve the information included in the program inventory required under paragraph (2)(B) after the end of the period during which such information is made available under paragraph (3); and

“(B) make information archived in accordance with subparagraph (A) publicly available as an open Government data asset.”.

SEC. 3. GUIDANCE, IMPLEMENTATION, REPORTING, AND REVIEW.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “appropriate congressional committees” means the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(2) the term “Director” means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget;

(3) the term “program” has the meaning given that term in section 1122(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, as amended by section 2 of this Act;

(4) the term “program activity” has the meaning given that term in section 1115(h) of title 31, United States Code; and

(5) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Treasury.

(b) PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND RECONCILING PROGRAM DEFINITIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director, in consultation with the Secretary, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that—

(1) includes a plan that—

(A) discusses how making available on a website the information required under subsection (a) of section 1122 of title 31, United States Code, as amended by section 2, will leverage existing data sources while avoiding duplicative or overlapping information in presenting information relating to program activities and programs;

(B) indicates how any gaps in data will be assessed and addressed;

(C) indicates how the Director will display such data; and

(D) discusses how the Director will expand the information collected with respect to program activities to incorporate the information required under the amendments made by section 2;

(2) sets forth details regarding a pilot program, developed in accordance with best practices for effective pilot programs—

(A) to develop and implement a functional program inventory that could be limited in scope; and

(B) under which the information required under the amendments made by section 2 with respect to program activities shall be made available on the website required under section 1122(a) of title 31, United States Code;

(3) establishes an implementation timeline for—

(A) gathering and building program activity information;

(B) developing and implementing the pilot program;

(C) seeking and responding to stakeholder comments;

(D) developing and presenting findings from the pilot program to the appropriate congressional committees;

(E) notifying the appropriate congressional committees regarding how program activities will be aggregated, disaggregated, or consolidated as part of identifying programs; and

(F) implementing a Governmentwide program inventory through an iterative approach; and

(4) includes recommendations, if any, to reconcile the conflicting definitions of the term “program” in relevant Federal statutes, as it relates to the purpose of this Act.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall make available online all information required under the amendments made by section 2 with respect to all programs.

(2) EXTENSIONS.—The Director may, based on an analysis of the costs of implementation, and after submitting to the appropriate congressional committees a notification of the action by the Director, extend the deadline for implementation under paragraph (1) by not more than a total of 1 year.

(d) REPORTING.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which the Director makes available online all information required under the amendments made by section 2 with respect to all programs, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report regarding the implementation of this Act and the amendments made by this Act, which shall—

(1) review how the Director and agencies determined how to aggregate, disaggregate, or consolidate program activities to provide the most useful information for an inventory of Government programs;

(2) evaluate the extent to which the program inventory required under section 1122 of title 31, United States Code, as amended by this Act, provides useful information for transparency, decision-making, and oversight;

(3) evaluate the extent to which the program inventory provides a coherent picture of the scope of Federal investments in particular areas; and

(4) include the recommendations of the Comptroller General, if any, for improving implementation of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SEC. 4. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1122 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “described in subsection (a)(2)(A)” after “the website” each place it appears;

(2) in subsection (c), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “described in subsection (a)(2)(A)” after “the website”; and

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking “ON WEBSITE”; and

(B) in the first sentence, by striking “on the website”.

(b) OTHER AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 1115(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “the website provided under” and inserting “a website described in”.

(2) Section 10 of the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 (31 U.S.C. 1115 note) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(3), by striking “the website described under” and inserting “a website described in”; and

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking “the website described under” and inserting “a website described in”; and

(ii) in paragraph (3), by striking “the website as required under” and inserting “a website described in”.

(3) Section 1120(a)(5) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking “the website described under” and inserting “a website described in”.

(4) Section 1126(b)(2)(E) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking “the

website of the Office of Management and Budget pursuant to" and inserting "a website described in".

(5) Section 3512(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking "the website described under" and inserting "a website described in".

SEC. 5. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled "Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation" for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the measure before us.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1500

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill and would like to thank Congressmen WALBERG and COOPER for their hard work on it.

The Taxpayers Right-to-Know Act is a bipartisan and commonsense solution that would help identify areas of inefficiency in the Federal Government. The bill would create an inventory of Federal programs that would be published on a government website and updated regularly. The information in the inventory would also be archived.

Previous attempts at getting information from agencies on Federal programs have yielded incomplete and varied results, since agencies often have different ways of defining Federal programs.

This bill aims to provide streamlined and uniformed insight into the activities of programs governmentwide. The Taxpayers Right-to-Know Act would require agencies to report on the spending, authorization, and purpose of a Federal program's activities. Information would also be required on any awards of financial assistance. Access to enhanced information would result in greater transparency into duplicative or inefficient programs.

This bill would also provide a means to test a way in which this comprehensive inventory of Federal programs would be achieved across the Federal Government. It would require the Of-

fice of Management and Budget to report on how existing agency data would be used to create the program inventory or explain how the data will be presented and the results of a pilot program.

Mr. Speaker, I support this good government measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3830, the Taxpayers Right-to-Know Act.

The Federal Government is a complex and diverse organization. As Members of Congress, we are responsible for ensuring the Federal Government is efficient and effective. However, we lack the tools to understand how the taxpayer dollars are spent. Oftentimes, we lack a detailed list of the programs that are there.

This bipartisan bill will increase transparency and make it easier to see how the Federal Government uses its tax dollars.

May I edit that last statement just a bit? It is not the government's tax dollars. It is the hardworking American people's tax dollars. So this is a critically important additional tool.

In fiscal year 2019, the Federal Government spent nearly \$4.4 trillion. Taxpayers should know where their hard-earned money is going. To follow the money, we need to know what the government is doing, so a comprehensive inventory of Federal programs will help us do that.

In 2010, Congress required the executive branch to develop a comprehensive Federal program inventory. The program inventory Congress envisioned would have given the public insight into the government's organizational structure and provided a comparable list of all Federal programs.

Comparability is key. We need to see how these programs match up. To give you one example, there were 678 duplicative programs in the Federal Government that dealt just with sustainable energy. You can argue the merits of priority or the lack thereof, but, certainly, over 600 programs to deal with one particular issue across the government is something that cannot be efficient.

However, the Government Accountability Office found that the program inventory built for the previous administration in 2013 failed to meet the intent of the law or needs of Congress. Implementing guidance allowed far too much flexibility for agencies to define programs. Each agency used its own definition, which prevented programs to be compared to one another. So the Taxpayers Right-to-Know Act updates the law to require a more consistent definition of Federal programs across all agencies.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is a good bill that goes with the intent of Congress as laid out, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from North Carolina has no further speakers, I am prepared to close.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I am sure we have one other speaker who is running in the halls right now, but I may let him speak upon a different bill.

Let me just mention Mr. WALBERG's leadership on this, a real shout-out to him and his leadership on trying to make sure congressional intent was indeed addressed. I thank him for his leadership.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time, and I urge passage of H.R. 3830, as amended.

Mr. MEADOWS. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Yes, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. MEADOWS. I appreciate the gentlewoman's flexibility, but if you would let me reclaim my time and yield to the gentleman, who made it in by the hair on his chinny chin chin.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HIMES). Without objection, the gentleman from North Carolina reclaims his time and yields to the gentleman from Michigan.

There was no objection.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I did shave this morning, so there wasn't much hair on the chinny chin chin.

Mr. Speaker, American taxpayers deserve to know where, when, why, and how government is spending their hard-earned dollars. This is why I partnered with my colleague from Tennessee, Representative JIM COOPER, to introduce H.R. 3830, the Taxpayers Right-to-Know Act. This bipartisan legislation requires Federal agencies to supply an online accounting of their program activities in an easily searchable inventory so that Americans can keep tabs on where and how their tax dollars are being spent.

The inventory will account for how funds are allocated, the total amount appropriated, obligated, and outlaid for services and the intended population served by each program. It will also provide performance reviews for each program, including any and all inspector general or Government Accountability Office reports. All of the information provided for the inventory will be updated regularly to provide for a more real-time accounting of Federal program dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for support from my colleagues for this legislation. I think its time has come.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman's courtesy. I urge support for this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 3830, as amended, and yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3830, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

USPS FAIRNESS ACT

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2382) to amend title 5, United States Code, to repeal the requirement that the United States Postal Service prepay future retirement benefits, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2382

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 “USPS Fairness Act”.

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF REQUIRED PREPAYMENT OF FUTURE POSTAL SERVICE RETIREMENT BENEFITS.

Subsection (d) of section 8909a of title 5, United States Code, is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure before us.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us, the U.S. Postal Service Fairness Act, which I am a very proud cosponsor, would make a small but very important change to help address the dire financial condition of the Postal Service.

Common law requires the Postal Service to prefund the healthcare costs of its future retirees decades into the future. We are aware of no other entity, public or private, that faces this type of onerous financial burden. This mandate has cost the Postal Service billions of dollars since it was first imposed 14 years ago. The Postal Service has not made a payment into this fund since 2012.

This bill won't solve all the Postal Service's financial problems. Eliminating the mandate will take some paper liabilities off the books of the Postal Service, but it will do nothing to improve its cash position.

Without major structural reforms, the Postal Service will run out of cash in about 4 years. At that point, it will not be able to pay its own workers, and mail delivery would simply cease.

The Postal Service has taken significant steps to control its costs, including shrinking its workforce by close to 300,000 employees over the past 20 years. Yet, it has incurred net annual losses for 13 straight years.

The Postal Service currently funds universal mail service to nearly 159 million delivery points solely through the sale of postage. It is required to expand its network to deliver mail to approximately 1 million new addresses every year, even as the volume of mail continues to decline by a projected 45 billion mail pieces over the next decade.

So while I support this bill, more must be done to stabilize the finances of this important American institution on which so much of our population relies.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform, and Congressman CONNOLLY in particular, is working on comprehensive legislation to do just that. We will continue to work on comprehensive legislation after this bill passes.

Finally, I thank my good friend, Mr. DEFAZIO, for his tireless, passionate advocacy for this bill. I also thank Mr. REED and Mr. FITZPATRICK, on the other side of the aisle, as well as Ms. TORRES SMALL, for all of their hard work.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and rise in opposition to the bill. No one has invested more time than perhaps Mr. CONNOLLY or myself on postal reform. But I think it was Winston Churchill who said that no matter how beautiful the strategy, we must occasionally look at the results. And the results of this bill will do nothing to stop the post office from hemorrhaging money.

As we look at this prefunding—and I would agree with the gentlewoman—part of our solution, part of the bipartisan solution in the previous Congress, was to look at this prefunding issue and to try to address it. But to do it as a standalone bill, Mr. Speaker, is certainly not what the doctor ordered. Because even with this, the Postal Service continues to lose money each and every day.

I would say that if this was the bomb that solved their problem, it would have already been solved because they haven't been making the payments.

What the American people need to understand is, they are wanting relief from a payment that they are not mak-

ing, and it is going to make zero difference in terms of the viability of the Postal Service.

Now, we can all agree that there need to be major reforms, but this particular bill, and the way that it is being put forth, would actually hurt the potential progress we have in addressing real reforms. With that, I sadly rise in opposition to this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), the author of the legislation.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, in a Christmas Eve bill with no legislative consideration, an otherwise noncontroversial bill, a provision was stuck in to say that the Postal Service should prefund 75 years of health benefits for retirees.

Now, think about that. That means people who have not yet been born, who have not yet gone to work for the Postal Service for a career and then might retire, we are paying for their healthcare now. Name one other entity in the United States of America, corporate or government, that does anything like this. It is nuts. And it is a piggybank.

The money isn't being put into a trust fund to pay for their health insurance. It is going into the maw of the Treasury. Who knows where it goes. It maybe makes the debt look a little smaller. That was why President Bush pushed for it. But it is accounting for the majority of the losses at the Postal Service.

□ 1515

So, yes, this will help relieve pressure on the Postal Service and on rates. And I think there are a lot of Americans who would like not to see the postal rates keep going up.

Now, there are 300 bipartisan cosponsors. There aren't too many things around here these days like that because I think many people realize this doesn't make much sense.

And the Postal Service is a critical service. It is not a government-run business to make a profit. It is the U.S. Postal Service.

Star routes don't make money. If you represent a rural area, you can't make money out there. FedEx and UPS won't go out there. They get the Postal Service to take the stuff out there. If we dismantle the Postal Service, then everybody in rural America is out of luck.

And there are a whole heck of a lot of other people who are dependent upon this: newspapers, rural newspapers, small businesses.

Many years ago, when I first started working on this, I posted something on the website: Tell me if you need the Postal Service.

People from all the small towns all around my very large district said: I sell on eBay. That is how I make a living out here in Powers, Oregon, or in

other little places around my district. I couldn't afford UPS or FedEx. I get the one package price.

So this is critical.

And, every day, hundreds of thousands of our veterans get their drugs delivered by the United States Postal Service, many of them in rural areas, hard to serve, and, sure as heck, hard for them to get to the VA hospital or get into town.

So we need to stop burdening the Postal Service with something that makes no sense. Are there other things that need to be reformed? Yes.

But once we take this \$5 billion a year burden off them—they have already put \$50 billion into a theoretical account to pay for healthcare for future postal employees who haven't been born yet, who might work there, might retire some day, and might get health benefits. That is more than enough.

And, by the way, this doesn't score in any way. So that is why we have 300 bipartisan sponsors.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues at long last to undo this stupidity.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I love the passion. The only problem is it is misplaced.

I can tell you that, if this bill would truly solve the business model that the Postal Service has, I would rise and support it. If this is all we are going to do, hallelujah. Let's do it and get it done. But the gentleman is wrong. This does not solve the problem.

You can give them a pass on \$5 billion a year, and they are still losing money. That is the whole issue. That is the crux of the issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from North Carolina. I agree with my colleague from North Carolina, let us not confuse what we are talking about here today.

I very much appreciate the postal employees who deliver the mail to my house. When I go into a post office and need to mail things, they are wonderful people and give great service. That is not the issue here. The issue is: Are we going to fund, properly, the retirement and healthcare services?

I am not necessarily opposed to addressing the United States Postal Service's requirement to prefund its retiree health benefits. Doing so, though, in this manner would be disastrous for the American taxpayer. This bill's elimination of the prefunding requirement without instituting any reforms to tackle its fiscal status, as my colleague has said, would simply mean that Congress continues to play the game of kicking the can down the road.

The fact is that there is already a long history of public retirement accounts that have either dramatically cut retiree benefits or had to rely on a taxpayer bailout as a result of not fully prefunding their plans.

This is a snowball going down the hill that is going to pick up steam.

The only way to pay off the unfunded liabilities created by the U.S. post-office retiree health benefits—without enacting cost-saving reform to the U.S. Postal Service, which this bill does not—would be a taxpayer bailout.

That is why President Trump's Task Force on the United States Postal System issued formal opposition to removing the prefunding requirement. To quote the task force: "The task force does not believe that this general policy should change or that the liability for USPS retiree health benefits should be shifted to the taxpayers."

Mr. Speaker, I agree, to be clear, this bill moves taxpayers one step closer to a bailout of the USPS, and we should oppose this change on the taxpayers' behalf.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the distinguished subcommittee chairman.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and distinguished chair of the Oversight and Reform Committee.

Boy, what you just heard from my friend from North Carolina couldn't be further from the truth. This is not a taxpayer bailout. Quite the opposite. It is exactly what Mr. DEFAZIO, my friend from Oregon, described.

This is righting a wrong Congress created in the dead of night in a lame-duck session in 2006 in putting a burden on the Postal Service no other entity on the planet is required to meet. And we have an obligation, having created that problem, to fix it. That is what we are trying to do with this bill.

It is not a panacea. That is why we are working on bipartisan legislation to have a comprehensive reform bill that will address a significant amount of time for the Postal Service to build a new business model.

My friend, my other friend from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS)—I was referring to the other North Carolinian—has been working diligently with us on a bipartisan basis for many years to try to find just the right fix. I am looking forward to that bipartisan solution.

But that doesn't mean we stop everything and fix nothing. This may not return the Postal Service to solvency, but it takes a liability off the books that is real, that hurts them, that makes it harder for them to recover and to figure out how to adjust to changes in technology and the marketplace, and that is why I support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to its passage on a bipartisan basis, and I hope that we will fold this bill, the concept of this bill, into a larger, more comprehensive bill. As the distinguished chairwoman said, we need a comprehensive approach to the Postal Service after we address and fix this problem that Congress created.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia, and I want to highlight his work on this particular issue, and I agree with him that this, ultimately, will be part of what has to be dovetailed into anything we do to fix the Postal Service.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) in the spirit of letting my colleagues express their full-throated support of this bill.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my good friend, Mr. MEADOWS. We have been working on issues like this relating to the long-term solvency of our Postal Service for many years, and I look forward to standing on this floor with him in the near future when we come up with a good, comprehensive solution that addresses issues like this.

I thank him for his leadership and his support of the Postal Service and the great postal workers who make up one of the greatest services that we have in our country.

Unfortunately, the Postal Service today is forced to play by a different set of rules, and those are unfair. This bill corrects this by repealing the 2006 mandate that the Postal Service prefund future retiree health benefits.

In 2006, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act mandated that the Postal Service prefund retiree health benefits decades in advance, something no other public or private enterprise is forced to do. Over the years, this mandate has caused severe cuts and damaged the Postal Service's ability to invest in even new delivery vehicles.

I have always been a steadfast supporter of the Postal Service and its workers. In fact, after speaking to many of the postal unions in my district, like the Letter Carriers and the Rural Letter Carriers', I proudly cosponsored this piece of legislation.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on this issue and other important pieces of legislature that impact our postal unions, such as opposing the privatization of the Postal Service and protecting the 6-day delivery, door-to-door service, and our rural post offices.

Mr. Speaker, we have to work together. We need to make sure that our Postal Service remains viable. I urge a "yes" vote on this bill, and I look forward to working with everyone in this institution in the future.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments, and I would also join him. We have got a number of great unions that I have had the privilege of getting to know over this time as we looked at comprehensive reform, and his acknowledging them and his willingness to look at something that actually solves the problem is to be applauded.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to

the gentlewoman from the great State of Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE).

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2382. This legislation is a positive first step—and I emphasize first step—to address a significantly more complex issue at hand: the financial solvency crisis plaguing the United States Postal Service.

After a 30-year career in the Postal Service—and I think I am the only member of Congress who is actually a letter carrier—I come to Congress with the intention of helping USPS return to a strong financial standing through legislative reform.

While decreased mail volume plays a role, there are other actions Congress must take to provide the Postal Service with the flexibility needed to reverse and mend the downward financial trend.

For the last few years, I have worked with several colleagues on the Oversight Committee, including Representatives CONNOLLY, LYNCH, MEADOWS, and the late, amazing Chairman Elijah Cummings, to introduce comprehensive postal reform.

As the House stands poised to pass H.R. 2382, I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on the committee to introduce a comprehensive postal reform package that will provide the Postal Service with the reform needed to help lessen the financial battle.

I want to thank Chairwoman MALONEY for her leadership on this issue, and I look forward to the continued work to build the Postal Service Fairness Act.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly support H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act. I have led, with my colleagues, this important legislation that ends the unfair prefunding mandate for the Postal Service and also solves the most pressing financing problem facing our letter carriers and post offices across the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the USPS is the only Government entity—the only one—which is mandated to prefund its retirees' health benefits. 100 percent of the Postal Service's financial losses over the past 6 years—100 percent—are directly due and linked to this requirement.

This is an outdated policy which has forced the Postal Service into a horrible financial position, which has prevented it from investing in resources that would benefit all of our communities, no matter where we live.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, this legislation has widespread support from the National Association of Letter Carriers, the American Postal Workers Union, and the National Postal Mail Handlers Union.

This bipartisan bill will restore USPS' financial health by shoring up

that funding and ensuring that it has the resources to improve the Postal Service for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation. This is the priority for our postal workers, in addition to 6-day delivery as well as door-to-door service. We have to get all three done for our postal workers, our letter carriers, and our post offices that serve all of our communities.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

□ 1530

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act.

The United States Postal Service is an essential part of American life. It was established more than 231 years ago and has delivered on its promise every one of those years.

Benjamin Franklin was the first Postmaster General in the United States. And they have—while I understand it is not an official slogan, I think we have all heard this: “Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed mission.”

So we know that with more than 100 billion pieces of mail delivered each year, and a 90 percent approval rating, that we must do all that we can to support them.

Today, Members of Congress are taking the important step to help support over seven million U.S. postal workers across the country.

Since 2006, U.S. postal employees have been forced to prefund retiree health benefits 75 years in advance, making them the only government agency that must prefund future employees that have not been born yet.

This ridiculous law has caused the U.S. Postal Service to lose billions of dollars each year and has caused postal employees' uncertainty in their work. This cannot continue.

So I agree with over 300 of my colleagues that we must reverse this absurd policy. The United States Postal Service Fairness Act will repeal the prefunding that is mandated and allow the United States Postal Service to return to its pay-as-you-go system as used before.

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

I appreciate all the points that my friends opposite are making. In fact, I have made some of the very same points when we talk about reform bills.

The problem is, all the wonderful things that they are talking about in this bill do not exist. They are not making the payments. They haven't made a payment since 2010.

So how does giving relief from a payment you are not making suddenly

make the Postal Service viable? It doesn't.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST), who will give you an opposing view from our side.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The United States Postal Service has a history as old as our Nation. Our Nation's Founders believed that it was so important that they put it in the Constitution and many people back home don't realize that. Of course, you know, that is the most quoted, least read document around here.

The rural communities in southern Illinois and across our country depend on the Postal Service. It is often the only means for small businesses to engage in commerce, and for rural residents to receive packages.

The Postal Service is facing many challenges, but it is taking several important steps to provide new services mandated by the modern economy. Unfortunately, it can't accomplish these reforms with one hand tied behind its back.

The Postal Service is the only entity with this requirement. I doubt that any Federal agency would be able to meet its goals and obligations to citizens and taxpayers if they were likewise required to prefund their health benefits.

The underlying legislation helps correct this. It does not impose additional costs on taxpayers, and it will help ensure the Postal Service can continue to serve our communities as it has since our Nation's founding.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this bill. I feel very strongly about this.

The United States Postal Service moves almost half the world's mail. It is the most popular Federal agency, highest ratings. And, in fact, if you look at the interaction that we have with postal workers, in my community and elsewhere, they are deeply beloved.

I had a father-in-law who was a postal worker. In the holiday season he was burdened down with cookies and fruitcake and brandy that was given to him by the people on his route.

What we have seen, unfortunately, since 2006, is part of an assault on the finest Postal Service in the world. You have heard it said before on the floor; this is the only—not just the only Federal agency, I don't think there is any entity in the United States that is required to prefund health benefits for people who haven't yet been born but might be employed 20, 30, 40 years from now. This is part of an effort on behalf of some who literally have a jihad against the U.S. Postal Service.

I had a session in my community 2 weeks ago where we heard about a bizarre experiment on casing mail, taking that away from the letter carriers,

and it has resulted in a serious disruption in our community by people who are disconnected from the actual service that is given.

Postal jobs are the best jobs in many rural and small American towns. And there are some who feel, well, they are paid too much. They have too generous benefits or retirement. That is hogwash.

They provide that foundation in much of rural and small-town America; a beloved service, a service that provides an essential connection for virtually the entire country, 6 days a week, and, in fact, if we get our act together, there is more benefit that can be provided.

Get rid of this stupid prefunding and give them more flexibility about the services they can provide. Why aren't we using the U.S. Postal Service to help us with the census? These people know who lives in the neighborhood. Why are we hiring temporary employees?

Why can't we use the Postal Service to deal with problems in the future, if we have an outbreak of an anthrax-sort of activity in terms of lethal threats. Use the Postal Service. Give them the flexibility to provide more service. Respect the men and women who work there, and stop this stupid effort to undercut the finest Postal Service in the world.

I appreciate the committee bringing this legislation forward. I appreciate the bipartisan support, and maybe it is time we get our act straight to help them fulfill their full potential.

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

I do need to correct a few things that the gentleman from Oregon just addressed. This is not—support or being against this bill is not an attack on the Postal Service.

I mean, there is no one who has invested more time—I can promise you, when I came to Congress, fixing the Postal Service was not on my bucket list. And as we have invested time, and I see my good friend, Mr. LYNCH, my good friend, Mr. CONNOLLY, let me just tell you, we have invested days, if not weeks and months, to try to address this.

But the gentleman from Oregon is just not correct. This particular bill, while it may be part of a solution, gives them no flexibility. It gives them no additional cash flow. They are still going to go out of business if we do not come together and get something worked out for all of us to make sure that, not only do we have a postal system that works, but one that is not a mere shadow of its former self.

I will say this: I want to make sure that my postal unions and all of those that are watching very intently, you have made an impact on this Member from North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, they have let me know exactly how important this is. And yet, at the same time, I am afraid I cannot support this bill because it does not do

what we need it to do, and that is, address the problem today. This just kicks the can down the road. And unfortunately, it doesn't even kick it down the road long enough to allow the postal workers to depend on the very system that employs them.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH), my good friend and colleague.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her kindness and the courtesy afforded to me.

I do want to say that, like some other Members in this Chamber, I think at one count, I had 17 of my relatives, including my mom, several of her sisters, two of my sisters, my brother-in-law, all my cousins, who worked for the United States Postal Service, sort of the family business.

And I do thank the gentleman from North Carolina. We spent, you know, days, if not weeks, if not months, arguing over the contours of this legislation.

I want to thank Mr. DEFAZIO. And I rise in strong support of his bill.

I also thank my colleague from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for his work on this as well. And our dear colleague, Elijah Cummings, who worked on this, put his heart and soul into finding a solution.

Look, I do agree with the gentleman from North Carolina's comments, that this does not solve everything. It does not. But it is an important element of a bill that we, Republicans and Democrats, passed out of committee unanimously, without any dissent in a previous session. So it is a very important element of what we are trying to do.

There is no dispute with the gentleman from Oregon's earlier remarks that we don't ask any other group within government to fund their retiree health benefits this way. This was an idea that, I think, came out of a time when, before email and before the use of social media, the volume of mail within the Postal Service being delivered every single day, could sustain the current configuration of retiree health benefits.

Those days are long gone, and we have to figure out a way that will keep the Postal Service viable going forward.

This does not solve everything but, boy, I will tell you, this solves a lot. It buys us time to craft those other pieces that need to come together as well.

So I would argue that we should not allow the perfect to be the enemy of the good. This is a solid change here.

This is something that I think people need to understand that what we are requiring of the Postal Service right now is that, when a new employee comes into the Postal Service, we have to set aside the money, on day one, for their eventual retirement; while every other collective bargaining agreement

and pension system periodically reassesses what the demands are as that person gets closer to retirement. That is the critical time to know whether or not there are sufficient resources and a guarantee that certain resources are there for that person to enjoy the retirement and the benefits and the health benefits that they have earned.

So I just ask my colleagues to vote in support of this bill. I support Mr. DEFAZIO's bill wholeheartedly, and I thank the Speaker for his courtesy.

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

I know that everybody is tuned in in their offices, paying attention to this unbelievable debate, and so for all of you that are tuned in on C-SPAN, and as we debate this, I think it is important that I share a couple of sentences from the U.S. Postal Service. So it is not from my colleagues opposite. It is not from my point of view; but this is what they have to say about this bill: "It would neither reduce the underlying RHB liability nor improve our cash flow or our long-term financial position. It would not impact the liquidity crisis that we have."

These are not my words, Mr. Speaker. These are the words of those that are closest to the financial responsibility, the Postal Service themselves.

So if the gentlewoman is prepared to close, I will just recommend to my colleagues a "no" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are further reminded to address their remarks to the Chair, not to a perceived viewing audience.

□ 1545

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 2382, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2382, the U.S.P.S. Fairness Act, introduced by my colleague, Representative PETER DEFAZIO of Oregon.

I'd like to commend Mr. DEFAZIO and the other bipartisan sponsors of this bill—Mr. REED of New York, Ms. TORRES-SMALL of New Mexico, and Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania—for their leadership in addressing the serious fiscal challenges facing the United States Postal Service. I'd also like to recognize the relentless and united effort on the part of our postal employee unions, management associations, and other stakeholders to advance this commonsense legislation.

With the support of over 300 bipartisan cosponsors, the U.S.P.S. Fairness Act would repeal a misguided provision in current law requiring the postal service to fully fund its health care costs for future postal retirees decades before it is necessary—that's an annual average cost of over \$5.5 billion dollars. This is a requirement that federal law does not impose on any other government agency—especially one that receives zero tax dollars and instead relies on the revenue generated by its own stamps, products, and services to fund its operations. It is no surprise that the postal service has not been able to make these exorbitant annual payments since 2011.

The elimination of the so-called “pre-funding mandate” is a sensible first step towards improving the financial viability of the postal service. This bipartisan bill should also guide our approach to developing comprehensive postal reform legislation going forward. In stark contrast to the more partisan and sweeping reform proposals that have been presented to our committee in recent years, H.R. 2382 will immediately place the postal service on more sound financial footing while preserving its core public service mission to “provide postal services to bind the nation together through the correspondence of the people.”

And contrary to the degradation of postal delivery services, or the wholesale privatization of the postal service itself, H.R. 2382 is the end product of bipartisan cooperation and the subject of broad consensus among our diverse postal stakeholders. As we develop additional postal reform legislation, it is imperative that we continue to identify fundamental and practical areas of agreement.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2382.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. 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.

FEDERAL RISK AND AUTHORIZATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2019

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3941) to enhance the innovation, security, and availability of cloud computing services used in the Federal Government by establishing the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program within the General Services Administration and by establishing a risk management, authorization, and continuous monitoring process to enable the Federal Government to leverage cloud computing services using a risk-based approach consistent with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 and cloud-based operations, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3941

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 “Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program Authorization Act of 2019” or the “FedRAMP Authorization Act”.

SEC. 2. CODIFICATION OF THE FEDRAMP PROGRAM.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 36 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new sections:

“§ 3607. Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the General Services Administration the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program. The Administrator of General Services, in accordance with the guidelines established pursuant to section 3612, shall establish a governmentwide program that provides the authoritative standardized approach to security assessment and authorization for cloud computing products and services that process unclassified information used by agencies.

“(b) COMPONENTS OF FEDRAMP.—The Joint Authorization Board and the FedRAMP Program Management Office are established as components of FedRAMP.

“§ 3608. FedRAMP Program Management Office

“(a) GSA DUTIES.—

“(1) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Administrator of General Services shall—

“(A) determine the categories and characteristics of cloud computing information technology goods or services that are within the jurisdiction of FedRAMP and that require FedRAMP authorization from the Joint Authorization Board or the FedRAMP Program Management Office;

“(B) develop, coordinate, and implement a process for the FedRAMP Program Management Office, the Joint Authorization Board, and agencies to review security assessments of cloud computing services pursuant to subsections (b) and (c) of section 3611, and appropriate oversight of continuous monitoring of cloud computing services; and

“(C) ensure the continuous improvement of FedRAMP.

“(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Administrator shall oversee the implementation of FedRAMP, including—

“(A) appointing a Program Director to oversee the FedRAMP Program Management Office;

“(B) hiring professional staff as may be necessary for the effective operation of the FedRAMP Program Management Office, and such other activities as are essential to properly perform critical functions;

“(C) entering into interagency agreements to detail personnel on a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis to assist the FedRAMP Program Management Office and the Joint Authorization Board in discharging the responsibilities of the Office under this section; and

“(D) such other actions as the Administrator may determine necessary to carry out this section.

“(b) DUTIES.—The FedRAMP Program Management Office shall have the following duties:

“(1) Provide guidance to independent assessment organizations, validate the independent assessments, and apply the requirements and guidelines adopted in section 3609(c)(5).

“(2) Oversee and issue guidelines regarding the qualifications, roles, and responsibilities of independent assessment organizations.

“(3) Develop templates and other materials to support the Joint Authorization Board and agencies in the authorization of cloud computing services to increase the speed, effectiveness, and transparency of the authorization process, consistent with standards defined by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

“(4) Establish and maintain a public comment process for proposed guidance before the issuance of such guidance by FedRAMP.

“(5) Issue FedRAMP authorization for any authorizations to operate issued by an agency that meets the requirements and guidelines described in paragraph (1).

“(6) Establish frameworks for agencies to use authorization packages processed by the FedRAMP Program Management Office and Joint Authorization Board.

“(7) Coordinate with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a framework for continuous monitoring and reporting required of agencies pursuant to section 3553.

“(8) Establish a centralized and secure repository to collect and share necessary data, including security authorization packages, from the Joint Authorization Board and agencies to enable better sharing and reuse to such packages across agencies.

“(c) EVALUATION OF AUTOMATION PROCEDURES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The FedRAMP Program Management Office shall assess and evaluate available automation capabilities and procedures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the issuance of provisional authorizations to operate issued by the Joint Authorization Board and FedRAMP authorizations, including continuous monitoring of cloud environments and among cloud environments.

“(2) MEANS FOR AUTOMATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section and updated annually thereafter, the FedRAMP Program Management Office shall establish a means for the automation of security assessments and reviews.

“(d) METRICS FOR AUTHORIZATION.—The FedRAMP Program Management Office shall establish annual metrics regarding the time and quality of the assessments necessary for completion of a FedRAMP authorization process in a manner that can be consistently tracked over time in conjunction with the periodic testing and evaluation process pursuant to section 3554 in a manner that minimizes the agency reporting burden.

“§ 3609. Joint Authorization Board

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Joint Authorization Board which shall consist of cloud computing experts, appointed by the Director in consultation with the Administrator, from each of the following:

“(1) The Department of Defense.

“(2) The Department of Homeland Security.

“(3) The General Services Administration.

“(4) Such other agencies as determined by the Director, in consultation with the Administrator.

“(b) ISSUANCE OF PROVISIONAL AUTHORIZATIONS TO OPERATE.—The Joint Authorization Board shall conduct security assessments of cloud computing services and issue provisional authorizations to operate to cloud service providers that meet FedRAMP security guidelines set forth in section 3608(b)(1).

“(c) DUTIES.—The Joint Authorization Board shall—

“(1) develop and make publicly available on a website, determined by the Administrator, criteria for prioritizing and selecting cloud computing services to be assessed by the Joint Authorization Board;

“(2) provide regular updates on the status of any cloud computing service during the assessment and authorization process of the Joint Authorization Board;

“(3) review and validate cloud computing services and independent assessment organization security packages or any documentation determined to be necessary by the Joint Authorization Board to evaluate the system security of a cloud computing service;

“(4) in consultation with the FedRAMP Program Management Office, serve as a resource for best practices to accelerate the FedRAMP process;

“(5) establish requirements and guidelines for security assessments of cloud computing services, consistent with standards defined by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, to be used by the Joint Authorization Board and agencies;

“(6) perform such other roles and responsibilities as the Administrator may assign, in consultation with the FedRAMP Program Management Office and members of the Joint Authorization Board; and

“(7) establish metrics and goals for reviews and activities associated with issuing provisional authorizations to operate and provide to the FedRAMP Program Management Office.

“(d) DETERMINATIONS OF DEMAND FOR CLOUD COMPUTING SERVICES.—The Joint Authorization Board shall consult with the Chief Information Officers Council established in section 3603 to establish a process for prioritizing and accepting the cloud computing services to be granted a provisional authorization to operate through the Joint Authorization Board, which shall be made available on a public website.

“(e) DETAIL OF PERSONNEL.—To assist the Joint Authorization Board in discharging the responsibilities under this section, personnel of agencies may be detailed to the Joint Authorization Board for the performance of duties described under subsection (c).

“§ 3610. Independent assessment organizations

“(a) REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCREDITATION.—The Joint Authorization Board shall determine the requirements for certification of independent assessment organizations pursuant to section 3609. Such requirements may include developing or requiring certification programs for individuals employed by the independent assessment organizations who lead FedRAMP assessment teams.

“(b) ASSESSMENT.—Accredited independent assessment organizations may assess, validate, and attest to the quality and compliance of security assessment materials provided by cloud service providers.

“§ 3611. Roles and responsibilities of agencies

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In implementing the requirements of FedRAMP, the head of each agency shall, consistent with guidance issued by the Director pursuant to section 3612—

“(1) create policies to ensure cloud computing services used by the agency meet FedRAMP security requirements and other risk-based performance requirements as defined by the Director;

“(2) issue agency-specific authorizations to operate for cloud computing services in compliance with section 3554;

“(3) confirm whether there is a provisional authorization to operate in the cloud security repository established under section 3608(b)(10) issued by the Joint Authorization Board or a FedRAMP authorization issued by the FedRAMP Program Management Office before beginning an agency authorization for a cloud computing product or service;

“(4) to the extent practicable, for any cloud computing product or service the agency seeks to authorize that has received either a provisional authorization to operate by the Joint Authorization Board or a FedRAMP authorization by the FedRAMP Program Management Office, use the existing assessments of security controls and materials within the authorization package; and

“(5) provide data and information required to the Director pursuant to section 3612 to determine how agencies are meeting metrics as defined by the FedRAMP Program Management Office.

“(b) SUBMISSION OF POLICIES REQUIRED.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the

enactment of this section, the head of each agency shall submit to the Director the policies created pursuant to subsection (a)(1) for review and approval.

“(c) SUBMISSION OF AUTHORIZATIONS TO OPERATE REQUIRED.—Upon issuance of an authorization to operate or a provisional authorization to operate issued by an agency, the head of each agency shall provide a copy of the authorization to operate letter and any supplementary information required pursuant to section 3608(b) to the FedRAMP Program Management Office.

“(d) PRESUMPTION OF ADEQUACY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The assessment of security controls and materials within the authorization package for provisional authorizations to operate issued by the Joint Authorization Board and agency authorizations to operate that receive FedRAMP authorization from the FedRAMP Program Management Office shall be presumed adequate for use in agency authorizations of cloud computing products and services.

“(2) INFORMATION SECURITY REQUIREMENTS.—The presumption under paragraph (1) does not modify or alter the responsibility of any agency to ensure compliance with subchapter II of chapter 35 for any cloud computing products or services used by the agency.

“§ 3612. Roles and responsibilities of the Office of Management and Budget

“The Director shall have the following duties:

“(1) Issue guidance to ensure that an agency does not operate a Federal Government cloud computing service using Government data without an authorization to operate issued by the agency that meets the requirements of subchapter II of chapter 35 and FedRAMP.

“(2) Ensure agencies are in compliance with any guidance or other requirements issued related to FedRAMP.

“(3) Review, analyze, and update guidance on the adoption, security, and use of cloud computing services used by agencies.

“(4) Ensure the Joint Authorization Board is in compliance with section 3609(c).

“(5) Adjudicate disagreements between the Joint Authorization Board and cloud service providers seeking a provisional authorization to operate through the Joint Authorization Board.

“(6) Promulgate regulations on the role of FedRAMP authorization in agency acquisition of cloud computing products and services that process unclassified information.

“§ 3613. Authorization of appropriations for FedRAMP

“There is authorized to be appropriated \$20,000,000 each year for the FedRAMP Program Management Office and the Joint Authorization Board.

“§ 3614. Reports to Congress

“Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, the Director shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report that includes the following:

“(1) The status, efficiency, and effectiveness of FedRAMP Program Management Office and agencies during the preceding year in supporting the speed, effectiveness, sharing, reuse, and security of authorizations to operate for cloud computing products and services, including progress towards meeting the metrics adopted by the FedRAMP Program Management Office pursuant to section 3608(d) and the Joint Authorization Board pursuant to section 3609(c)(5).

“(2) Data on agency use of provisional authorizations to operate issued by the Joint

Authorization Board and agency sponsored authorizations that receive FedRAMP authorization by the FedRAMP Program Management Office.

“(3) The length of time for the Joint Authorization Board to review applications for and issue provisional authorizations to operate.

“(4) The length of time for the FedRAMP Program Management Office to review agency applications for and issue FedRAMP authorization.

“(5) The number of provisional authorizations to operate issued by the Joint Authorization Board and FedRAMP authorizations issued by the FedRAMP Program Management Office for the previous year.

“(6) A review of progress made during the preceding year in advancing automation techniques to securely automate FedRAMP processes and to accelerate reporting as described in this section.

“(7) The number and characteristics of authorized cloud computing services in use at each agency consistent with guidance provided by the Director in section 3612.

“§ 3615. Federal Secure Cloud Advisory Committee

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT, PURPOSES, AND DUTIES.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a Federal Secure Cloud Advisory Committee (referred to in this section as the ‘Committee’) to ensure effective and ongoing coordination of agency adoption, use, authorization, monitoring, acquisition, and security of cloud computing products and services to enable agency mission and administrative priorities.

“(2) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Committee are the following:

“(A) To examine the operations of FedRAMP and determine ways that authorization processes can continuously be improved, including the following:

“(i) Measures to increase agency re-use of provisional authorizations to operate issued by the Joint Authorization Board.

“(ii) Proposed actions that can be adopted to reduce the cost of provisional authorizations to operate and FedRAMP authorizations for cloud service providers.

“(iii) Measures to increase the number of provisional authorizations to operate or FedRAMP authorizations for cloud computing services offered by small businesses (as defined by section 3(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a))).

“(B) Collect information and feedback on agency compliance with and implementation of FedRAMP requirements.

“(C) Serve as a forum that facilitates communication and collaboration among the FedRAMP stakeholder community.

“(3) DUTIES.—The duties of the Committee are, at a minimum, the following:

“(A) Provide advice and recommendations to the Administrator, the Joint Authorization Board, and to agencies on technical, financial, programmatic, and operational matters regarding secure adoption of cloud computing services.

“(B) Submit reports as required.

“(b) MEMBERS.—

“(1) COMPOSITION.—The Committee shall be comprised of not more than 15 members who are qualified representatives from the public and private sectors, appointed by the Administrator, in consultation with the Administrator of the Office of Electronic Government, as follows:

“(A) The Administrator or the Administrator’s designee, who shall be the Chair of the Committee.

“(B) At least 1 representative each from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

“(C) At least 2 officials who serve as the Chief Information Security Officer within an agency, who shall be required to maintain such a position throughout the duration of their service on the Committee.

“(D) At least 1 official serving as Chief Procurement Officer (or equivalent) in an agency, who shall be required to maintain such a position throughout the duration of their service on the Committee.

“(E) At least 1 individual representing an independent assessment organization.

“(F) No fewer than 5 representatives from unique businesses that primarily provide cloud computing services or products, including at least 2 representatives from a small business (as defined by section 3(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a))).

“(G) At least 2 other government representatives as the Administrator determines to be necessary to provide sufficient balance, insights, or expertise to the Committee.

“(2) DEADLINE FOR APPOINTMENT.—Each member of the Committee shall be appointed not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

“(3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Each non-Federal member of the Committee shall be appointed for a term of 3 years, except that the initial terms for members may be staggered 1, 2, or 3 year terms to establish a rotation in which one-third of the members are selected each year. Any such member may be appointed for not more than 2 consecutive terms.

“(B) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy in the Committee shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made. Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which the member's predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of that term. A member may serve after the expiration of that member's term until a successor has taken office.

“(C) MEETINGS AND RULES OF PROCEDURES.—

“(1) MEETINGS.—The Committee shall hold not fewer than 3 meetings in a calendar year, at such time and place as determined by the Chair.

“(2) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Committee shall meet and begin the operations of the Committee.

“(3) RULES OF PROCEDURE.—The Committee may establish rules for the conduct of the business of the Committee, if such rules are not inconsistent with this section or other applicable law.

“(d) EMPLOYEE STATUS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A member of the Committee (other than a member who is appointed to the Committee in connection with another Federal appointment) shall not be considered an employee of the Federal Government by reason of any service as such a member, except for the purposes of section 5703 of title 5, relating to travel expenses.

“(2) PAY NOT PERMITTED.—A member of the Committee covered by paragraph (1) may not receive pay by reason of service on the panel.

“(e) APPLICABILITY TO THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall apply to the Committee, except that section 14 of such Act shall not apply.

“(f) HEARINGS AND EVIDENCE.—The Committee, or on the authority of the Committee, any subcommittee, may, for the purposes of carrying out this section, hold hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take testimony, receive evidence, and administer oaths.

“(g) CONTRACTING.—The Committee, may, to such extent and in such amounts as are provided in appropriation Acts, enter into contracts to enable the Committee to discharge its duties under this section.

“(h) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Committee is authorized to secure directly from any executive department, bureau, agency, board, commission, office, independent establishment, or instrumentality of the Government, information, suggestions, estimates, and statistics for the purposes of the Committee. Each department, bureau, agency, board, commission, office, independent establishment, or instrumentality shall, to the extent authorized by law, furnish such information, suggestions, estimates, and statistics directly to the Committee, upon request made by the Chair, the Chair of any subcommittee created by a majority of the Committee, or any member designated by a majority of the Committee.

“(2) RECEIPT, HANDLING, STORAGE, AND DISSEMINATION.—Information may only be received, handled, stored, and disseminated by members of the Committee and its staff consistent with all applicable statutes, regulations, and Executive orders.

“(i) DETAIL OF EMPLOYEES.—Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Committee without reimbursement from the Committee, and such detailee shall retain the rights, status, and privileges of his or her regular employment without interruption.

“(j) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Committee may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as agencies.

“(k) EXPERT AND CONSULTANT SERVICES.—The Committee is authorized to procure the services of experts and consultants in accordance with section 3109 of title 5, but at rates not to exceed the daily rate paid a person occupying a position at Level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5.

“(1) REPORTS.—

“(1) INTERIM REPORTS.—The Committee may submit to the Administrator and Congress interim reports containing such findings, conclusions, and recommendations as have been agreed to by the Committee.

“(2) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, the Committee shall submit to the Administrator and Congress a final report containing such findings, conclusions, and recommendations as have been agreed to by the Committee.

“§ 3616. Definitions

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under subsection (b), the definitions under sections 3502 and 3552 apply to sections 3607 through this section.

“(b) ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS.—In sections 3607 through this section:

“(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘Administrator’ means the Administrator of General Services.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION PACKAGE.—The term ‘authorization package’—

“(A) means the essential information used to determine whether to authorize the operation of an information system or the use of a designated set of common controls; and

“(B) at a minimum, includes the information system security plan, privacy plan, security control assessment, privacy control assessment, and any relevant plans of action and milestones.

“(3) CLOUD COMPUTING.—The term ‘cloud computing’ has the meaning given that term by the National Institutes of Standards and

Technology in NIST Special Publication 800-145 and any amendatory or superseding document thereto.

“(4) CLOUD SERVICE PROVIDER.—The term ‘cloud service provider’ means an entity offering cloud computing services to agencies.

“(5) DIRECTOR.—The term ‘Director’ means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(6) FEDRAMP.—The term ‘FedRAMP’ means the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program established under section 3607(a).

“(7) FEDRAMP AUTHORIZATION.—The term ‘FedRAMP authorization’ means a cloud computing product or service that has received an agency authorization to operate and has been approved by the FedRAMP Program Management Office to meet requirements and guidelines established by the FedRAMP Program Management Office.

“(8) FEDRAMP PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE.—The term ‘FedRAMP Program Management Office’ means the office that administers FedRAMP established under section 3608.

“(9) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT ORGANIZATION.—The term ‘independent assessment organization’ means a third-party organization accredited by the Program Director of the FedRAMP Program Management Office to undertake conformity assessments of cloud service providers.

“(10) JOINT AUTHORIZATION BOARD.—The term ‘Joint Authorization Board’ means the Joint Authorization Board established under section 3609.”

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 36 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new items:

“3607. Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program.

“3608. FedRAMP Program Management Office.

“3609. Joint Authorization Board.

“3610. Independent assessment organizations.

“3611. Roles and responsibilities of agencies.

“3612. Roles and responsibilities of the Office of Management and Budget.

“3613. Authorization of appropriations for FEDRAMP.

“3614. Reports to Congress.

“3615. Federal Secure Cloud Advisory Committee.

“3616. Definitions.”

(c) SUNSET.—This Act and any amendment made by this Act shall be repealed on the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act or any amendment made by this Act shall be construed as altering or impairing the authorities of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget or the Secretary of Homeland Security under subchapter II of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure before us.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank my colleagues and friends, Representatives CONNOLLY and MEADOWS, for their bipartisan work on this very important measure.

The Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program Authorization Act would codify and improve the existing FedRAMP program in the General Services Administration.

First established in 2011, FedRAMP is an important program that certifies cloud service providers that wish to offer services to the Federal Government. The FedRAMP certification process outlined in this bill is comprehensive and facilitates easier agency adoption, promotes agency reuse, and encourages savings.

The FedRAMP process uses a risk-based approach to ensure the reliability of any cloud platform that hosts unclassified government data. A significant provision of this bill is the Federal Secure Cloud Advisory Committee. This committee would be tasked with key responsibilities, including providing technical expertise on cloud products and services and identifying ways to reduce costs associated with FedRAMP certification.

The Director of the Office of Management and Budget would be required to issue regulations pertaining to FedRAMP and would ensure that agencies are not using cloud service providers without authorization.

This bill supports a critical effort to keep our Nation's information secure in cloud environments.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 3941, the FedRAMP Authorization Act.

Cybersecurity and IT modernization are both vital issues that we need to make sure run properly. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) has been very proactive on this front.

The Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program, or FedRAMP, as it is commonly referred to, would allow Federal programs to focus on cybersecurity for cloud services, and it provides a process for agencies to follow when procuring cloud systems to ensure that those systems meet strict cybersecurity controls.

The gentlewoman, the chairman of the full committee, has certainly talked on a number of issues as it relates to this bill, but since there is no opposition that I am aware of, I will just submit my remarks for the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3941, the FedRAMP Authorization Act.

Cyber security and IT modernization are both vital issues to ensure this government runs efficiently and effectively.

The Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program, or FedRAMP, is the main federal program focused on cyber security for cloud services.

It provides a process for agencies to follow when procuring cloud systems to ensure the systems meet strict cyber security controls.

Recent federal policies make the focus on securing cloud services especially important.

With the Cloud First initiative in 2011 and the Cloud Smart initiative from last year, the government has focused on implementation of cloud technologies.

The federal government has been plagued by reoccurring problems in information technology, such as low asset utilization, duplicative systems, and fragmented resources.

Shifting to the cloud provides for improved asset utilization, increased innovation, and a more responsive tech environment.

These improved efficiencies lead to a significant cost savings.

In fiscal year 2018, the government spent roughly six and a half billion dollars on cloud computing, with eighty four percent coming from FedRAMP authorized providers.

Efficiencies from FedRAMP saved agencies over two hundred fifty million dollars.

Codifying the program is an important step to encouraging agencies to take advantage of this program and all the benefits it offers.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), chair of the subcommittee.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I salute my partner and friend on our subcommittee, Mr. MEADOWS. He chaired the subcommittee in the previous Congress, and I was his ranking member. We have reversed roles, but our partnership continues, especially in trying to modernize the Federal Government and bringing it into the 21st century in terms of information technology. We know that when we don't make those investments, bad things can happen. We just saw that the other night in the Iowa caucus.

H.R. 3941 codifies the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program, known as FedRAMP, established in 2011 to provide a cost-effective, risk-based approach for the adoption and use of cloud computing technologies within the Federal Government.

FedRAMP standardizes security requirements for the authorization and ongoing cybersecurity assessments of cloud services for information systems across the Federal Government. In short, FedRAMP seeks to reduce the redundancies of Federal cloud migration and to help agencies quickly adopt cloud technologies.

I am also happy to say that FedRAMP has the approval of this administration. Last June, the Trump administration issued its Federal cloud computing strategy called Cloud Smart, which reaffirmed its support for FedRAMP. The Cloud Smart strategy acknowledged the importance of

FedRAMP in helping agencies modernize their information technology systems.

Cloud Smart also highlighted improvements the program has implemented over the past few years that have resulted in a drastically reduced timeframe for providing a provisional authorization to operate a cloud service provider.

However, the administration also noted that there is still lack of reciprocity across agencies in taking advantage of FedRAMP-authorized products. Without that reciprocity, agencies end up duplicating the assessment process of cloud service offerings, leading to time delays and inefficiencies for both the Federal Government and the providers.

In July, the Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing to look at what the GSA has done right in administering the program and the ways in which FedRAMP can and should be improved. The message both from agency and industry witnesses was clear. FedRAMP is an important program that, if carried out effectively and efficiently, saves money for both agencies and businesses hoping to provide those services.

The FedRAMP Authorization Act codifies the program and addresses many of the concerns raised in July by both the administration and private-sector witnesses.

First, the bill reduces duplication of security assessments and other obstacles to agency adoption of cloud products by establishing—and this is really important—a presumption of adequacy for cloud technologies that have already received FedRAMP certification. Going to 33 different windows with 33 separate processes costs way too much money, takes way too much time, and, frankly, is unnecessary.

The presumption of adequacy means that the cloud service offering has met baseline security standards already established by the program and should be considered approved for use across the Federal Government, except where very specialized services would be required.

The bill also facilitates agency reuse of cloud technologies that have already received an authorization to operate by requiring agencies to check a centralized and secure repository and, to the extent practicable, reuse any existing security assessment before conducting an independent one of their own.

The desire to automate aspects of FedRAMP assessment processes was another key finding of the subcommittee's hearing. This bill requires the GSA work toward automating their processes, which will lead to more standard security assessments and continuous monitoring of cloud offerings to increase the efficiency for both providers and agencies.

The bill also establishes, as the distinguished chairwoman indicated, a Federal Secure Cloud Advisory Committee to ensure a dialogue among

GSA, agency cybersecurity and procurement officials, and industry in order to have effective and ongoing coordination in acquisition and adoption of cloud products by the Federal Government.

Finally, the bill authorizes the program at \$20 million at an annual level, providing sufficient resources to increase the number of secure cloud technologies available for agency adoption.

We have worked with OMB, GSA, industry stakeholders, and our minority counterparts to ensure that this bill makes needed improvements in the FedRAMP program and gives the program the flexibility to grow and adopt to future changes in cloud technologies. I believe it is consistent with the administration's goals, and I urge adoption of the bill.

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

I thank the gentleman for his leadership on this. I will say that I have had a number of conversations in recent weeks with stakeholders who have offered some suggestions on what we could do, so I look forward to working with the gentleman opposite on how we can address this critical issue.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge support and adoption of this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I urge passage of H.R. 3941, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3941, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PAYMENT INTEGRITY INFORMATION ACT OF 2019

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 375) to improve efforts to identify and reduce Governmentwide improper payments, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 375

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 "Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. IMPROPER PAYMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 33 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"Subchapter IV—Improper Payments

"§ 3351. Definitions

"In this subchapter:

"(1) ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT.—The term 'annual financial statement' means the annual financial statement required under section 3515 of this title or similar provision of law.

"(2) COMPLIANCE.—The term 'compliance' means that an executive agency—

"(A) has—

"(i) published improper payments information with the annual financial statement of the executive agency for the most recent fiscal year; and

"(ii) posted on the website of the executive agency that statement and any accompanying materials required under guidance of the Office of Management and Budget;

"(B) if required, has conducted a program specific risk assessment for each program or activity that conforms with the requirements under section 3352(a);

"(C) if required, publishes improper payments estimates for all programs and activities identified under section 3352(a) in the accompanying materials to the annual financial statement;

"(D) publishes programmatic corrective action plans prepared under section 3352(d) that the executive agency may have in the accompanying materials to the annual financial statement;

"(E) publishes improper payments reduction targets established under section 3352(d) that the executive agency may have in the accompanying materials to the annual financial statement for each program or activity assessed to be at risk, and has demonstrated improvements and developed a plan to meet the reduction targets; and

"(F) has reported an improper payment rate of less than 10 percent for each program and activity for which an estimate was published under section 3352(c).

"(3) DO NOT PAY INITIATIVE.—The term 'Do Not Pay Initiative' means the initiative described in section 3354(b).

"(4) IMPROPER PAYMENT.—The term 'improper payment'—

"(A) means any payment that should not have been made or that was made in an incorrect amount, including an overpayment or underpayment, under a statutory, contractual, administrative, or other legally applicable requirement; and

"(B) includes—

"(i) any payment to an ineligible recipient;

"(ii) any payment for an ineligible good or service;

"(iii) any duplicate payment;

"(iv) any payment for a good or service not received, except for those payments where authorized by law; and

"(v) any payment that does not account for credit for applicable discounts.

"(5) PAYMENT.—The term 'payment' means any transfer or commitment for future transfer of Federal funds such as cash, securities, loans, loan guarantees, and insurance subsidies to any non-Federal person or entity or a Federal employee, that is made by a Federal agency, a Federal contractor, a Federal grantee, or a governmental or other organization administering a Federal program or activity.

"(6) PAYMENT FOR AN INELIGIBLE GOOD OR SERVICE.—The term 'payment for an ineligible good or service' includes a payment for any good or service that is rejected under any provision of any contract, grant, lease, cooperative agreement, or other funding mechanism.

"(7) RECOVERY AUDIT.—The term 'recovery audit' means a recovery audit described in section 3352(i).

"(8) STATE.—The term 'State' means each State of the United States, the District of Columbia, each territory or possession of the United States, and each Federally recognized Indian tribe.

"§ 3352. Estimates of improper payments and reports on actions to reduce improper payments

"(a) IDENTIFICATION OF SUSCEPTIBLE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of each executive agency shall, in accordance with guidance prescribed by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget—

"(A) periodically review all programs and activities that the head of the executive agency administers; and

"(B) identify all programs and activities with outlays exceeding the statutory threshold dollar amount described in paragraph (3)(A)(i) that may be susceptible to significant improper payments.

"(2) FREQUENCY.—A review under paragraph (1) shall be performed for each program and activity that the head of an executive agency administers not less frequently than once every 3 fiscal years.

"(3) RISK ASSESSMENTS.—

"(A) DEFINITION OF SIGNIFICANT.—In this paragraph, the term 'significant' means that, in the preceding fiscal year, the sum of a program or activity's improper payments and payments whose propriety cannot be determined by the executive agency due to lacking or insufficient documentation may have exceeded—

"(i) \$10,000,000 of all reported program or activity payments of the executive agency made during that fiscal year and 1.5 percent of program outlays; or

"(ii) \$100,000,000.

"(B) SCOPE.—In conducting a review under paragraph (1), the head of each executive agency shall take into account those risk factors that are likely to contribute to a susceptibility to significant improper payments, such as—

"(i) whether the program or activity reviewed is new to the executive agency;

"(ii) the complexity of the program or activity reviewed;

"(iii) the volume of payments made through the program or activity reviewed;

"(iv) whether payments or payment eligibility decisions are made outside of the executive agency, such as by a State or local government;

"(v) recent major changes in program funding, authorities, practices, or procedures;

"(vi) the level, experience, and quality of training for personnel responsible for making program eligibility determinations or certifying that payments are accurate;

"(vii) significant deficiencies in the audit report of the executive agency or other relevant management findings that might hinder accurate payment certification;

"(viii) similarities to other programs or activities that have reported improper payment estimates or been deemed susceptible to significant improper payments;

"(ix) the accuracy and reliability of improper payment estimates previously reported for the program or activity, or other indicator of potential susceptibility to improper payments identified by the Inspector General of the executive agency, the Government Accountability Office, other audits performed by or on behalf of the Federal, State, or local government, disclosures by the executive agency, or any other means;

"(x) whether the program or activity lacks information or data systems to confirm eligibility or provide for other payment integrity needs; and

"(xi) the risk of fraud as assessed by the executive agency under the Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government published by the Government Accountability Office (commonly known as the 'Green Book').

“(C) ANNUAL REPORT.—Each executive agency shall publish an annual report that includes—

“(i) a listing of each program or activity identified under paragraph (1), including the date on which the program or activity was most recently assessed for risk under paragraph (1); and

“(ii) a listing of any program or activity for which the executive agency makes any substantial changes to the methodologies of the reviews conducted under paragraph (1).

“(b) IMPROVING THE DETERMINATION OF IMPROPER PAYMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall on an annual basis—

“(A) identify a list of high-priority Federal programs for greater levels of oversight and review—

“(i) in which the highest dollar value or highest rate of improper payments occur; or

“(ii) for which there is a higher risk of improper payments; and

“(B) in coordination with the executive agency responsible for administering a high-priority program identified under subparagraph (A), establish annual targets and semi-annual or quarterly actions for reducing improper payments associated with the high-priority program.

“(2) REPORT ON HIGH-PRIORITY IMPROPER PAYMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to Federal privacy policies and to the extent permitted by law, each executive agency with a program identified under paragraph (1)(A) shall on an annual basis submit to the Inspector General of the executive agency and the Office of Management and Budget, and make available to the public, including through a website, a report on that program.

“(B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) shall describe any action the executive agency—

“(I) has taken or plans to take to recover improper payments; and

“(II) intends to take to prevent future improper payments; and

“(ii) shall not include—

“(I) any referrals the executive agency made or anticipates making to the Department of Justice; or

“(II) any information provided in connection with a referral described in subclause (I).

“(C) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY ON CENTRAL WEBSITE.—The Office of Management and Budget shall make each report submitted under subparagraph (A) available on a central website.

“(D) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION TO INSPECTOR GENERAL.—Subparagraph (B)(ii) shall not prohibit any referral or information being made available to an Inspector General as otherwise provided by law.

“(E) ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Inspector General of each executive agency that submits a report under subparagraph (A) shall, for each program of the executive agency that is identified under paragraph (1)(A)—

“(i) review—

“(I) the assessment of the level of risk associated with the program and the quality of the improper payment estimates and methodology of the executive agency relating to the program; and

“(II) the oversight or financial controls to identify and prevent improper payments under the program; and

“(ii) submit to the appropriate authorizing and appropriations committees of Congress recommendations, which may be included in another report submitted by the Inspector General to Congress, for modifying any plans of the executive agency relating to the pro-

gram, including improvements for improper payments determination and estimation methodology.

“(F) ANNUAL MEETING.—Not less frequently than once every year, the head of each executive agency with a program identified under paragraph (1)(A), or a designee of the head of the executive agency, shall meet with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, or a designee of the Director, to report on actions taken during the preceding year and planned actions to prevent improper payments.

“(c) ESTIMATION OF IMPROPER PAYMENTS.—

“(1) ESTIMATION.—With respect to each program and activity identified under subsection (a)(1), the head of the relevant executive agency shall—

“(A) produce a statistically valid estimate, or an estimate that is otherwise appropriate using a methodology approved by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, of the improper payments made under the program or activity; and

“(B) include the estimates described in subparagraph (A) in the accompanying materials to the annual financial statement of the executive agency and as required in applicable guidance of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(2) LACKING OR INSUFFICIENT DOCUMENTATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For the purpose of producing an estimate under paragraph (1), when the executive agency cannot determine, due to lacking or insufficient documentation, whether a payment is proper or not, the payment shall be treated as an improper payment.

“(B) SEPARATE REPORT.—The head of an executive agency may report separately on what portion of the improper payments estimate for a program or activity of the executive agency under paragraph (1) is attributable to lacking or insufficient documentation.

“(d) REPORTS ON ACTIONS TO REDUCE IMPROPER PAYMENTS.—With respect to any program or activity of an executive agency with estimated improper payments under subsection (c), the head of the executive agency shall provide with the estimate required under subsection (c) a report on what actions the executive agency is taking to reduce improper payments, including—

“(1) a description of the causes of the improper payments, actions planned or taken to correct those causes, and the planned or actual completion date of the actions taken to address those causes;

“(2) in order to reduce improper payments to a level below which further expenditures to reduce improper payments would cost more than the amount those expenditures would save in prevented or recovered improper payments, a statement of whether the executive agency has what is needed with respect to—

“(A) internal controls; and

“(B) human capital; and

“(C) information systems and other infrastructure;

“(3) if the executive agency does not have sufficient resources to establish and maintain effective internal controls as described in paragraph (2)(A), a description of the resources the executive agency has requested in the budget submission of the executive agency to establish and maintain those internal controls;

“(4) program-specific and activity-specific improper payments reduction targets that have been approved by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget;

“(5) a description of the steps the executive agency has taken to ensure that executive agency managers, programs, and, where appropriate, States and local governments are

held accountable through annual performance appraisal criteria for—

“(A) meeting applicable improper payments reduction targets; and

“(B) establishing and maintaining sufficient internal controls, including an appropriate control environment, that effectively—

“(i) prevent improper payments from being made; and

“(ii) promptly detect and recover improper payments that are made; and

“(6) a description of how the level of planned or completed actions by the executive agency to address the causes of the improper payments matches the level of improper payments, including a breakdown by category of improper payment and specific timelines for completion of those actions.

“(e) REPORTS ON ACTIONS TO RECOVER IMPROPER PAYMENTS.—With respect to improper payments identified in a recovery audit, the head of the executive agency shall provide with the estimate required under subsection (c) a report on all actions the executive agency is taking to recover the improper payments, including—

“(1) a discussion of the methods used by the executive agency to recover improper payments;

“(2) the amounts recovered, outstanding, and determined to not be collectable, including the percent those amounts represent of the total improper payments of the executive agency;

“(3) if a determination has been made that certain improper payments are not collectable, a justification of that determination;

“(4) an aging schedule of the amounts outstanding;

“(5) a summary of how recovered amounts have been disposed of;

“(6) a discussion of any conditions giving rise to improper payments and how those conditions are being resolved; and

“(7) if the executive agency has determined under subsection (i) that performing recovery audits for any applicable program or activity is not cost-effective, a justification for that determination.

“(f) GOVERNMENTWIDE REPORTING OF IMPROPER PAYMENTS AND ACTIONS TO RECOVER IMPROPER PAYMENTS.—

“(1) REPORT.—Each fiscal year, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall submit a report with respect to the preceding fiscal year on actions that executive agencies have taken to report information regarding improper payments and actions to recover improper payments to—

“(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

“(B) the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives; and

“(C) the Comptroller General of the United States.

“(2) CONTENTS.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall include—

“(A) a summary of the reports of each executive agency on improper payments and recovery actions submitted under this section;

“(B) an identification of the compliance status of each executive agency, as determined by the Inspector General of the executive agency under section 3353, to which this section applies;

“(C) Governmentwide improper payment reduction targets;

“(D) a Governmentwide estimate of improper payments; and

“(E) a discussion of progress made towards meeting Governmentwide improper payment reduction targets.

“(g) GUIDANCE BY THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section,

the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall prescribe guidance for executive agencies to implement the requirements of this section, which shall not include any exemptions to those requirements that are not specifically authorized by this section.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The guidance under paragraph (1) shall prescribe—

“(A) the form of the reports on actions to reduce improper payments, recovery actions, and Governmentwide reporting; and

“(B) strategies for addressing risks and establishing appropriate prepayment and postpayment internal controls.

“(h) DETERMINATIONS OF AGENCY READINESS FOR OPINION ON INTERNAL CONTROL.—The criteria required to be developed under section 2(g) of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this section—

“(1) shall continue to be in effect on and after the date of enactment of this section; and

“(2) may be modified as determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(i) RECOVERY AUDITS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—

“(A) CONDUCT OF AUDITS.—Except as provided under paragraph (3) and if not prohibited under any other provision of law, the head of each executive agency shall conduct recovery audits with respect to each program and activity of the executive agency that expends \$1,000,000 or more annually if conducting the audits would be cost effective.

“(B) PROCEDURES.—In conducting a recovery audit under this subsection, the head of an executive agency—

“(i) shall give priority to the most recent payments and to payments made in any program identified as susceptible to significant improper payments under subsection (a);

“(ii) shall implement this subsection in a manner designed to ensure the greatest financial benefit to the Federal Government; and

“(iii) may conduct the recovery audit directly, by using other departments and agencies of the United States, or by procuring performance of recovery audits by private sector sources by contract, subject to the availability of appropriations, or by any combination thereof.

“(C) RECOVERY AUDIT CONTRACTS.—With respect to a recovery audit procured by an executive agency by contract—

“(i) subject to subparagraph (B)(iii), and except to the extent such actions are outside the authority of the executive agency under section 7103 of title 41, the head of the executive agency may authorize the contractor to—

“(I) notify entities, including individuals, of potential overpayments made to those entities;

“(II) respond to questions concerning potential overpayments; and

“(III) take other administrative actions with respect to an overpayment claim made or to be made by the executive agency; and

“(ii) the contractor shall not have the authority to make a final determination relating to whether any overpayment occurred or whether to compromise, settle, or terminate an overpayment claim.

“(D) CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The executive agency shall include in each contract for procurement of performance of a recovery audit a requirement that the contractor shall—

“(I) provide to the executive agency periodic reports on conditions giving rise to overpayments identified by the contractor

and any recommendations on how to mitigate those conditions;

“(II) notify the executive agency of any overpayments identified by the contractor pertaining to the executive agency or to any other executive agency that are beyond the scope of the contract; and

“(III) report to the executive agency credible evidence of fraud or vulnerabilities to fraud and conduct appropriate training of personnel of the contractor on identification of fraud.

“(ii) REPORTS ON ACTIONS TAKEN.—Each executive agency shall, on an annual basis, include in annual financial statement of the executive agency a report on actions taken by the executive agency during the preceding fiscal year to address the recommendations described in clause (i)(I).

“(E) AGENCY ACTION FOLLOWING NOTIFICATION.—Each executive agency shall—

“(i) take prompt and appropriate action in response to a report or notification by a contractor under subclause (I) or (II) of subparagraph (D)(i) to collect an overpayment; and

“(ii) forward to other executive agencies any information that applies to that executive agency.

“(2) DISPOSITION OF AMOUNTS RECOVERED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Amounts collected by executive agencies each fiscal year through recovery audits shall be treated in accordance with this paragraph.

“(B) DISTRIBUTION.—The head of an executive agency shall determine the distribution of collected amounts described in subparagraph (A), less amounts needed to fulfill the purposes of section 3562(a) of this title, in accordance with subparagraphs (C), (D), and (E).

“(C) USE FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.—Not more than 25 percent of the amounts collected by an executive agency through recovery audits—

“(i) shall be available to the head of the executive agency to carry out the financial management improvement program of the executive agency under paragraph (3);

“(ii) may be credited, if applicable, for the purpose described in clause (i) by the head of an executive agency to any executive agency appropriations and funds that are available for obligation at the time of collection; and

“(iii) shall be used to supplement and not supplant any other amounts available for the purpose described in clause (i) and shall remain available until expended.

“(D) USE FOR ORIGINAL PURPOSE.—Not more than 25 percent of the amounts collected by an executive agency through recovery audits—

“(i) shall be credited to the appropriation or fund, if any, available for obligation at the time of collection for the same general purposes as the appropriation or fund from which the overpayment was made;

“(ii) shall remain available for the same period and purposes as the appropriation or fund to which credited; and

“(iii) if the appropriation from which an overpayment was made has expired—

“(I) in the case of recoveries of overpayments that are made from a trust or special fund account, shall revert to that account; and

“(II) in the case of other recoveries of overpayments—

“(aa) for amounts that are recovered more than 5 fiscal years from the last fiscal year in which the funds were available for obligation, shall be deposited in the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts; and

“(bb) for other amounts, shall be newly available for the same time period as the funds were originally available for obligation.

“(E) USE FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL ACTIVITIES.—Not more than 5 percent of the

amounts collected by an executive agency through recovery audits—

“(i) shall be available to the Inspector General of that executive agency for—

“(I) the Inspector General to carry out this Act; or

“(II) any other activities of the Inspector General relating to investigating improper payments or auditing internal controls associated with payments; and

“(ii) shall remain available for the same period and purposes as the appropriation or fund to which credited.

“(F) REMAINDER.—Amounts collected that are not applied in accordance with subparagraph (B), (C), (D), or (E) shall be deposited in the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts, except that in the case of recoveries of overpayments that are made from trust or special fund accounts, those amounts shall revert to those accounts.

“(G) DISCRETIONARY AMOUNTS.—This paragraph shall apply only to recoveries of overpayments that are made from discretionary appropriations, as defined in section 250(c)(7) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900(c)(7)), and shall not apply to recoveries of overpayments that are made from discretionary amounts that were appropriated before the date of enactment of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this section.

“(H) APPLICATION.—This paragraph shall not apply to the recovery of an overpayment if the appropriation from which the overpayment was made has not expired.

“(3) FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.—

“(A) REQUIREMENT.—The head of each executive agency shall conduct a financial management improvement program consistent with rules prescribed by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(B) PROGRAM FEATURES.—In conducting a program described in subparagraph (A), the head of an executive agency—

“(i) shall, as the first priority of the program, address problems that contribute directly to executive agency improper payments; and

“(ii) may seek to reduce errors and waste in other executive agency programs and operations.

“(4) PRIVACY PROTECTIONS.—Any non-governmental entity that, in the course of recovery auditing or recovery activity under this subsection, obtains information that identifies an individual or with respect to which there is a reasonable basis to believe that the information can be used to identify an individual, may not disclose the information for any purpose other than the recovery auditing or recovery activity and governmental oversight of the activity, unless disclosure for that other purpose is authorized by the individual to the executive agency that contracted for the performance of the recovery auditing or recovery activity.

“(5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Except as provided under paragraph (4), nothing in this subsection shall be construed as terminating or in any way limiting authorities that are otherwise available to executive agencies under existing provisions of law to recover improper payments and use recovered amounts.

“§ 3353. Compliance

“(a) ANNUAL COMPLIANCE REPORT BY INSPECTORS GENERAL OF EXECUTIVE AGENCIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each fiscal year, the Inspector General of each executive agency shall—

“(A) determine whether the executive agency is in compliance; and

“(B) submit a report on the determination made under subparagraph (A) to—

- “(i) the head of the executive agency;
- “(ii) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;
- “(iii) the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives; and
- “(iv) the Comptroller General of the United States.

“(2) DEVELOPMENT OR USE OF A CENTRAL WEBSITE.—The Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (in this subsection referred to as the ‘Council’) shall develop a public central website, or make use of a public central website in existence on the date of enactment of this section, to contain individual compliance determination reports issued by Inspectors General under paragraph (1)(B) and such additional information as determined by the Council.

“(3) OMB GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Council and with consideration given to the available resources and independence of individual Offices of Inspectors General, shall develop and promulgate guidance for the compliance determination reports issued by the Inspectors General under paragraph (1)(B), which shall require that—

“(A) the reporting format used by the Inspectors General is consistent;

“(B) Inspectors General evaluate and take into account the adequacy of executive agency risk assessments, improper payment estimates methodology, and executive agency action plans to address the causes of improper payments;

“(C) Inspectors General take into account whether the executive agency has correctly identified the causes of improper payments and whether the actions of the executive agency to address those causes are adequate and effective;

“(D) Inspectors General evaluate the adequacy of executive agency action plans on how the executive agency addresses the causes of improper payments; and

“(E) as part of the report, Inspectors General include an evaluation of executive agency efforts to prevent and reduce improper payments and any recommendations for actions to further improve that prevention and reduction.

“(4) CIGIE GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Council shall, with consideration given to the available resources and independence of individual Offices of Inspectors General, develop and promulgate guidance that specifies procedures for compliance determinations made by the Inspectors General under paragraph (1)(A), which shall describe procedures for Inspectors General—

“(A) to make the determinations consistent regarding compliance; and

“(B) to evaluate—

“(i) for compliance with the requirement described in section 3351(2)(B), the risk assessment methodology of the executive agency, including whether the audits, examinations, and legal actions of the Inspector General indicate a higher risk of improper payments or actual improper payments that were not included in the risk assessments of the executive agency conducted under section 3352(a);

“(ii) for compliance with the requirement described in section 3351(2)(C), the accuracy of the rate estimates and whether the sampling and estimation plan used is appropriate given program characteristics;

“(iii) for compliance with the requirement described in section 3351(2)(D), the corrective action plans and whether the plans are adequate and focused on the true causes of im-

proper payments, including whether the corrective action plans are—

- “(I) reducing improper payments;
- “(II) effectively implemented; and
- “(III) prioritized within the executive agency;

“(iv) the adequacy of executive agency action plans to address the causes of improper payments;

“(v) executive agency efforts to prevent and reduce improper payments, and any recommendations for actions to further improve; and

“(vi) whether an executive agency has published an annual financial statement in accordance with the requirement described in section 3351(2)(A).

“(b) REMEDIATION.—

“(1) NONCOMPLIANCE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If an executive agency is determined by the Inspector General of that executive agency not to be in compliance under subsection (a) in a fiscal year with respect to a program or activity, the head of the executive agency shall submit to the appropriate authorizing and appropriations committees of Congress a plan describing the actions that the executive agency will take to come into compliance.

“(B) PLAN.—The plan described in subparagraph (A) shall include—

“(i) measurable milestones to be accomplished in order to achieve compliance for each program or activity;

“(ii) the designation of a senior executive agency official who shall be accountable for the progress of the executive agency in coming into compliance for each program or activity; and

“(iii) the establishment of an accountability mechanism, such as a performance agreement, with appropriate incentives and consequences tied to the success of the official designated under clause (ii) in leading the efforts of the executive agency to come into compliance for each program or activity.

“(2) NONCOMPLIANCE FOR 2 FISCAL YEARS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If an executive agency is determined by the Inspector General of that executive agency not to be in compliance under subsection (a) for 2 consecutive fiscal years for the same program or activity, the executive agency shall propose to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget additional program integrity proposals that would help the executive agency come into compliance.

“(B) ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Director of the Office of Management and Budget determines that additional funding would help an executive agency described in subparagraph (A) come into compliance, the head of the executive agency shall obligate additional funding, in an amount determined by the Director, to intensified compliance efforts.

“(ii) REPROGRAMMING OR TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—In providing additional funding under clause (i)—

“(I) the head of an executive agency shall use any reprogramming or transfer authority available to the executive agency; and

“(II) if after exercising the reprogramming or transfer authority described in subclause (I), additional funding is necessary to obligate the full level of funding determined by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget under clause (i), the executive agency shall submit a request to Congress for additional reprogramming or transfer authority.

“(3) REAUTHORIZATION AND STATUTORY PROPOSALS.—If an executive agency is determined by the Inspector General of that executive agency not to be in compliance under subsection (a) for 3 consecutive fiscal years for the same program or activity, the head of

the executive agency shall, not later than 30 days after the date of that determination, submit to the appropriate authorizing and appropriations committees of Congress and the Comptroller General of the United States—

“(A)(i) reauthorization proposals for each program or activity that has not been in compliance for 3 or more consecutive fiscal years; and

“(ii) proposed statutory changes necessary to bring the program or activity into compliance; or

“(B) if the head of the executive agency determines that clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A) will not bring the program or activity into compliance, a description of the actions that the executive agency is undertaking to bring the program or activity into compliance and a timeline of when the compliance will be achieved.

“(4) PLAN AND TIMELINE FOR COMPLIANCE.—

If an executive agency is determined by the Inspector General of that executive agency not to be in compliance under subsection (a) for 4 or more consecutive fiscal years for the same program or activity, the head of the executive agency shall, not later than 30 days after such determination, submit to the appropriate authorizing and appropriations committees of Congress a report that includes—

“(A) the activities taken to comply with the requirements for 1, 2, 3, 4, or more years of noncompliance;

“(B) a description of any requirements that were fulfilled for 1, 2, or 3 consecutive years of noncompliance that are still relevant and being pursued as a means to bring the program or activity into compliance and prevent and reduce improper payments;

“(C) a description of any new corrective actions; and

“(D) a timeline for when the program or activity will achieve compliance based on the actions described within the report.

“(5) ANNUAL REPORT.—Each executive agency shall submit to the appropriate authorizing and appropriations committees of Congress and the Comptroller General of the United States—

“(A) a list of each program or activity that was determined to not be in compliance under paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4); and

“(B) actions that are planned to bring the program or activity into compliance.

“(c) COMPLIANCE ENFORCEMENT PILOT PROGRAMS.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget may establish 1 or more pilot programs that shall test potential accountability mechanisms with appropriate incentives and consequences tied to success in ensuring compliance with this section and eliminating improper payments.

“(d) IMPROVED ESTIMATES GUIDANCE.—The guidance required to be provided under section 3(b) of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this section—

“(1) shall continue to be in effect on and after the date of enactment of this section; and

“(2) may be modified as determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“§ 3354. Do Not Pay Initiative

“(a) PREPAYMENT AND PREAWARD PROCEDURES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each executive agency shall review prepayment and preaward procedures and ensure that a thorough review of available databases with relevant information on eligibility occurs to determine program or award eligibility and prevent improper payments before the release of any Federal funds.

“(2) DATABASES.—At a minimum and before issuing any payment or award, each executive agency shall review as appropriate the following databases to verify eligibility of the payment and award:

“(A) The death records maintained by the Commissioner of Social Security.

“(B) The System for Award Management Exclusion Records, formerly known as the Excluded Parties List System, of the General Services Administration.

“(C) The Debt Check Database of the Department of the Treasury.

“(D) The Credit Alert System or Credit Alert Interactive Voice Response System of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

“(E) The List of Excluded Individuals/Entities of the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services.

“(F) Information regarding incarcerated individuals maintained by the Commissioner of Social Security under sections 202(x) and 1611(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 402(x), 1382(e)).

“(b) DO NOT PAY INITIATIVE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—There is the Do Not Pay Initiative, which shall include—

“(A) use of the databases described in subsection (a)(2); and

“(B) use of other databases designated by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, or the designee of the Director, in consultation with executive agencies and in accordance with paragraph (2).

“(2) OTHER DATABASES.—In making designations of other databases under paragraph (1)(B), the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, or the head of any executive agency designated by the Director, shall—

“(A) consider any database that substantially assists in preventing improper payments; and

“(B) provide public notice and an opportunity for comment before designating a database under paragraph (1)(B).

“(3) ACCESS AND REVIEW.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of identifying and preventing improper payments, each executive agency shall have access to, and use of, the Do Not Pay Initiative to verify payment or award eligibility in accordance with subsection (a).

“(B) MATCHING PROGRAMS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The head of the agency operating the Working System may, in consultation with the Office of Management and Budget, waive the requirements of section 552a(o) of title 5 in any case or class of cases for computer matching activities conducted under this section.

“(ii) GUIDANCE.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget may issue guidance that establishes requirements governing waivers under clause (i).

“(C) OTHER ENTITIES.—Each State and any contractor, subcontractor, or agent of a State, including a State auditor or State program responsible for reducing improper payments of a federally funded State-administered program, and the judicial and legislative branches of the United States, as defined in paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively, of section 202(e) of title 18, shall have access to, and use of, the Do Not Pay Initiative for the purpose of verifying payment or award eligibility for payments.

“(D) CONSISTENCY WITH PRIVACY ACT OF 1974.—To ensure consistency with the principles of section 552a of title 5 (commonly known as the ‘Privacy Act of 1974’), the Director of the Office of Management and Budget may issue guidance that establishes privacy and other requirements that shall be incorporated into Do Not Pay Initiative access agreements with States, including any contractor, subcontractor, or agent of a

State, and the judicial and legislative branches of the United States, as defined in paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively, of section 202(e) of title 18.

“(4) PAYMENT OTHERWISE REQUIRED.—When using the Do Not Pay Initiative, an executive agency shall recognize that there may be circumstances under which the law requires a payment or award to be made to a recipient, regardless of whether that recipient is identified as potentially ineligible under the Do Not Pay Initiative.

“(5) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall submit to Congress an annual report, which may be included as part of another report submitted to Congress by the Director, regarding the operation of the Do Not Pay Initiative, which shall—

“(A) include an evaluation of whether the Do Not Pay Initiative has reduced improper payments or improper awards; and

“(B) provide the frequency of corrections or identification of incorrect information.

“(c) INITIAL WORKING SYSTEM.—The working system required to be established under section 5(d) of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this section—

“(1) shall continue to be in effect on and after the date of enactment of this section; and

“(2) shall require each executive agency to review all payments and awards for all programs and activities of that executive agency through the working system.

“(d) FACILITATING DATA ACCESS BY FEDERAL AGENCIES AND OFFICES OF INSPECTORS GENERAL FOR PURPOSES OF PROGRAM INTEGRITY.—

“(1) COMPUTER MATCHING BY EXECUTIVE AGENCIES FOR PURPOSES OF INVESTIGATION AND PREVENTION OF IMPROPER PAYMENTS AND FRAUD.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in this paragraph, in accordance with section 552a of title 5 (commonly known as the ‘Privacy Act of 1974’), the head of each executive agency may enter into computer matching agreements with other heads of executive agencies that allow ongoing data matching, which shall include automated data matching, in order to assist in the detection and prevention of improper payments.

“(B) REVIEW.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which a proposal for an agreement under subparagraph (A) has been presented to a Data Integrity Board established under section 552a(u) of title 5 for consideration, the Data Integrity Board shall respond to the proposal.

“(C) TERMINATION DATE.—An agreement described in subparagraph (A)—

“(i) shall have a termination date of less than 3 years; and

“(ii) during the 3-month period ending on the date on which the agreement is scheduled to terminate, may be renewed by the executive agencies entering the agreement for not more than 3 years.

“(D) MULTIPLE AGENCIES.—For purposes of this paragraph, section 552a(o)(1) of title 5 shall be applied by substituting ‘between the source agency and the recipient agency or non-Federal agency or an agreement governing multiple agencies’ for ‘between the source agency and the recipient agency or non-Federal agency’ in the matter preceding subparagraph (A).

“(E) COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS.—A justification under section 552a(o)(1)(B) of title 5 relating to an agreement under subparagraph (A) is not required to contain a specific estimate of any savings under the computer matching agreement.

“(2) GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES BY THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET.—The guid-

ance, rules, and procedures required to be issued, clarified, and established under paragraphs (3) and (4) of section 5(e) of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this section—

“(A) shall continue to be in effect on and after the date of enactment of this section; and

“(B) may be modified as determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(3) COMPLIANCE.—The head of each executive agency, in consultation with the Inspector General of the executive agency, shall ensure that any information provided to an individual or entity under this subsection is provided in accordance with protocols established under this subsection.

“(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed—

“(A) to affect the rights of an individual under section 552a(p) of title 5; or

“(B) to impede the exercise of an exemption provided to Inspectors General or by an executive agency in coordination with an Inspector General under section 6(j) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

“(e) PLAN TO CURB FEDERAL IMPROPER PAYMENTS TO DECEASED INDIVIDUALS BY IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND USE BY FEDERAL AGENCIES OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION DEATH MASTER FILE AND OTHER DEATH DATA.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—In conjunction with the Commissioner of Social Security and in consultation with relevant stakeholders that have an interest in or responsibility for providing the data, and each State, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall conduct a study and update the plan required to be established under section 5(g) of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this section, for improving the quality, accuracy, and timeliness of death data maintained by the Social Security Administration, including death information reported to the Commissioner under section 205(r) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 405(r)).

“(2) ADDITIONAL ACTIONS UNDER PLAN.—The plan described in this subsection shall include recommended actions by executive agencies to—

“(A) increase the quality and frequency of access to the Death Master File and other death data;

“(B) achieve a goal of at least daily access as appropriate;

“(C) provide for all States and other data providers to use improved and electronic means for providing data;

“(D) identify improved methods by executive agencies for determining ineligible payments due to the death of a recipient through proactive verification means; and

“(E) address improper payments made by executive agencies to deceased individuals as part of Federal retirement programs.

“(3) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall submit a report to Congress on the plan described in this subsection, including recommended legislation.

“§ 3355. Improving recovery of improper payments

“The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall determine—

“(1) current and historical rates and amounts of recovery of improper payments, or, in cases in which improper payments are identified solely on the basis of a sample, recovery rates and amounts estimated on the basis of the applicable sample, including a

list of executive agency recovery audit contract programs and specific information of amounts and payments recovered by recovery audit contractors; and

“(2) targets for recovering improper payments, including specific information on amounts and payments recovered by recovery audit contractors.

“§3356. Improving the use of data by executive agencies for curbing improper payments

“(a) PROMPT REPORTING OF DEATH INFORMATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—The procedure required to be established under section 7(a) of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this section—

“(1) shall continue to be in effect on and after the date of enactment of this section; and

“(2) may be modified as determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(b) PROMPT REPORTING OF DEATH INFORMATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall establish a procedure under which the Secretary and the Director—

“(1) shall promptly and on a regular basis submit information relating to the deaths of individuals, including stopped payments data as applicable, to each executive agency for which the Director of the Office of Management and Budget determines receiving and using such information would be relevant and necessary; and

“(2) to facilitate the centralized access of death data for the use of reducing improper payments, may identify additional Federal sources of death data and direct the data owner to provide that data to 1 or more executive agencies for that purpose.

“(c) GUIDANCE TO EXECUTIVE AGENCIES REGARDING DATA ACCESS AND USE FOR IMPROPER PAYMENTS PURPOSES.—The guidance required to be issued under section 7(b) of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this section—

“(1) shall continue to be in effect on and after the date of enactment of this section; and

“(2) may be modified as determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“§3357. Financial and administrative controls relating to fraud and improper payments

“(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ‘agency’ has the meaning given the term in section 551 of title 5.

“(b) GUIDELINES.—The guidelines required to be established under section 3(a) of the Fraud Reduction and Data Analytics Act of 2015, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this section—

“(1) shall continue to be in effect on and after the date of enactment of this section; and

“(2) may be periodically modified by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Comptroller General of the United States, as the Director and Comptroller General may determine necessary.

“(c) REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTROLS.—The guidelines described in subsection (b) shall include—

“(1) conducting an evaluation of fraud risks and using a risk-based approach to design and implement financial and adminis-

trative control activities to mitigate identified fraud risks;

“(2) collecting and analyzing data from reporting mechanisms on detected fraud to monitor fraud trends and using that data and information to continuously improve fraud prevention controls; and

“(3) using the results of monitoring, evaluation, audits, and investigations to improve fraud prevention, detection, and response.

“(d) REPORT.—For each of fiscal years 2019 and 2020, each agency shall submit to Congress, as part of the annual financial report of the agency, a report of the agency on—

“(1) implementing—

“(A) the financial and administrative controls described in subsection (b);

“(B) the fraud risk principle in the Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government published by the Government Accountability Office (commonly known as the ‘Green Book’); and

“(C) Office of Management and Budget Circular A–123, or any successor thereto, with respect to the leading practices for managing fraud risk;

“(2) identifying risks and vulnerabilities to fraud, including with respect to payroll, beneficiary payments, grants, large contracts, and purchase and travel cards; and

“(3) establishing strategies, procedures, and other steps to curb fraud.

“§3358. Interagency working group for Governmentwide payment integrity improvement

“(a) WORKING GROUP.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, there is established an interagency working group on payment integrity—

“(A) to improve—

“(i) State-administered Federal programs to determine eligibility processes and data sharing practices;

“(ii) the guidelines described in section 3357(b) and other best practices and techniques for detecting, preventing, and responding to improper payments, including improper payments that are the result of fraud; and

“(iii) the sharing and development of data analytics techniques to help prevent and identify potential improper payments, including those that are the result of fraud; and

“(B) to identify any additional activities that will improve payment integrity of Federal programs.

“(2) COMPOSITION.—The interagency working group established under paragraph (1) shall be composed of—

“(A) the Director of the Office of Management and Budget;

“(B) 1 representative from each of the agencies described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 901(b) of this title; and

“(C) any other representatives of other executive agencies determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, which may include the Chief Information Officer, the Chief Procurement Officer, the Chief Risk Officer, or the Chief Operating Officer of an executive agency.

“(b) CONSULTATION.—The working group established under subsection (a)(1) may consult with Offices of Inspectors General and Federal and non-Federal experts on fraud risk assessments, administrative controls over payment integrity, financial controls, and other relevant matters.

“(c) MEETINGS.—The working group established under subsection (a)(1) shall hold not fewer than 4 meetings per year.

“(d) REPORT.—Not later than 240 days after the date of enactment of this section, the working group established under subsection (a)(1) shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

“(1) a plan containing tangible solutions to prevent and reduce improper payments; and

“(2) a plan for State agencies to work with Federal agencies to regularly review lists of beneficiaries of State-managed Federal programs for duplicate enrollment between States, including how the Do Not Pay Business Center and the data analytics initiative of the Department of the Treasury could aid in the detection of duplicate enrollment.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 33 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SUBCHAPTER IV—IMPROPER PAYMENTS

“3351. Definitions.

“3352. Estimates of improper payments and reports on actions to reduce improper payments.

“3353. Compliance.

“3354. Do Not Pay Initiative.

“3355. Improving recovery of improper payments.

“3356. Improving the use of data by executive agencies for curbing improper payments.

“3357. Financial and administrative controls relating to fraud and improper payments.

“3358. Interagency working group for Governmentwide payment integrity improvement.”.

SEC. 3. REPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) IMPROPER PAYMENTS INFORMATION ACT OF 2002.—The Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note) is repealed.

(2) IMPROPER PAYMENTS ELIMINATION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2010.—The Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010 (Public Law 114–204; 124 Stat. 2224) is repealed.

(3) IMPROPER PAYMENTS ELIMINATION AND RECOVERY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2012.—The Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note) is repealed.

(4) FRAUD REDUCTION AND DATA ANALYTICS ACT OF 2015.—The Fraud Reduction and Data Analytics Act of 2015 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note) is repealed.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) GOVERNMENT CHARGE CARD ABUSE PREVENTION ACT OF 2012.—Section 6(a) of the Government Charge Card Abuse Prevention Act of 2012 (5 U.S.C. 5701 note) is amended by striking “section 3512 of title 31, United States Code, or in the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note)” and inserting “section 3512 or subchapter IV of chapter 33 of title 31, United States Code”.

(2) HOMELAND SECURITY ACT OF 2002.—Section 2022(a) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 612(a)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)(C), by striking “Consistent with the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note)” and inserting “Consistent with subchapter IV of chapter 33 of title 31, United States Code”; and

(B) in paragraph (5), by striking “section 2(h) of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note)” and inserting “section 3352(i) of title 31, United States Code.”.

(3) SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.—Section 2105 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397ee(c)) is amended by striking “Improper Payments Information Act of 2002” each place that term appears and inserting “subchapter IV of chapter 33 of title 31, United States Code”.

(4) TITLE 31.—Section 3562(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “section 3561” and inserting “section 3352(i)”;

(ii) by striking “agency for the following purposes:” and all that follows through “To reimburse” and inserting “agency to reimburse”; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure before us.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Improper payments include overpayments, underpayments, payments to the incorrect recipient, and those that lack proper documentation. They are a longstanding and significant problem in the Federal Government. In fiscal year 2018 alone, they totaled more than \$151 billion.

Congress has passed a number of laws over the past two decades to try and address this problem, but the problem, unfortunately, persists.

S. 375, the Payment Integrity Information Act, would consolidate the existing and proper payment laws in one place in the U.S. Code and make several changes to help identify and reduce improper payments. It would require agencies to develop plans to prevent improper payments and also to identify programs with the highest risk.

It would also require the Office of Management and Budget and inspectors general to offer guidance on how to improve annual reporting on improper payments.

Finally, the bill will create a working group of Federal agencies and non-Federal partners to develop strategies for addressing the key causes of improper payments, such as fraud and eligibility determination in State-managed Federal benefits programs.

I thank Senators TOM CARPER, RON JOHNSON, GARY PETERS, and MIKE BRAUN for their good work on this commonsense measure. I commend Senator CARPER for his longstanding dedication to reducing improper payments.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important measure to reduce waste and fraud in Federal programs, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 375, the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019. I know that I am not alone in addressing the Speaker on the will of the House, but

there are very few times that we see a whole lot of good that comes out of the other Chamber in the Capitol. This is one of the rare moments.

□ 1600

So as I see this, I would actually encourage support of it.

According to the GAO, since 2003, we have had \$1.5 trillion—that is trillion with a T—in improper payments. In fiscal year 2018 alone, Federal agencies estimated that there was \$151 billion in improper payments.

The Speaker probably knows that oftentimes we have had, in Oversight Committee, annual reports on improper payments, and consistently we are talking about hundreds of billions of dollars that are sent to not only the wrong place, but in terms that are not even accounted for. And after you get hundreds of billions year after year, eventually that adds up to real money. It is time that we address it.

This is a commonsense piece of legislation that brings everything together so that we can start, hopefully, addressing the sad state of where we are in addressing improper payments. The American taxpayers demand it, the American taxpayers deserve it, and, ultimately, we have a responsibility to address it. So I rise in support of this.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. CRAIG), the House sponsor for this bill.

Ms. CRAIG. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 375, the Payment Integrity Information Act. I was proud to introduce H.R. 5389, the House companion to this bill, earlier this year.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Congressman, Mr. MEADOWS, as well as Representatives CHERI BUSTOS and GREG GIANFORTE for their work on this bill.

My constituents sent me here to Congress to represent some of the hardest working, creative, and entrepreneurial folks in our country. Every day, I work to protect the hard-earned dollars of these families, and I remain committed to ensuring that the Federal Government is a good steward of their tax dollars.

In fiscal year 2018 alone, the Government Accountability Office estimated that improper payments throughout the Federal Government totaled \$151 billion. Since 2003, when agencies were first directed to begin reporting improper payments, cumulative improper payments estimated across government have totaled \$1.4 trillion.

These improper payments can be overpayments, underpayments, payments made to ineligible parties, or payments that were not properly documented. Frankly, it is outrageous.

Whether it is overpaying a defense contractor or underpaying a senior on their Social Security benefits, the Federal Government has an obligation to

put commonsense policies in place to end these improper payments.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this bipartisan and commonsense bill to tackle Federal waste, fraud, and abuse so that we can make room to fund the priorities that Minnesota families care so much about, like special education and addressing our crumbling infrastructure.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, again, this bill actually takes five different laws that have really not been codified in an appropriate manner, brings them together under one umbrella, and allows us to address this in a meaningful way, a commonsense bill.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues opposite to thank them for their support. I rise in support of this legislation.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of S. 375, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 375.

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.

PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2019

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 394) to amend the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 to improve the orderly transfer of the executive power during Presidential transitions.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 394

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 “Presidential Transition Enhancement Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION ENHANCEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3 of the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “upon request,” and all that follows through “including” and inserting “upon request, to each President-elect, each Vice-President-elect, and, for up to 60 days after the date of the inauguration of the President-elect and Vice-President-elect, each President and Vice President, for use in connection with the preparations for the assumption of official duties as President or Vice President necessary services and facilities, including”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by inserting “, or an employee of a committee of either House of Congress, a joint committee of the Congress, or an individual

Member of Congress," after "any branch of the Government"; and

(i) by inserting " , or in the case of an employee in a position in the legislative branch, with the consent of the supervising Member of Congress" after "with the consent of the head of the agency";

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

"(b) The Administrator shall expend funds for the provision of services and facilities under this section—

"(1) in connection with any obligation incurred by the President-elect or Vice-President-elect, or after the inauguration of the President-elect as President and the inauguration of the Vice-President-elect as Vice President incurred by the President or Vice President, during the period—

"(A) beginning on the day after the date of the general elections held to determine the electors of the President and Vice President under section 1 or 2 of title 3, United States Code; and

"(B) ending on the date that is 60 days after the date of such inauguration; and

"(2) without regard to whether the President-elect, Vice-President-elect, President, or Vice President submits to the Administrator a request for payment regarding services or facilities before the end of such period.";

(3) in subsection (h)(2)(B)(ii), by striking "computers" and inserting "information technology"; and

(4) By adding at the end the following:

"(1) MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 1 of a year during which a Presidential election occurs, the Administrator shall, to the maximum extent practicable, enter into a memorandum of understanding with each eligible candidate, which shall include, at a minimum, the conditions for the administrative support services and facilities described in subsection (a).

"(2) EXISTING RESOURCES.—To the maximum extent practicable, a memorandum of understanding entered into under paragraph (1) shall be based on memorandums of understanding relating to previous Presidential transitions.

"(3) TRANSITION REPRESENTATIVE.—

"(A) DESIGNATION OF REPRESENTATIVE FOR INQUIRIES.—Each memorandum of understanding entered into under this subsection shall designate a representative of the eligible candidate to whom the Administrator shall direct any inquiries or legal instruments regarding the records of the eligible candidate that are in the custody of the Administrator.

"(B) CHANGE IN TRANSITION REPRESENTATIVE.—The designation of a new individual as the transition representative of an eligible candidate shall not require the execution of a new memorandum of understanding under this subsection.

"(C) TERMINATION OF DESIGNATION.—The designation of a transition representative under a memorandum of understanding shall terminate—

"(i) not later than September 30 of the year during which the inauguration of the President-elect as President and the inauguration of the Vice-President-elect as Vice President occurs; or

"(ii) before the date described in clause (i), upon request of the President-elect or the Vice-President-elect or, after such inauguration, upon request of the President or the Vice President.

"(4) AMENDMENTS.—Any amendment to a memorandum of understanding entered into under this subsection shall be agreed to in writing.

"(5) PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF DEVIATION.—Each party to a memorandum of under-

standing entered into under this subsection shall provide written notice, except to the extent prohibited under another provision of law, not later than 3 days before taking any action that deviates from the terms and conditions agreed to in the memorandum of understanding.

"(6) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term 'eligible candidate' has the meaning given that term in subsection (h)(4)."

(b) AGENCY TRANSITIONS.—Section 4 of the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking "and" at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

"(4) the term 'nonpublic information'—

"(A) means information from the Federal Government that a member of a transition team obtains as part of the employment of the member that such member knows or reasonably should know has not been made available to the general public; and

"(B) includes information that a member of the transition team knows or reasonably should know—

"(i) is exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, or otherwise protected from disclosure by law; and

"(ii) is not authorized by the appropriate government agency or officials to be released to the public; and";

(2) in subparagraphs (C) and (D) of subsection (e)(3), by inserting "serving in a career position" after "senior representative";

(3) by striking subsection (f)(2) and inserting the following:

"(2) ACTING OFFICERS.—Not later than September 15 of a year during which a Presidential election occurs, and in accordance with subchapter III of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, the head of each agency shall ensure that a succession plan is in place for each senior noncareer position in the agency."; and

(4) in subsection (g)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking "November 1" and inserting "October 1"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) ETHICS PLAN.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Each memorandum of understanding under paragraph (1) shall include an agreement that the eligible candidate will implement and enforce an ethics plan to guide the conduct of the transition beginning on the date on which the eligible candidate becomes the President-elect.

"(B) CONTENTS.—The ethics plan shall include, at a minimum—

"(i) a description of the ethics requirements that will apply to all members of the transition team, including any specific requirement for transition team members who will have access to nonpublic or classified information;

"(ii) a description of how the transition team will—

"(I) address the role on the transition team of—

"(aa) lobbyists registered under the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) and individuals who were former lobbyists registered under that Act; and

"(bb) persons registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938 (22 U.S.C. 611 et seq.), foreign nationals, and other foreign agents;

"(II) prohibit a transition team member with conflicts of interest similar to those applicable to Federal employees under section 2635.402(a) and section 2635.502(a) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, related to current or former employment, affiliations, clients, or investments, from working on par-

ticular matters involving specific parties that affect the interests of such member; and

"(III) address how the covered eligible candidate will address his or her own conflicts of interest during a Presidential term if the covered eligible candidate becomes the President-elect;

"(iii) a Code of Ethical Conduct, which each member of the transition team will sign and be subject to, that reflects the content of the ethics plans under this paragraph and at a minimum requires transition team members to—

"(I) seek authorization from transition team leaders or their designees before seeking, on behalf of the transition, access to any nonpublic information;

"(II) keep confidential any nonpublic information provided in the course of the duties of the member with the transition and exclusively use such information for the purposes of the transition; and

"(III) not use any nonpublic information provided in the course of transition duties, in any manner, for personal or private gain for the member or any other party at any time during or after the transition; and

"(iv) a description of how the transition team will enforce the Code of Ethical Conduct, including the names of the members of the transition team responsible for enforcement, oversight, and compliance.

"(C) PUBLICLY AVAILABLE.—The transition team shall make the ethics plan described in this paragraph publicly available on the internet website of the General Services Administration the earlier of—

"(i) the day on which the memorandum of understanding is completed; or

"(ii) October 1."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure before us.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

The Presidential Transition Enhancement Act would make a number of important changes to the transition process when a new President is elected.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Senators JOHNSON and CARPER for their hard work on this issue.

Many of the provisions in the bill before us today were introduced in the House by our late chairman, Elijah Cummings, in the Transition Team Ethics Improvement Act.

Most importantly, the bill would strengthen the ethics requirements for transition team members.

The Government Accountability Office issued a report in 2017 about President Trump's Presidential transition.

GAO reported that the Trump transition team required team members to sign an ethics code of conduct but failed to designate a transition team member responsible for enforcing it.

Ethics plans are important for Presidential transitions because Presidents-elect often hire transition team members who work in the private sector, but unlike Federal employees, private-sector employees are not subject to Federal ethics laws.

This bill would require eligible Presidential candidates to agree to enforce ethics plans during the transition period. The bill includes core elements of what those ethics plans should include, such as a description of how the transition team will address participation by lobbyists and individuals working for foreign governments.

The bill would also require that transition teams make the ethics plans they adopt publicly available. It also includes provisions to ensure that non-public information remains confidential and is not used in any way for personal gain.

The bill would clarify the responsibility of the General Services Administration during a transition by requiring a memorandum of understanding between the agency and the Presidential transition team. Finally, the bill would allow GSA to provide transition services for up to 60 days after an inauguration.

These provisions would help ensure smoother transitions than we have had in the past.

I am very glad this is a bipartisan bill. The Senate approved this bill without any opposition.

The peaceful transition of power from one party to another is a cornerstone of our democratic system. We must do all we can to ensure the integrity of that process.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of S. 394, the Presidential Transition Enhancement Act of 2019.

First, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman JOHNSON for taking a serious look at the needed ethics reform. The Senate has developed this legislative package in a bipartisan manner, something that we would be well served in this House to do.

At the beginning of Congress, I think the Democrats introduced H.R. 1, which was a grab bag of unrelated Democrat messaging bills. One section of H.R. 1 was really directed at the President of the United States and his administration without really addressing serious ethics reforms.

S. 394, on the other hand, is an honest ethics reform package. The bipartisan support in the Senate shows that ethics reform does not need to be a partisan exercise.

I would suggest Senator JOHNSON's bill addresses a number of ambiguities

about how agencies work with Presidential transition teams that were identified by the Trump transition team. For example, agencies and the Presidential transition team should come to an agreement about the use and disclosure of transition team records.

The bill also establishes a requirement for a transition team's ethics plan. The plan would include consideration of how conflicts of interest would be addressed by members of the transition team and the President-elect.

I hope that we can use this for our future benefit as we work together in a bipartisan manner to make sure that ethics are addressed and stop politicizing ethics reforms.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this bill, S. 394, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 394.

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.

ARETHA FRANKLIN POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3976) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 12711 East Jefferson Avenue in Detroit, Michigan, as the "Aretha Franklin Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3976

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

SECTION 1. ARETHA FRANKLIN POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 12711 East Jefferson Avenue in Detroit, Michigan, shall be known and designated as the "Aretha Franklin Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Aretha Franklin Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. 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 gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in consideration of H.R. 3976, to designate the facility of the U.S. Postal Service located at 12711 East Jefferson Avenue in Detroit, Michigan, as the Aretha Franklin Post Office Building.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, Representative BRENDA LAWRENCE, for introducing this important measure to honor a cultural and civil rights heroine.

Aretha Franklin, the "Queen of Soul," was an American singer, songwriter, pianist, and civil rights activist from Detroit, Michigan. Over her career, Aretha Franklin was awarded 18 Grammy awards, along with various lifetime achievement recognitions.

Her unique vocal style not only influenced generations of future singers, but it also earned her the number one spot on Rolling Stone magazine's list of the Greatest Singers of All Time.

Aretha Franklin was also a champion for civil rights and women's rights. She frequently donated to civil rights groups, and two of her biggest hits, "Respect" and "You Make Me Feel Like a Natural Woman," became anthems for social change movements across the country.

In 1987, she was the first woman to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. She also received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush in 2005.

Aretha Franklin died of advanced pancreatic cancer on August 16, 2018, in Detroit, Michigan. Naming a post office in the city she cherished so fondly would recognize her important cultural and civic accomplishments.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3976, introduced by my friend, Representative BRENDA LAWRENCE.

This bill, as has been mentioned, names a post office located in Detroit, Michigan, in honor of the "Queen of Soul," Aretha Franklin.

Aretha Franklin was an American singer, songwriter, pianist, and civil rights activist, and so we want to give honor where honor is due.

She began her career as a child singing at her church in Detroit. For the next six decades, her distinctive voice captivated listeners and influenced countless other singers.

So it is my delight to rise in support of this particular bill. It is out of "Respect" for my good friend from Michigan, and so we will "Say a Little Prayer" and hope that this goes through.

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Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE), the author of this bill.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I will start by thanking the leadership on the Committee on Oversight and Reform for marking up this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3976, which would rename a post office in my hometown of Detroit after the Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin. As was mentioned earlier, she was an 18 Grammy Award winner; a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame; and the first woman to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

She performed at three inaugural events for Presidents Carter, Clinton, and Barack Obama. She was a woman who was respected on both sides of the aisle where President Bush issued her the Medal of Freedom.

"A Natural Woman" singer, she was more than just a music icon. She was a civil rights advocate who used her platform and voice to advocate for racial equality.

I knew her personally and she would talk to me about being a child and having Martin Luther King in her home with her dad discussing policies and what they were going to do to fight together for racial equality.

In 1967, Aretha released "Respect," which became a rally cry for racial and gender political movements of the time.

Although people remember Aretha Franklin as the "Queen of Soul" she was more than just a vocalist. Aretha used her platform to become a beacon of hope for people during the civil rights movement and her voice served as a perfect guiding light.

In 1967, she toured with Harry Belafonte and Sidney Poitier to raise money for Dr. Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The organization was in a dire financial state and would soon become the Poor People's Campaign.

In 1970, few people knew Aretha Franklin posted bond for Angela Davis, a prominent activist who was jailed on trumped-up charges. In 1970, a *Jet* magazine article quoted Aretha Franklin: "Black people will be free. I have been locked up for disturbing the peace in Detroit and I know you got to disturb the peace when you can't get no peace. Jail is hell to be in. I'm going to see her free if there is any justice in our courts . . . because she's a Black woman and she wants freedom for Black people."

In her 1999 autobiography, "Aretha: From These Roots" described the im-

pact Detroit had on her childhood and career. "Detroiters realize how deeply I appreciate the city in which I was raised. And it is in Detroit that I continue to cultivate my career; it is to Detroit that I direct most of my charitable activities; and it is from Detroit that I receive much love and support, which I reciprocate."

No matter how famous she became worldwide, Aretha always gave back to the city she grew up in. She frequently hosted community events for congregants in her father's church, and she donated to organizations like Save the Children and Easterseals and supported local food banks across Detroit.

In the year after her passing, an outpouring of support has led to the renaming of Detroit monuments in her honor—and I am so proud and happy to stand here today, personally knowing her, traveling with her on her tours—to include a post office near her home in Detroit to the list of ways to commemorate this amazing woman.

While there is little that can truly demonstrate our appreciation for Aretha Franklin, I hope her family knows how proud and thankful we all are for her lifelong support.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to give a little support R-E-S-P-E-C-T, to this legislation.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL).

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank Madam Chair for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3976, the bill sponsored by my colleague, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and by the members of the Michigan delegation.

This bill honors the "Queen of Soul," Aretha Franklin, and her innumerable contributions to music. Her faith in Detroit and its people is what I remember as much as her voice. This legislation serves as a fitting tribute to her esteemed legacy.

Aretha Franklin grew up singing at the New Bethel Baptist Church with her father, Reverend C.L. Franklin. Aretha's father was a good and dear friend to John Dingell, helping him early in his career. The two of them fought side by side in the fifties and the sixties for civil rights legislation.

Aretha's career includes more than 20 Grammy Awards, the first woman inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

However, it is Aretha's message through music of respect, love, and faith that will stay with us for generations.

Today, I stand with my Michigan colleagues and urge every Member to honor Aretha Franklin's legacy. Her contributions to our country are deserving of this recognition, and maybe we need to have her up there, up there with John, "say a little prayer" for us.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I will just cut to the chase. Let's get this

thing done and get it over with and make sure that we show the "respect" that we should.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 3976. I had the opportunity to meet Aretha Franklin several times. She was a great friend of Charlie Rangel and would often perform for his events. She very generously gave her time to raise money for all kinds of civic rights events. She was a remarkable person and a great singer.

Mr. Speaker, I urge everyone to support this important legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARSON of Indiana). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3976.

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.

MOTHER FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4794) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 8320 13th Avenue in Brooklyn, New York, as the "Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4794

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

SECTION 1. MOTHER FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 8320 13th Avenue in Brooklyn, New York, shall be known and designated as the "Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members 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 gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in consideration of H.R. 4794, to designate the facilities of the United States Postal Service located at 8320 13th Avenue in Brooklyn, New York, as the Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini Post Office.

I want to thank Representative MAX ROSE, a fellow Member, for introducing this bill honoring, literally, a saint. In November of 1880, Mother Cabrini, along with six other women, took religious vows and founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The purpose of the missionary was to care and educate orphans.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ROSE).

Mr. ROSE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman LAWRENCE for that kind introduction, and the gentlewoman is an honorary fellow New Yorker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support my bill, H.R. 4794, to rename the post office in Dyker Heights, Brooklyn as the Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini Post Office. Mother Cabrini was a great New Yorker and a great American who devoted her life to helping the poor and underserved to include immigrants throughout New York City.

Mother Cabrini is famous across the United States for her work providing education in underserved communities. She began her work organizing classes for Italian immigrants and orphans through the city. She helped found Columbus Hospital in New York City's Lower East Side, which is now a part of the world-renowned Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.

After her success in New York, she was called upon to open up schools all around the world; not only across the United States, but also in Europe, and Central and South America.

Mother Cabrini is not just a New York icon, although she is that. Her name is affixed to buildings in Chicago, Seattle, New Orleans, Denver, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia.

Cabrini was naturalized as a U.S. citizen in 1909 and canonized as Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini on July 7, 1946 by Pope Pius XII as the patron saint of immigrants.

I am proud to have the support of my colleagues from the New York delegation, both Democrats and Republicans, who have come together in recognition that the time has come to give Mother Cabrini her due recognition.

Mother Cabrini will always be a shining example of our country's commitment to the less fortunate, particularly immigrants in our country. She also serves as a testament for the power of education, the power of education to relieve poverty and empower communities, regardless of their background.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4794. I appreciate Representative ROSE's willingness to acknowledge the great work of Mother Cabrini and so much has been said already about her accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4794.

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.

□ 1630

JULIUS L. CHAMBERS CIVIL RIGHTS MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4981) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2505 Derita Avenue in Charlotte, North Carolina, as the "Julius L. Chambers Civil Rights Memorial Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4981

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

SECTION 1. JULIUS L. CHAMBERS CIVIL RIGHTS MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2505 Derita Avenue in Charlotte, North Carolina, shall be known and designated as the "Julius L. Chambers Civil Rights Memorial Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Julius L. Chambers Civil Rights Memorial Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LAWRENCE. 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 matter.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in consideration of H.R. 4981

to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2505 Derita Avenue in Charlotte, North Carolina, as the Julius L. Chambers Civil Rights Memorial Post Office.

I thank Representative ALMA ADAMS for introducing this bill to honor Julius Chambers, a civil rights icon.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS).

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman from Michigan for yielding, as well the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4981, which would designate the U.S. Post Office facility at 2505 Derita Avenue in Charlotte, North Carolina, as the Julius L. Chambers Civil Rights Memorial Post Office.

Julius LeVonne Chambers was born in Mount Gilead, North Carolina, in 1935. When he was young, a White man stole from his father, an auto mechanic, by refusing to pay a substantial bill. When attorneys in Mount Gilead refused to hear his father's case because his father was Black, Julius Chambers vowed to become a lawyer himself.

At North Carolina Central University—then the North Carolina College at Durham—for his undergraduate education, Chambers served as student body president. While attending UNC-Chapel Hill for law school, Julius Chambers was the first African American editor in chief of that school's prestigious law review.

Upon graduating and moving to Charlotte in 1964, Julius Chambers began a prolific legal career that would see him fight for justice and equality. He founded his own law firm and immediately began to litigate key discrimination cases after White firms would not hire him. Mr. Chambers' firm would later become North Carolina's first integrated law firm, Ferguson Chambers & Sumter, P.A. It is still in operation today.

Notably, in 1970, Chambers argued successfully before the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* that resulted in the desegregation of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system.

As he fought for equality, there were many who fought to stop him. In January 1965, his car was burned. In November 1965, his home was bombed. And in February 1971, his office was firebombed.

According to *The New York Times*: "His response was defiant; he said he would 'keep fighting.' It was also measured. 'We must accept this type of practice,' he said, 'from those less in control of their faculties.'"

Though he endured hardships, he did not grow weary of his mission. As he grew into one of the Nation's most accomplished civil rights lawyers, Julius Chambers would go on to lead the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund for over 9 years, where he continued to fight for social justice and equality.

He would later return to North Carolina Central University to serve as chancellor, where he proudly cultivated young minds from 1993 until 2001.

After a lifetime of service to others, Julius L. Chambers passed away at the age of 76 in 2013.

Mr. Speaker, my State and our Nation are undoubtedly better because of the life of Julius L. Chambers. I admired this man, and I was pleased to know him and had many conversations with him during his lifetime.

During this Black History Month, I hope that my colleagues will join me in voting in favor of this legislation and help me honor this civil rights legend in a community that he worked so hard to improve.

I thank my colleague, Mr. MEADOWS, and all of my colleagues from North Carolina and that delegation for supporting this legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4981 introduced by my good friend, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS).

Certainly, she has gone over all the reasons why support for this measure is not only demanded, but it is certainly deserved. I would just join her in asking my colleagues to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to urge the passage of H.R. 4981.

Mr. Speaker, this is such a significant opportunity for us in Congress to be able to recognize lifelong accomplishments that are above the norm, people who give their lives so that their names will never be forgotten.

It is with great honor that we recognize a queen, a saint, and now a civil rights leader, and I urge the passage of H.R. 4981.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4981.

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.

WALTER B. JONES, JR. POST OFFICE

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5037) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3703 North Main Street in Farmville, North Carolina, as the "Walter B. Jones, Jr. Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5037

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

SECTION 1. WALTER B. JONES, JR. POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3703 North Main Street in Farmville, North Carolina, shall be known and designated as the "Walter B. Jones, Jr. Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Walter B. Jones, Jr. Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in consideration of H.R. 5037 to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3703 North Main Street in Farmville, North Carolina, as the Walter B. Jones, Jr. Post Office.

I thank Representative MURPHY for introducing this measure honoring our former colleague. As you know, Walter Jones was born in North Carolina and was a longtime resident of Farmville. He later graduated from Atlantic Christian College and served 4 years in the National Guard.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise in support of this legislation, H.R. 5037, supporting the designation of the Walter B. Jones, Jr. Post Office in his hometown of Farmville, North Carolina.

The late Walter Jones was a treasured colleague and a personal friend, and I am glad to join others in the North Carolina delegation and in this Chamber in this fitting tribute.

Walter, I think we would all agree, charted a path uniquely his own. His warmth and sincerity earned him respect and affection on both sides of the aisle and across the entire spectrum of political attitudes and beliefs. The same was true in North Carolina among his constituents.

Walter was perhaps best known for his devotion to our men and women in uniform and their families. He was attentive, of course, to the needs of our military bases in North Carolina, but for Walter, this was very personal. He sent more than 10,000 letters to the families of fallen troops, and he memorialized those who died from North

Carolina's Camp Lejeune with photos outside his office, all of this demonstrating his genuine dedication to those who serve.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join in support of this resolution so that Walter's memory can be honored in Farmville, a community he loved dearly and served tirelessly.

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

I rise in support of this legislation, H.R. 5037.

Walter Jones was not just a colleague; he was a friend. For many of us in this Chamber, we can remember when he sat just off the center aisle there, just a few rows back from the front. He was consistently there and consistently a voice, as my friend from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) just said, of those who had fallen in the ultimate fight for freedom and liberty. Many of us have pictures outside of our congressional offices recognizing those who have fallen in their fight for liberty in the armed services, and that is due in no small part to our good friend, Mr. Walter Jones.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MURPHY), who is carrying on that legacy in his congressional district.

Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5037, which is a tribute to my predecessor, friend, and mentor, Congressman Walter B. Jones. Sadly, he passed away while serving diligently in his office nearly a year ago.

This legislation would designate the post office in his hometown of Farmville, North Carolina, as the Walter B. Jones, Jr. Post Office.

He was the son of Walter B. Jones, Sr., and Doris Long. A devoted public servant, a man of great faith, and a proud American, Walter put the people and the needs of North Carolina's Third District first.

I knew Walter first as a patient, who then became a dear friend and then became a political mentor. His passing was a loss for our State, our Nation, and for all who knew him and loved him.

In part due to his own service in the military, Walter cared deeply about the brave men and women who served our country. After attending Hargrave Military Academy in Virginia, Walter graduated from Atlantic Christian College in 1966 and went on to serve in the North Carolina National Guard for 4 years.

After serving for 10 years in the North Carolina House, he was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1995, where he would spend the remaining 24 years of his life diligently serving the people of North Carolina's Third Congressional District.

He worked tirelessly to ensure that he was always available to his constituents and saw that they received assistance whenever they needed it, particularly with the VA and healthcare benefits.

Both in our Nation's Capitol and in eastern North Carolina, Walter was known for his humility and kindness. In fact, Walter was voted the nicest Member of Congress in 2004 in a survey conducted by the Washingtonian among top Capitol Hill staffers.

Of course, Walter was known for his vigorous support of our military and particularly thousands of marines based in eastern North Carolina at Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps air stations in Cherry Point as well as New River, along with FRC East.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, he began a letter-writing campaign, ultimately sending over 11,000 letters of condolences to families and extended family members of fallen soldiers. Outside of his office—and now my office—are hundreds of photos of those who have fallen for the freedom of this Nation.

This was the kind of man he was: admirable, selfless, and caring.

Additionally, some of Walter's greatest achievements while serving in Congress included the work to ensure autistic children of military families received a proper education. He also advocated for the use of hyperbaric oxygen therapy to treat veterans with traumatic brain injury and to protect the beautiful wild horses on Shackleford Banks and North Carolina's beaches. He had compassion and respect for these beautiful animals on the eastern shores.

Walter left behind a legacy that epitomized what we all should aspire to be as a public servant. So it is my privilege to introduce this bill honoring such a great American like Walter Jones.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the entire North Carolina delegation for joining as original cosponsors of this piece of legislation, and I urge Members to adopt H.R. 5037, which would permanently name the post office after him in Farmville.

□ 1645

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the great State of North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD), my colleague.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time and for her leadership and willingness to give time on this very important bill.

I thank my colleagues, Congressman GREG MURPHY and Congressman MARK MEADOWS, for advancing this bill. I remember how well-connected they were to Walter B. Jones, Jr.—both of them—and I thank them for this legislation.

It is my honor to join with Congressman GREG MURPHY in cosponsoring this legislation, and so I support H.R. 5037.

Congressman Walter B. Jones, Jr., was a devoted man of great faith. He was my personal friend, Mr. Speaker, for more than 40 years.

My colleagues will recall that, as Walter was beginning to decline in

health, he was unable to come to the floor to have the oath of office administered to him, and Walter asked that I come to his home. The Speaker of the House authorized me to do so, and I went to his living room that day and administered the final oath of office to him. He was so appreciative, and we had a wonderful conversation that I shall never ever forget.

Walter Jones was a lifetime public servant, serving in the National Guard for 4 years, in our general assembly for 10 years, and here in Congress for 24 long years as Representative of the Third Congressional District.

Since I joined Congress in 2004, I watched Walter cast many difficult votes with conviction. I would sit right here to my left, and Walter would come by and, in his own way, he would say, "Mr. Chairman," and we would have a wonderful laugh about that. But he would stand firm in what he believed was right for his constituents and the American people.

Although Walter is no longer with us, he left an indelible mark on eastern North Carolina. He left a mark on this House and the Nation. Mr. Speaker, I call on my colleagues to join me in honoring Walter Jones.

I was particularly moved that so many of our colleagues traveled by military aircraft as we went to his funeral that day. The Speaker of the House authorized the airplane, and we flew down to Greenville that day.

The airplane was full of colleagues in a bipartisan manner. Democrats and Republicans both attended the funeral. And it was bicameral. You may remember that Senator Byrne and Senator TILLIS were there as well.

So I thank them very much for honoring this great man.

And to the Jones family, to Joe Ann and Ashley, may God bless you, and may we keep the memory of Walter B. Jones, Jr., alive.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, all of us have come together to give a little bit of what we got in big doses, and that was compassion and care from a man who was not only strongest in his convictions, but resolute in those convictions as well.

So I rise in support. I appreciate my colleagues opposite for their support of this. I appreciate Congressman MURPHY for his leadership as well, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today just always in awe of the history of this House and those who have served, knowing personally the sacrifices and the skill set that is needed to be successful. To be able to honor one of our own is something that I support.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 5037, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Representative Walter B. Jones, Jr., a fierce champion for North Carolina, a diligent public servant, and a personal friend to many across this body.

Representative Jones passed away on February 10, 2019, his 76th birthday. He worked tirelessly on behalf of our great state and served four years in the North Carolina National Guard, ten years in the North Carolina General Assembly, and was a member of the House of Representatives for over three decades.

A man of profound integrity, Representative Jones fought each and every day for what he believed was right. From championing our men and women in uniform to protecting our coastline, he was always a steadfast voice for the people of eastern North Carolina.

Today I am proud to join the North Carolina Congressional Delegation in supporting H.R. 5037, to designate a facility of the United States Postal Service as the "Walter B. Jones, Jr. Post Office," located in his hometown of Farmville, North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in honoring the life and legacy of Representative Walter B. Jones, Jr.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5037.

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.

SCIPIO A. JONES POST OFFICE PORTRAIT

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3317) to permit the Scipio A. Jones Post Office in Little Rock, Arkansas, to accept and display a portrait of Scipio A. Jones, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3317

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

SECTION 1. SCIPIO A. JONES POST OFFICE PORTRAIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The postmaster of the Scipio A. Jones Post Office, located at 1700 Main Street in Little Rock, Arkansas, may accept and display, in the lobby of such Post Office, a painting, by artist Wade Hampton, of a portrait of Scipio A. Jones.

(b) COSTS; GIFTS.—The United States Postal Service shall not be responsible for any costs of carrying out subsection (a), including the costs of displaying the painting. The postmaster referred to in such subsection is authorized to accept on behalf of the Government the painting and any services necessary to display the painting.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LAWRENCE. 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 matter.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in consideration of H.R. 3317, to permit the Scipio A. Jones Post Office in Little Rock, Arkansas, to accept and display a portrait of Scipio A. Jones.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative FRENCH HILL for introducing the measure to honor this civil rights icon.

Scipio Jones was born in 1863 near Tulip, Arkansas. He would later argue two civil rights cases before the Arkansas Supreme Court.

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

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3317, introduced by my good friend, Representative FRENCH HILL.

Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from North Carolina. I thank him particularly for his help in shepherding this bill through the committee.

I am grateful, too, to our late, good friend Elijah Cummings for his support and the opportunity to thank him on the floor for his service in the House.

Also, I thank my good friend from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) for her support of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, in 1919, American doughboys returning from the European front and its brutality were committed to benefiting from the opportunity and liberty they secured at great risk and sacrifice to themselves. Many took that commitment to autonomy and freedom home to small towns and communities and homesteads where their families and livelihoods remained.

Just over 100 years ago, as September bled over into October in 1919, few eyes in this country were turned to a small agrarian community in northeast Arkansas. There, Black sharecroppers, spurred in part by the tales of opportunity and liberty spun by these returning brave veterans of the war to end all wars, dared to discuss fair pay for their crops.

To this day, an accurate account of the tragic loss of life that took place during the Elaine massacre, when White mobs killed more than 100 African Americans, remains widely unknown.

But one of the heroic stories that emerged from the ashes of the Elaine massacre was that of Scipio Africanus Jones, one of the great lawyers in Arkansas history. Jones' skillful legal defense saved the lives of 12 unfairly charged sharecroppers from the Elaine massacre who were originally sentenced to death by an Arkansas State court.

Jones' actions resulted in the landmark Supreme Court decision in Moore v. Dempsey, establishing that Federal courts could review criminal convictions in State courts under the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that this legislation today that I have sponsored to honor his legacy, the Scipio A. Jones Post Office Portrait Act, is being considered on the House floor.

Today's measure is a simple one. It authorizes a portrait of Scipio Jones to be displayed at the U.S. Post Office in Little Rock, Arkansas, that bears his name. It has the support of the entire Arkansas delegation.

Scipio Jones' fight for civil rights and equality is an important part of Arkansas' history and something that we are deeply proud of in our State.

The Elaine massacre had a profound impact on the soul of our State that can be felt a century later. However, history always teaches us that we can learn from our past. We have an opportunity, today, with this legislation, to write a new chapter on Arkansas history that recognizes the legacy of the tragedy, honors the victims, and seeks to heal longstanding wounds. I am delighted to draft and sponsor this bill that helps accomplish that goal.

Our friend from North Carolina, the late Elijah Cummings, I am grateful for their help and the staff of the Committee on Oversight and Reform. I appreciate it for the quick markup, and I am grateful for the support.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this measure's passage.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I urge the bill's passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I urge support for the passage of H.R. 3317, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3317.

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.

MELINDA GENE PICCOTTI POST OFFICE

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4279) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 445 Main Street in Laceyville, Pennsylvania, as the "Melinda Gene Piccotti Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4279

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

SECTION 1. MELINDA GENE PICCOTTI POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 445 Main Street in Laceyville, Pennsylvania, shall be known and designated as the "Melinda Gene Piccotti Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Melinda Gene Piccotti Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LAWRENCE. 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 Michigan?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in consideration of H.R. 4279, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 445 Main Street in Laceyville, Pennsylvania, as the Melinda Gene Piccotti Post Office.

I thank FRED KELLER, a distinguished member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, for this measure to honor a distinguished military veteran.

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

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4279, introduced by Representative FRED KELLER. Certainly, his leadership on this is to be applauded.

I also thank the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) for her willingness to not only lead on this, but manage the floor for Chairwoman MALONEY.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER).

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4279, to name the post office in Laceyville, Wyoming County, Pennsylvania, after Melinda Gene Piccotti.

A native of Pennsylvania's 12th Congressional District, Mindy was an Air Force veteran who knew the struggles of combat veterans and wounded soldiers. She knew the struggles they faced when returning home from duty.

Starting in 2009, at the age of 60, Mindy highlighted her commitment to our Nation's Armed Forces by founding Hunts for Healing, based out of Laceyville.

Mindy founded Hunts for Healing to help wounded soldiers returning from military missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other combat missions transition back into civilian life, allowing them to experience the joys of hunting, including social interaction and camaraderie.

With the assistance of volunteer guides and funded entirely by private donations, Hunts for Healing helps veterans in need of physical, spiritual, and emotional support. In Laceyville, to the veterans she has helped and their families and loved ones, Mindy is nothing short of a hero.

For the impact of her life and for her continued legacy to the veterans' community, I urge members to support H.R. 4279 to name the post office in Laceyville, Pennsylvania, for Melinda Gene Piccotti.

□ 1700

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from North Carolina controls the time of the gentlewoman from Michigan.

There was no objection.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I, too, urge passage of H.R. 4279, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4279.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

Motions to suspend the rules and pass:

- H.R. 4044;
- H.R. 4031; and
- H.R. 2382.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROTECT AND RESTORE AMERICA'S ESTUARIES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4044) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the National Estuary Program, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 355, nays 62, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 35]

YEAS—355

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Abraham | Deutch | King (NY) |
| Adams | Diaz-Balart | Kinzinger |
| Aderholt | Dingell | Krishnamoorthi |
| Aguilar | Doggett | Kuster (NH) |
| Allred | Doyle, Michael | Kustoff (TN) |
| Amodei | F. | LaHood |
| Axne | Dunn | Lamb |
| Bacon | Engel | Lamborn |
| Balderson | Eshoo | Langevin |
| Barr | Españolat | Larsen (WA) |
| Barragán | Evans | Larson (CT) |
| Bera | Ferguson | Latta |
| Beatty | Finkenauer | Lawrence |
| Bergman | Fitzpatrick | Lawson (FL) |
| Beyer | Fleischmann | Lee (CA) |
| Bilirakis | Fletcher | Lee (NV) |
| Bishop (GA) | Flores | Levin (CA) |
| Blumenauer | Fortenberry | Levin (MI) |
| Blunt Rochester | Frankel | Lewis |
| Bonamici | Fudge | Lieu, Ted |
| Bost | Fulcher | Lipinski |
| Boyle, Brendan | Gaetz | Loeb |
| F. | Gallagher | Lofgren |
| Brady | Gallego | Long |
| Brindisi | Garamendi | Lowenthal |
| Brooks (IN) | Garcia (IL) | Lowe |
| Brown (MD) | Garcia (TX) | Lucas |
| Brownley (CA) | Gibbs | Luetkemeyer |
| Buchanan | Golden | Luján |
| Bucshon | Gomez | Lurla |
| Burgess | Gonzalez (OH) | Lynch |
| Bustos | Gonzalez (TX) | Malinowski |
| Butterfield | Gottheimer | Maloney, |
| Byrne | Granger | Carolyn B. |
| Calvert | Graves (LA) | Maloney, Sean |
| Carbajal | Graves (MO) | Marchant |
| Cárdenas | Green, Al (TX) | Marshall |
| Carson (IN) | Griffith | Matsui |
| Carter (GA) | Grijalva | McAdams |
| Carter (TX) | Guthrie | McBath |
| Cartwright | Haaland | McCarthy |
| Case | Hagedorn | McCaul |
| Casten (IL) | Harder (CA) | McCollum |
| Castor (FL) | Hartzler | McEachin |
| Castro (TX) | Hastings | McGovern |
| Chabot | Hayes | McHenry |
| Chu, Judy | Heck | McKinley |
| Cicilline | Herrera Beutler | McNerney |
| Cisneros | Higgins (LA) | Meeks |
| Clark (MA) | Higgins (NY) | Meng |
| Clarke (NY) | Hill (AR) | Miller |
| Clay | Himes | Mitchell |
| Clyburn | Hollingsworth | Moolenaar |
| Cohen | Horn, Kendra S. | Mooney (WV) |
| Cole | Horsford | Moore |
| Coleman | Houlahan | Morelle |
| Collins (GA) | Hoyer | Moulton |
| Conaway | Huffman | Mucarsel-Powell |
| Connelly | Huizenga | Mullin |
| Cook | Hurd (TX) | Murphy (FL) |
| Cooper | Jackson Lee | Murphy (NC) |
| Correa | Jayapal | Nadler |
| Costa | Jeffries | Napolitano |
| Courtney | Johnson (GA) | Neal |
| Cox (CA) | Johnson (LA) | Neguse |
| Craig | Johnson (OH) | Newhouse |
| Crawford | Johnson (SD) | Norcross |
| Crenshaw | Johnson (TX) | Nunes |
| Crist | Jordan | O'Halleran |
| Crow | Joyce (OH) | Olson |
| Cuellar | Kaptur | Omar |
| Cunningham | Katko | Palazzo |
| Davis (CA) | Keating | Pallone |
| Davis, Danny K. | Keller | Panetta |
| Davis, Rodney | Kelly (IL) | Pappas |
| Dean | Kelly (MS) | Pascarell |
| DeFazio | Kelly (PA) | Payne |
| DeGette | Kennedy | Perlmutter |
| DeLauro | Khanna | Peters |
| DelBene | Kildee | Peterson |
| Delgado | Kilmer | Phillips |
| Demings | Kim | Pingree |
| DeSaulnier | Kind | |

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Pocan | Scott, Austin | Torres Small |
| Porter | Scott, David | (NM) |
| Posey | Serrano | Trahan |
| Pressley | Sewell (AL) | Trone |
| Price (NC) | Shalala | Turner |
| Quigley | Sherman | Underwood |
| Raskin | Sherrill | Upton |
| Ratcliffe | Shimkus | Van Drew |
| Reed | Simpson | Vargas |
| Reschenthaler | Sires | Veasey |
| Richmond | Slotkin | Vela |
| Roby | Smith (NJ) | Velázquez |
| Rodgers (WA) | Smith (WA) | Vislousky |
| Roe, David P. | Soto | Wagner |
| Rogers (AL) | Spanberger | Walberg |
| Rogers (KY) | Speier | Walden |
| Rooney (FL) | Stanton | Walorski |
| Rose (NY) | Staubert | Waltz |
| Rose, John W. | Stefanik | Wasserman |
| Rouda | Steil | Schultz |
| Roybal-Allard | Steube | Waters |
| Ruiz | Stevens | Watkins |
| Ruppersberger | Stewart | Watson Coleman |
| Rush | Stivers | Welch |
| Rutherford | Suozzi | Wenstrup |
| Ryan | Swalwell (CA) | Westerman |
| Sánchez | Takano | Wexton |
| Sarbanes | Thompson (CA) | Wild |
| Scalise | Thompson (MS) | Williams |
| Scanlon | Thompson (PA) | Wilson (FL) |
| Schakowsky | Thornberry | Wilson (SC) |
| Schiff | Timmons | Wittman |
| Schneider | Tipton | Womack |
| Schrader | Titus | Woodall |
| Schrier | Tlaib | Yarmuth |
| Schweikert | Tonko | Young |
| Scott (VA) | Torres (CA) | Zeldin |

NAYS—62

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| Allen | Duncan | Loudermilk |
| Amash | Emmer | Massie |
| Armstrong | Estes | McClintock |
| Arrington | Foxx (NC) | Meadows |
| Babin | Gianforte | Norman |
| Baird | Gohmert | Palmer |
| Banks | Gooden | Pence |
| Biggs | Gosar | Perry |
| Bishop (NC) | Graves (GA) | Rice (SC) |
| Bishop (UT) | Green (TN) | Riggleman |
| Brooks (AL) | Grothman | Rouzer |
| Buck | Guest | Roy |
| Budd | Harris | Sensenbrenner |
| Burchett | Hern, Kevin | Smith (MO) |
| Cheney | Hice (GA) | Smith (NE) |
| Cline | Holding | Spano |
| Cloud | Hudson | Taylor |
| Comer | Joyce (PA) | Walker |
| Curtis | King (IA) | Weber (TX) |
| Davidson (OH) | LaMalfa | Wright |
| DesJarlais | Lesko | |

NOT VOTING—12

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Cleaver | Gabbard | Rice (NY) |
| Davids (KS) | Kirkpatrick | Smucker |
| Escobar | Meuser | Webster (FL) |
| Foster | Ocasio-Cortez | Yoho |

□ 1730

Messrs. MEADOWS, JOYCE of Pennsylvania, KEVIN HERN of Oklahoma, COMER, PALMER, and WEBER of Texas changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. GUTHRIE, GAETZ, and WILSON of South Carolina changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE ACT OF 2019

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4031) to amend the Federal

Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 373, nays 45, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 36]

YEAS—373

Abraham	Davis, Danny K.	Jackson Lee
Adams	Davis, Rodney	Jayapal
Aderholt	Dean	Jeffries
Aguilar	DeFazio	Johnson (GA)
Allred	DeGette	Johnson (OH)
Amodei	DeLauro	Johnson (SD)
Axne	DelBene	Johnson (TX)
Bacon	Delgado	Jordan
Baird	Demings	Joyce (OH)
Balderson	DeSaulnier	Joyce (PA)
Banks	DesJarlais	Kaptur
Barr	Deutch	Katko
Barragán	Diaz-Balart	Keating
Bass	Dingell	Keller
Beatty	Doggett	Kelly (IL)
Bera	Doyle, Michael	Kelly (MS)
Bergman	F.	Kelly (PA)
Beyer	Dunn	Kennedy
Billirakis	Emmer	Khanna
Bishop (GA)	Engel	Kildee
Bishop (UT)	Eshoo	Kilmer
Blumenauer	Espallat	Kim
Blunt Rochester	Evans	Kind
Bonamici	Ferguson	King (IA)
Bost	Finkenauer	King (NY)
Boyle, Brendan	Fitzpatrick	Kinzinger
F.	Fleischmann	Krishnamoorthi
Brady	Fletcher	Kuster (NH)
Brindisi	Flores	Kustoff (TN)
Brooks (IN)	Fortenberry	LaHood
Brown (MD)	Frankel	Lamb
Brownley (CA)	Fudge	Lamborn
Buchanan	Fulcher	Langevin
Bucshon	Gaetz	Larsen (WA)
Burgess	Gallagher	Larson (CT)
Bustos	Gallego	Latta
Butterfield	Garamendi	Lawrence
Calvert	Garcia (IL)	Lawson (FL)
Carbajal	Garcia (TX)	Lee (CA)
Cárdenas	Gibbs	Lee (NV)
Carson (IN)	Gohmert	Levin (CA)
Carter (GA)	Golden	Levin (MI)
Carter (TX)	Gomez	Lewis
Cartwright	Gonzalez (OH)	Lieu, Ted
Case	Gonzalez (TX)	Lipinski
Casten (IL)	Gosar	Loebsack
Castor (FL)	Gottheimer	Lofgren
Castro (TX)	Granger	Long
Chabot	Graves (GA)	Lowenthal
Cheney	Graves (LA)	Lowe
Chu, Judy	Graves (MO)	Lucas
Cicilline	Green, Al (TX)	Luetkemeyer
Cisneros	Griffith	Lujan
Clark (MA)	Grijalva	Luria
Clarke (NY)	Grothman	Lynch
Clay	Guest	Malinowski
Clyburn	Guthrie	Maloney,
Cohen	Haaland	Carolyn B.
Cole	Hagedorn	Maloney, Sean
Collins (GA)	Harder (CA)	Mast
Comer	Hartzler	Matsui
Connolly	Hastings	McAdams
Cook	Hayes	McBath
Cooper	Heck	McCarthy
Correa	Herrera Beutler	McCaul
Costa	Higgins (LA)	McCollum
Courtney	Higgins (NY)	McEachin
Cox (CA)	Hill (AR)	McGovern
Craig	Himes	McHenry
Crawford	Holding	McKinley
Crenshaw	Hollingsworth	McNerney
Crist	Horn, Kendra S.	Meadows
Crow	Horsford	Meeks
Cuellar	Houlahan	Meng
Cunningham	Hoyer	Miller
Curtis	Huffman	Mitchell
Davidson (OH)	Huizenga	Moolenaar
Davis (CA)	Hurd (TX)	Mooney (WV)

Moore	Rose (NY)	Swalwell (CA)
Morelle	Rose, John W.	Takano
Moulton	Rouda	Thompson (CA)
Mucarsel-Powell	Roybal-Allard	Thompson (MS)
Mullin	Ruiz	Thompson (PA)
Murphy (FL)	Ruppersberger	Thornberry
Nadler	Rush	Timmons
Napolitano	Rutherford	Tipton
Neal	Ryan	Titus
Neguse	Sánchez	Tlaib
Newhouse	Sarbanes	Tonko
Norcross	Scalise	Torres (CA)
Nunes	Scanlon	Torres Small
O'Halleran	Schakowsky	(NM)
Ocasio-Cortez	Schiff	Trahan
Olson	Schneider	Trone
Omar	Schrader	Turner
Palazzo	Schrier	Underwood
Pallone	Schweikert	Upton
Panetta	Scott (VA)	Van Drew
Pappas	Scott, Austin	Vargas
Pascarell	Scott, David	Veasey
Payne	Sensenbrenner	Vela
Pence	Serrano	Velázquez
Perlmutter	Sewell (AL)	Visclosky
Perry	Shalala	Wagner
Peters	Sherman	Walberg
Peterson	Sherrill	Walden
Phillips	Shimkus	Walorski
Pingree	Simpson	Waltz
Pocan	Sires	Wasserman
Porter	Slotkin	Schultz
Posey	Smith (MO)	Waters
Pressley	Smith (NE)	Watson Coleman
Price (NC)	Smith (NJ)	Welch
Quigley	Smith (WA)	Wenstrup
Raskin	Soto	Westerman
Ratcliffe	Spanberger	Wexton
Reed	Spano	Wild
Reschenthaler	Speier	Williams
Richardson	Stanton	Wilson (FL)
Riggleman	Staubert	Wilson (SC)
Roby	Steafnik	Wittman
Rodgers (WA)	Steil	Womack
Roe, David P.	Stevens	Woodall
Rogers (AL)	Stewart	Yarmuth
Rogers (KY)	Stivers	Young
Rooney (FL)	Suzuki	Zeldin

NAYS—45

Allen	Duncan	Marshall
Amash	Estes	Massie
Armstrong	Foxx (NC)	McClintock
Arrington	Gianforte	Murphy (NC)
Babin	Gooden	Norman
Biggs	Green (TN)	Palmer
Bishop (NC)	Harris	Rice (SC)
Brooks (AL)	Hern, Kevin	Rouzer
Buck	Hice (GA)	Roy
Budd	Hudson	Steube
Burchett	Johnson (LA)	Taylor
Byrne	LaMalfa	Walker
Cline	Lesko	Watkins
Cloud	Loudermilk	Weber (TX)
Conaway	Marchant	Wright

NOT VOTING—11

Cleaver	Gabbard	Smucker
Dauids (KS)	Kirkpatrick	Webster (FL)
Escobar	Meuser	Yoho
Foster	Rice (NY)	

□ 1739

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

USPS FAIRNESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2382) to amend title 5, United States Code, to repeal the requirement that the United States Postal Service prepay future retirement benefits, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 309, nays 106, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 37]

YEAS—309

Adams	Emmer	Lowenthal
Aguilar	Engel	Lowe
Allred	Eshoo	Lucas
Amodei	Espallat	Luetkemeyer
Armstrong	Estes	Lujan
Axne	Evans	Luria
Bacon	Finkenauer	Lynch
Balderson	Fitzpatrick	Malinowski
Barragán	Fleischmann	Maloney,
Bass	Fletcher	Carolyn B.
Beatty	Fortenberry	Maloney, Sean
Bera	Frankel	Marchant
Bergman	Fudge	Marshall
Beyer	Gallego	Mast
Bilirakis	Garamendi	Matsui
Bishop (GA)	Garcia (IL)	McAdams
Bishop (UT)	Garcia (TX)	McBath
Blumenauer	Gianforte	McCaul
Blunt Rochester	Gibbs	McCollum
Bonamici	Golden	McEachin
Bost	Gomez	McGovern
Boyle, Brendan	Gonzalez (OH)	McKinley
F.	Gonzalez (TX)	McNerney
Brindisi	Gottheimer	Meeks
Brooks (IN)	Graves (MO)	Meng
Brown (MD)	Green, Al (TX)	Miller
Brownley (CA)	Griffith	Moolenaar
Buchanan	Grijalva	Moore
Bucshon	Haaland	Morelle
Burchett	Hagedorn	Moulton
Bustos	Harder (CA)	Mucarsel-Powell
Butterfield	Hartzler	Mullin
Calvert	Hastings	Murphy (FL)
Carbajal	Hayes	Nadler
Cárdenas	Heck	Napolitano
Carson (IN)	Herrera Beutler	Neal
Carter (GA)	Higgins (NY)	Neguse
Carter (TX)	Himes	Newhouse
Cartwright	Horn, Kendra S.	Norcross
Case	Horsford	Nunes
Casten (IL)	Houlahan	O'Halleran
Castor (FL)	Hoyer	Ocasio-Cortez
Castro (TX)	Huffman	Olson
Chabot	Hurd (TX)	Omar
Cheney	Jackson Lee	Pallone
Chu, Judy	Jayapal	Panetta
Cicilline	Jeffries	Pappas
Cisneros	Johnson (GA)	Pascarell
Clark (MA)	Johnson (OH)	Payne
Clarke (NY)	Johnson (TX)	Perlmutter
Clay	Joyce (OH)	Peters
Clyburn	Cole	Peterson
Cohen	Collins (GA)	Phillips
Cole	Connolly	Pingree
Collins (GA)	Cook	Pocan
Comer	Cooper	Porter
Connolly	Correa	Pressley
Cook	Costa	Price (NC)
Cooper	Courtney	Quigley
Correa	Cox (CA)	Raskin
Costa	Craig	Reed
Courtney	Crist	Reschenthaler
Cox (CA)	Crow	Richmond
Craig	Cuellar	Rigglesman
Crenshaw	Cunningham	Roby
Crist	Davis (CA)	Rodgers (WA)
Crow	Davis, Danny K.	Roe, David P.
Cuellar	Davis, Rodney	Rogers (AL)
Cunningham	Dean	Rogers (KY)
Davis (CA)	DeFazio	Rose (NY)
Davis, Danny K.	DeGette	Rouda
Davis, Rodney	DeLauro	Rouzer
Dean	DelBene	Roybal-Allard
DeFazio	Delgado	Ruiz
DeGette	Demings	Ruppersberger
DeLauro	DeSaulnier	Rush
DelBene	Deutch	Rutherford
Delgado	Diaz-Balart	Ryan
Demings	Dingell	Sánchez
DeSaulnier	Doggett	Sarbanes
Deutch	Doyle, Michael	Scanlon
Diaz-Balart	F.	Schakowsky
Dingell	Dunn	Schiff
Doggett		
Doyle, Michael		
F.		
Dunn		

Schneider	Stauber	Van Drew
Schrader	Stefanik	Vargas
Schrier	Stevens	Veasey
Scott (VA)	Stivers	Velázquez
Scott, Austin	Suozzi	Visclosky
Scott, David	Swalwell (CA)	Wagner
Serrano	Takano	Walden
Sewell (AL)	Thompson (CA)	Waltz
Shalala	Thompson (MS)	Wasserman
Sherman	Thompson (PA)	Schultz
Sherrill	Tipton	Waters
Shimkus	Titus	Watkins
Simpson	Tlaib	Watson Coleman
Sires	Tonko	Welch
Slotkin	Torres (CA)	Wexton
Smith (NE)	Torres Small	Wild
Smith (NJ)	(NM)	Wilson (FL)
Smith (WA)	Trahan	Wilson (SC)
Soto	Trone	Yarmuth
Spanberger	Turner	Young
Speier	Underwood	Zeldin
Stanton	Upton	

NAYS—106

Abraham	Gosar	Murphy (NC)
Aderholt	Granger	Norman
Allen	Graves (GA)	Palazzo
Amash	Graves (LA)	Palmer
Arrington	Green (TN)	Pence
Babin	Grothman	Perry
Baird	Guest	Posey
Banks	Guthrie	Ratcliffe
Barr	Harris	Rice (SC)
Biggs	Hern, Kevin	Rooney (FL)
Bishop (NC)	Hice (GA)	Rose, John W.
Brady	Higgins (LA)	Roy
Brooks (AL)	Hill (AR)	Scalise
Buck	Holding	Schweikert
Budd	Hollingsworth	Sensenbrenner
Burgess	Hudson	Smith (MO)
Byrne	Huizenga	Spano
Carter (TX)	Johnson (LA)	Steil
Chabot	Johnson (SD)	Steube
Cline	Jordan	Stewart
Cloud	Joyce (PA)	Taylor
Comer	Keller	Thornberry
Conaway	Kelly (MS)	Timmons
Crawford	Kustoff (TN)	Walberg
Crenshaw	Lamborn	Walker
Curtis	Latta	Walorski
Davidson (OH)	Lesko	Weber (TX)
DesJarlais	Long	Wenstrup
Duncan	Loudermilk	Westerman
Ferguson	Massie	Williams
Flores	McCarthy	Wittman
Foxx (NC)	McClintock	Womack
Fulcher	McHenry	Woodall
Gaetz	Meadows	Wright
Gallagher	Mitchell	
Gooden	Mooney (WV)	

NOT VOTING—14

Cleaver	Gohmert	Smucker
Davids (KS)	Kirkpatrick	Vela
Escobar	Loeb sack	Webster (FL)
Foster	Meuser	Yoho
Gabbard	Rice (NY)	

1748

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I was absent today due to a medical emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted: "yea" on rollcall No. 35, "yea" on rollcall No. 36, and "yea" on rollcall No. 37.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 826, EXPRESSING DISAPPROVAL OF THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S HARMFUL ACTIONS TOWARDS MEDICAID; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2474, PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE ACT OF 2019; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5687, EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR DISASTER RELIEF AND PUERTO RICO DISASTER TAX RELIEF ACT, 2020

Mr. DESAULNIER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 116-392) on the resolution (H. Res. 833) providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 826) expressing disapproval of the Trump administration's harmful actions towards Medicaid; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2474) to amend the National Labor Relations Act, the Labor Management Relations Act, 1947, and the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5687) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

MAKING A TECHNICAL CORRECTION TO THE SFC SEAN COOLEY AND SPC CHRISTOPHER HORTON CONGRESSIONAL GOLD STAR FAMILY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM ACT

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of House Resolution 812, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 812

Resolved, That section 2(d) of House Resolution 107 (agreed to October 29, 2019) is amended by striking "or sibling of" and inserting "parent, or sibling of".

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REAPPOINTING JOHN FAHEY AS CITIZEN REGENT OF BOARD OF REGENTS OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 65) providing for the reappointment of John

Fahey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

S.J. RES. 65

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in accordance with section 5581 of the Revised Statutes (20 U.S.C. 43), the vacancy on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, in the class other than Members of Congress, occurring by reason of the expiration of the term of John Fahey of Massachusetts on February 20, 2020, is filled by the reappointment of the incumbent. The reappointment is for a term of six years, beginning on the later of February 20, 2020, or the date of the enactment of this joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REAPPOINTING RISA LAVIZZO-MOUREY AS CITIZEN REGENT OF BOARD OF REGENTS OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 67) providing for the reappointment of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

S.J. RES. 67

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in accordance with section 5581 of the Revised Statutes (20 U.S.C. 43), the vacancy on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, in the class other than Members of Congress, occurring by reason of the expiration of the term of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey of Pennsylvania on February 21, 2020, is filled by the reappointment of the incumbent. The reappointment is for a term of six years, beginning on the later of February 21, 2020, or the date of enactment of this joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Secretary be directed to communicate to the Secretary of State, as

provided by rule XXIII of the Rules of Procedure and Practice in the Senate When Sitting on Impeachment Trials, and also to the House of Representatives, the judgment of the Senate in the Case of Donald John Trump, and transmit a certified copy of the judgment to each.

JUDGMENT

The Senate having tried Donald John Trump, President of the United States, upon two Articles of Impeachment exhibited against him by the House of Representatives, and two-thirds of the Senators present not having found him guilty of the charges contained therein: It is, therefore,

Ordered and adjudged, That the said Donald John Trump be, and he is hereby, acquitted of the charges in said articles.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER
AS COSPONSOR OF H.J. RES. 25

Mr. SPANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be removed as cosponsor of H.J. Res. 25.

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

There was no objection.

NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE
SURVIVORS WEEK

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize National Gun Violence Survivors Week and the countless Americans whose lives have been impacted by gun violence across the country.

This issue is personal to me, as it is for so many others. When I was 16 years old, as a young police cadet, an accidental gunshot left me paralyzed.

Last week, I had the honor of spending time with former Congresswoman Gabby Giffords, our colleague, in my home State of Rhode Island. Gabby's life was forever changed by a gunman in 2011, but she never stopped fighting. She spoke of the courage it takes to stop gun violence, courage that she embodies every single day.

So, to the parents, children, students, teachers, and countless others who have lost loved ones to gun violence or faced gun violence themselves, I encourage you to keep fighting.

Together, we can reform our gun laws and keep guns out of the wrong hands and save others from tragedy.

OFFICIAL COPY OF PRESIDENT'S
STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

(Mr. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, we heard a great speech by the President last night, who spoke to the strength of

our country and the courage and character of our fellow citizens:

People like 100-year-old Tuskegee airman Retired Brigadier General Charles McGee and his great-grandson, the 13-year-old who dreams of going to space;

People like single mother Stephanie Davis and her lovely fourth grade daughter who received an Opportunity Scholarship. Who in this room does not remember the look on Stephanie's face as she realized that her daughter was going to get an opportunity that she sacrificed so greatly for;

And people like Sergeant First Class Townsend Williams, who surprised his wife, Amy, and two beautiful children in the gallery last night.

As I looked around, I saw tears in many people's eyes from the emotion that they felt at that time.

Unfortunately, Speaker PELOSI was unmoved and chose to tear up the House copy of that speech. She had no right to destroy this document, especially one filled with such impactful stories of American patriots.

The record was presented before the people's House and it belongs to the American people. That is why I am here today.

In my hand, I have an official copy of the President's State of the Union address signed by the President, given to me at the White House today. It will be delivered to the House Clerk to be archived and preserved for posterity, whether she likes it or not.

These great American stories will be remembered by history, not erased by the Speaker. We are better because of them, and we should learn from them and we should be proud that they will shape our future.

□ 1800

REACTION TO PRESIDENT'S STATE
OF THE UNION ADDRESS

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, obviously, each of us had our own reaction to the speech that was given by the President last night. He had every right under the First Amendment to say what he believed, what he was going to do, and what he wanted us to do.

I suggest to you that if I took this card and tore it up because I didn't like what was on the card, I am protected by the First Amendment in doing that. That is a form of speech. If the effort is to shut one another up, perhaps we will go down that road.

But, clearly, most of you in this House, or at least some of you in this House, have said an act of destroying things that the leader alleges are property of the House—I will ask for a ruling on that, Mr. Speaker, in just a minute—but is an act of disagreement.

It is not an assertion, per se, that what was said was wrong, disagreed with, or anything else. It was not an

outcry to the President of the United States that "You lie" that clearly undermined the decorum of this House.

Frankly, I did not see the Speaker tear that up. I have seen it on television. It has been played, but I would suggest to you very seriously—well, whether anyone saw it or not, that is not my argument. My argument is, if each of us watches closely on the floor each of our actions and we deem those actions to be disrespectful, either to the Speaker, that is, the Speaker at the rostrum or from the microphones behind the desk, do we bring a resolution that that was disrespectful?

Each of you who say "yes," well, I will watch very closely, and we will go back and forth, and that will not be a good precedent because it will undermine the premise of the First Amendment that action is speech.

Now, an action that is criminal, an action that defames, an action that brings the House into disrepute, that is another issue. But an action which says: "I feel this way" should be protected. Now, not necessarily agreed with, maybe even subject to criticism, but certainly, not subject to a resolution.

This resolution will not go forward, of course, because I will move to table it if it is offered because I believe it undermines the First Amendment and the House.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OFFER
RESOLUTION RAISING A QUESTION
OF THE PRIVILEGES OF
THE HOUSE

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of rule IX, I seek recognition to give notice of my intent to raise a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of the resolution is as follows:

House Resolution 832.

Whereas on December 20th, 2019, Speaker PELOSI extended an invitation for President Trump to address a joint session of Congress on February 4th, 2020;

Whereas on February 4th, 2020, President Trump delivered his State of the Union address, in which he honored the sacrifice of the following American heroes and their families:

General Charles McGee, one of the last surviving Tuskegee airmen, who served in World War II, the Korean war and the Vietnam war;

Kayla Mueller, a humanitarian aid worker who was caring for suffering civilians in Syria when she was kidnapped, tortured and enslaved by ISIS for over 500 days before being murdered by ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi;

Army Staff Sergeant Christopher Hake, who was killed while serving his second tour of duty in Iraq by a roadside bomb supplied by Iranian terrorist leader Qasem Soleimani;

Sergeant First Class Townsend Williams, who is currently serving his fourth deployment in the Middle East

and his wife, Amy, who works full-time for the Army and devotes hundreds of hours helping military families;

Whereas immediately following the address, while still presiding over the joint session, Speaker PELOSI ripped up an official copy of the President's remarks, which contained the names and stories of these patriots who sacrificed so much for our country; and

Whereas the conduct of Speaker PELOSI was a breach of decorum and degraded the proceedings of the joint session, to the discredit of the House: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives disapproves of the behavior of Speaker PELOSI during the joint session of Congress held on February 4, 2020.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Texas will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the majority leader asserted in his comments that the document in question was the property of the House.

Was, in fact, the document that the Speaker had to read the property of the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The message is part of the proceedings of the House and can be used by the House for archival and printing purposes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, an additional question.

Mr. Speaker, after the President had spoken the State of the Union and delivered that to the Congress of the United States, at the end of that session, I moved that that document be enrolled in the House proceedings of last evening.

Am I to understand from the ruling that that document was specifically the document that would have been enrolled?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The motion was adopted.

Mr. HOYER. Yes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. And the document was printed.

Mr. HOYER. That document did not exist according to the assertion of the Republican leader. It was destroyed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The message is part of the proceedings of the House and can be used by the House for archival and printing purposes. The gentleman has addressed the printing of the document.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I don't think that answered my question.

My question was: Was the document that was destroyed or torn apart, the document that was to be enrolled by the House pursuant to my motion?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The House is able to use that document and other materials to fulfill the order of the House.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, to clarify, was that document provided from the President to the Speaker of the House a document of the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is part of the proceedings of the House and can be used by the House for archival and printing purposes.

Mr. MCCARTHY. So to be clear, your answer is: That is a document of the House, and the President provides one to the Speaker for the House, and the President provides one to the President of the Senate, the Vice President, for the Senate?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The document was printed as a document of the House upon order of the House.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, is it allowed to destroy a document of the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will not provide an advisory opinion. The Chair is not going to give advisory opinions.

Mr. MCCARTHY. But to be clear, it is a document of the House, much like any historical document that has been provided to the floor of this House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is engaged in debate, and the gentleman is free to engage in debate on the resolution at the appropriate time.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the resolution is not on the floor, I don't think.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, no, the gentleman is correct. It was her intention.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Who seeks recognition?

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask for clarification. Obviously, the Parliamentarian—I think we ought to clarify this issue.

If the document has been torn apart as is alleged, and as we know it was,

that document, presumably, is not the document that was enrolled by the House pursuant to my motion last night.

I know it is not in the possession of the House. I know that for a fact. But there is, pursuant to my motion, a document that has been enrolled, the President's address in the State of the Union.

So I simply want to make the point to the Parliamentarian and to the Speaker, that the document that—I have been here for a long period of time. Numerous times, numerous times, I have had in this drawer a copy of the President's speech that is delivered by the communication staff of the White House.

Mr. Speaker, is that to be presumed—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Respectfully, the gentleman is engaged in debate. This issue is more properly addressed in the format of 1-minute speeches.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, you clarified that is a document of the House. Can you clarify that is not a document for the Speaker, but a document for the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The document is used as part of House proceedings and can be used for archival and printing purposes.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Did the Speaker have any history in past State of the Unions where that document provided to the Speaker has not been enshrined into the RECORD?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Respectfully, the Chair will not act as a historian.

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, in 2009, the majority leader, now Mr. HOYER, led a formal rebuke of South Carolina Representative JOE WILSON defending "the rules of the House and enforcing the traditional decorum of the Chamber."

At the time, Mr. HOYER said: "This House cannot stay silent. What is at issue here is important to the House and of importance to the country."

My parliamentary inquiry is—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Respectfully, the gentleman is engaged in debate. The House may address this during 1-minute speeches.

Mr. BRADY. Is the Speaker of the House—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is engaged in debate.

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, I asked for a parliamentary inquiry, and the question is this: Is the Speaker ripping up

the President's State of the Union speech on national TV considered the proper decorum of the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will not give an advisory opinion. The House may address this matter in the format of 1-minute speeches.

□ 1815

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS WEEK

(Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL. Madam Speaker, getting back to the business of the people, this week is National Gun Violence Survivors Week when we honor and remember the lives that we have lost to gun violence, those whom we have loved and miss terribly, people like my father, Guido Mucarsel; Jaime Guttenberg; De'Michael Dukes; Joaquin Oliver; Tel Orfanos; Jerry Wright; and all of their loved ones who now must live with the pain forever.

The sad reality is that 58 percent of Americans or someone they know has experienced gun violence in their lifetime. The number of gun violence survivors increases in each passing day, tragedy after tragedy. The mental and emotional toll on survivors is immense, and many people are thrust into financial hardship.

These are experiences that no one chooses to endure. We must not only remember those who have died but also those who have survived and do all we can to help them in their never-ending journey toward healing.

To all of those who are remembering a loved one this week, we stand with you.

REMEMBERING BONNIE DUVALL

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Ms. Bonnie Duvall, who passed away on January 18 at the age of 61 after a brave battle with cancer.

Ms. Duvall was known to many as the first lady of American agriculture. She was married to Mr. Zippy Duvall, the president of the American Farm Bureau, and enjoyed accompanying him to Farm Bureau events across the country. She was also the loving mother of one of my former staff members, Zellie, who was with me on my first day here at the Capitol.

Throughout her life, her dedication to the farming community made a lasting impact on agriculture in southeast Georgia, and there is no doubt that she is leaving it in a better place than she found it.

On her own farm, she used her business expertise gained at the University of Georgia to keep the books. She was

named the 1982 National Young Farmer and Rancher of the Year, and she was a consistent member of the Greene County Farm Bureau Women's Committee.

Most importantly, she was an overall inspiring and genuine person who will always be remembered for her optimistic attitude. Ms. Duvall is going to be deeply missed throughout the agriculture community.

Zellie, Zippy, and the entire Duvall family are in my thoughts and prayers.

DEFEND AMERICAN HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

(Mr. O'HALLERAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in defense of the American healthcare system.

Last week, the administration proposed a new demonstration program that would allow States to apply for block grants. These would permit States to slash funding for their Medicaid programs, reduce protections for beneficiaries, and restrict eligibility standards. A recent study by George Washington University found that these changes would also result in community health centers treating 5 million fewer patients over the next 4 years.

This is unacceptable. Federal law already gives Medicaid flexibility to change from State to State. These proposed block grants are nothing more than cuts to funding for the program.

Today, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for a resolution condemning these proposed changes as what they are: attacks on our healthcare system and those with pre-existing conditions.

HONORING RONNIE SPRINKLE

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

Mr. CLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Sheriff Ronnie Sprinkle, who began his service as the sheriff of Botetourt County nearly two decades ago. When Ronnie was just 6 months, his father was elected as Botetourt County sheriff and held the position for 30 years, retiring in 1991. Eight years later, the junior Sprinkle followed in his dad's footsteps and was elected to the same post, which he held until retirement last month.

Save the 8 years between his father's retirement and Ronnie's election, 2020 will mark the first time since the heart of the Vietnam war that a Sprinkle has not led the Botetourt Sheriff's Office.

I want to thank Sheriff Ronnie for his years of service to our community and congratulate him on all he has accomplished during his tenure. His tireless work to secure funding for a new public safety building and jail will not be forgotten.

The risks and responsibilities that come with being a law enforcement of-

ficer are many, and I want to express my sincere gratitude to Ronnie Sprinkle for his unwavering commitment to Botetourt County and all our men and women in blue.

PASS COMPREHENSIVE GUN REFORM

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, today, I rise in recognition of National Gun Violence Survivors Week.

Last month, with the leadership of my House colleagues and Senator ELIZABETH WARREN, I was proud to introduce the Gun Violence Prevention and Community Safety Act, the most comprehensive piece of gun reform legislation this Chamber has ever seen.

We will mandate universal background checks, which will help keep guns out of the hands of those who should not have them. We will crack down on gun trafficking. And we will hold the gun industry accountable for putting profits over the safety of the American people.

I promise today to fight so that not one more American is burdened with living as a gun violence survivor because of irresponsible, outdated, and morally bankrupt Federal gun policies.

BRI FOLDS GOES PRO

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

Mr. SPANO. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to honor a talented young lady from my district.

Bri Folds, a Lakeland Christian and Auburn grad, was drafted in the fourth round of the 2020 National Woman's Soccer League draft by the North Carolina Courage.

Ms. Folds is the first player from Polk County to be drafted by the National Women's Soccer League. Folds was a two-time Lakeland Ledger Player of the Year, with 173 goals and 155 assists while at Lakeland Christian. She finished her college career ranked seventh all-time at Auburn in assists, eighth in goals, and tied for fifth in game-winning goals with nine.

I am extraordinarily proud of her dedication and drive. It is important that our community continues to invest in future generations to produce stars and leaders like Ms. Folds. Players like her will influence young girls for years to come.

I encourage all of District 15 to join me in cheering on Bri Folds when the 2020 NWSL season begins in March.

REPEAL PREFUND MANDATE ON USPS

(Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act, which passed today with large bipartisan and union support. I was proud to lead this bill with my friends and colleagues, Chairman PETER DEFAZIO and Representatives BRIAN FITZPATRICK and TOM REED.

The USPS Fairness Act will repeal the mandate for the United States Postal Service to prefund future retiree health benefits. No other government agency or private business is plagued with a mandate like this. Since 2006, the prefunding mandate has wreaked havoc on USPS's finances, costing the agency \$5.4 billion each year.

I represent one of the most rural districts in the Nation, and in southern New Mexico, post offices and postal workers are an integral part of our communities, connecting businesses to customers, pharmacies to patients, and families to friends spread across our vast country.

Congress created this prefunding crisis, so I am pleased the House of Representatives took the first step to solve it. I ask that the Senate take the next step with us.

HONORING CHIEF DANIEL SPIEGEL

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

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor Chief Daniel Spiegel on his retirement from the Wildwood Fire Department.

Daniel spent 28 faithful years with the fire department, where he had served as chief since 2016. Daniel has the distinct honor of holding every rank in the fire department. Daniel's father also served as fire chief in Wildwood, the second-ever father-son chief in the department's history.

Daniel served in the New Jersey Task Force 1 Urban Research and Rescue and responded to the September 11 terrorist attacks, searching for survivors. He was the team leader for the Cape May County Regional Urban Search and Rescue Team, which serves all of Cape May County.

Danny was always focused on training. He trained thousands of firefighters in our entire region.

He is planning to spend more time with his wife, daughter, and two stepsons in retirement.

I thank Daniel for his service; his community thanks him for his service; and his country thanks him for his service.

Daniel, may God bless you. You are truly one of our heroes.

FIGHT FOR JUSTICE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, our emerging Nation sought to be a

bright light for democracy and the rule of law. This afternoon, I sat in the Senate Chamber and watched the Senate one by one announce the words guilty or not guilty: Article I, guilty 48, not guilty 52; Article II, guilty 47, not guilty 53.

I believe the presentation of the Judiciary, Oversight, Intelligence, and Foreign Affairs Committees was brilliantly presented.

I wondered whether there would be one moment for a profile in courage, one understanding that the norm of this Nation cannot tolerate what the Framers were most frightened about, which was the constitutional crime of abuse of power or having a sovereign nation interfere with our elections. Yet, there was one in Article I that made it bipartisan in the guilt, but no one in Article II.

Simply stated, now what is the answer? That this Nation no longer loves its democracy; does not stand by the rule of law; and, therefore, the person who remains in office is a king?

I believe, Madam Speaker, that we must raise the Constitution and fight for justice.

DECORUM AND MAINTAINING CIVILITY IN THE HOUSE

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

Mr. PALMER. Madam Speaker, I rise to note, in regard to the assertion of the majority leader that the act of destroying the House copy of President Trump's State of the Union speech was speech protected under the First Amendment, I rise to assert that not all speech protected under the First Amendment is allowable under the rules of the House.

Moreover, the act of destroying the House's copy of the State of the Union Address diminishes the decorum that is critical to maintaining the civility that is expected of every Member, including and especially the Speaker.

TAKE ACTION FOR GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS

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

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, during National Gun Violence Survivors Week, I rise to recognize my State of the Union guest, Mary Miller-Strobel, from my hometown of Berkeley, Michigan.

After her brother, Ben, was honorably discharged from the military, Mary grew concerned that Ben was at risk of self-harm. Mary and her father drove to every gun store in their small town, begging them not to sell Ben a gun. But they had no legal recourse to block a store from selling Ben the gun that would end his life. Ben died by suicide soon thereafter.

Had Mary been able to seek an extreme risk protection order, Ben might still be alive today.

Mary is now a Moms Demand Action leader and has turned her tragedy into a triumphant story of fighting to prevent other families from suffering this tremendous and preventable loss.

The House has passed commonsense gun violence legislation, and we will pass red flag legislation, too. Now, we need the Senate to act, for Mary and Ben, and for so many others.

□ 1830

SUPPORT OF U.S. POSTAL SERVICE FAIRNESS ACT

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2382, or the U.S. Postal Service Fairness Act up for a vote today.

Madam Speaker, 13 years ago, the Postal Service was saddled by this body when we required it—not with my support—to prefund its retirement benefits. Unfortunately, this prevented the Postal Service from addressing critical equipment modernization needs. Thankfully, this legislation allows us to correct this misguided requirement.

The post office is a constitutionally mandated institution. A sense of community is sustained every time the mailwoman or mailman delivers a letter, increasing connectivity in rural and urban districts alike. The Postal Service delivers close to 190 million pieces of mail every single day and is a testament to American ingenuity. Indeed, postal workers are the best ambassadors, receiving an overwhelmingly high public approval rating of 74 percent.

While we work to ensure the post office's financial health, we must also continue to increase innovation, such as through modernizing postal services. For example, creative initiatives could increase access to basic functions in post offices and underserved communities.

I thank my friend, Representative PETER DEFAZIO, for his true leadership on this bill, and urge all my colleagues to support its passage, and thank those who did.

PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, a crucial piece of legislation that we will take up tomorrow on the floor of this House. It is so important that

we take up this bill because the American economy is not working for most American families.

While corporations and the wealthy continue to capture the rewards of a growing economy, working families and middle class Americans are being left behind. From 1980 to 2017, average incomes for the bottom 90 percent of households increased just 1.1 percent, while average incomes for the wealthiest 1 percent increased by 184 percent.

This inequality is not a natural product of a functioning economy. It is not all due to globalization or technology change. It is the result of policy choices that have stripped workers of the power to join together and negotiate for decent wages, benefits, and working conditions.

The Protecting the Right to Organize Act restores fairness to the economy by strengthening the Federal laws that protect workers' rights to form a union.

You know, our basic labor law, the National Labor Relations Act was passed 85 years ago in 1935. It was a core part of the New Deal. A lot of credit is due to the man for whom it is named, Senator Wagner of New York. Also, in addition to FDR, our President, our amazing Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins deserves of a huge amount of credit.

And after the Wagner Act was passed, or the National Labor Relations Act in 1935, within just 12 years, one-third of American workers were members of unions. And that figure, about a third of all workers being in unions, persisted for some time. But then employers went on the attack to try to undermine that law.

In 1947, over President Truman's veto, the Taft Hartley amendments were passed, and they gutted a lot of what workers wanted in 1935. And then in 1959, the Landrum-Griffin amendments were passed in the Eisenhower era, and they further eroded workers' rights.

So that while a third of workers were union members in the late 1940s and early 1950s, by the time that I started organizing workers in 1983, about 16½ percent of private sector workers were in unions. And today, in 2020, just 6.2 percent of workers in the private sector in our country have the voice and power of a union. And this has decimated the American middle class. And it has made the American Dream recede from view for so many American workers.

So we are going to spend some time tonight talking about the PRO Act, and I want to invite my esteemed colleague from the great State of Minnesota, Representative OMAR, to join me in saying a few words about the PRO Act.

Madam Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman from Minnesota such time as she may consume.

Ms. OMAR. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the role that organized labor has played in improving the lives of countless working men and women across this country.

Labor unions have been the driving force for all positive change for workers in modern history. As a former union member myself, I can attest to the power that workers wield when they exercise their right to organize. And I have seen the incredible work that unions in Minnesota have accomplished when they came together to fight for working rights.

On average, a worker covered by a union contract, earns over 13 percent more in wages than someone with similar education, occupation, and experience in nonunionized workplaces. And unions are about so much more than wages. They create solidarity between workers across gender, race, ethnicity, and religion. That is why we need the PRO Act, and why we must pass it this week, and pressure the Senate to do the same.

It will address the challenges and attacks that labor unions have been facing for decades that have led to the erosion of wages, a spike in workplace discrimination and a dangerous growth in inequality in our society at every turn.

The PRO Act puts power back in the hands of workers where it belongs. I do not want to envision what workplaces would look like for my children and their grandchildren one day if we do not pass the PRO Act. It is a crucial step to strengthening labor rights so that we can help shepherd through a new generation of victories for working unions and members.

Madam Speaker, I am delighted for our chairman and vice chairman on the Committee on Education and Labor for their work in championing labor rights on behalf of American workers.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I thank Representative OMAR for being such a champion of workers in Minnesota and throughout this great Nation and, indeed, throughout our world.

Madam Speaker, I will take a few moments to talk about the breadth of this bill.

What has happened to workers in this country over the last several decades is the result of many administrative actions by various administrations, regulatory actions that administrations have taken that stripped workers of their rights, judicial decisions from the lower courts all the way up to the Supreme Court, and laws passed by the Congress and the States, to the point where millions and millions of workers aren't even covered by the National Labor Relations Act, can't even exercise their rights under the National Labor Relations Act, and the rights that they have are so badly eroded that, functionally, workers don't have the freedom to form unions in this country.

And Representative OMAR referenced Chairman SCOTT. Chairman SCOTT and

the staff of this committee have done such an incredible job at looking at the complexity of the workplace in 2020 and including the many ways in which we need to make changes to help workers.

I want to highlight several things: The first is the problem of multiple employers and protecting employees of multiple employers.

The PRO Act will make it so that two or more persons are employers under the National Labor Relations Act, if each codetermines or shares control over the employees' essential terms and conditions of employment. It basically codifies the joint employer standard in the NLRB's Browning-Ferris decision of 2015. And this is extremely important because in a lot of industries, employers have tried to evade their responsibility to workers under the National Labor Relations Act through various schemes of corporate organization so that the company that really is in charge, that really determines what uniform they wear, what route they drive, what kind of products they serve, everything about their job, is not considered an employer under the act.

The PRO Act will fix that, and it is very important to help millions of workers get their rights under the NLRA.

Another huge problem of excluding workers from accessing their rights is misclassification of workers as independent contractors.

The PRO Act will fix this problem by using a simple three-part test to determine whether someone is an employee or an independent contractor. And this will help, again, another set of millions of workers gain access to their rights and clarify that they are covered as workers, as employees under the National Labor Relations Act. So they can form a union, bargain collectively, get a contract, and get justice.

Another major area of the law involves protecting workers in their right to engage in protected activities. So let's talk about workers going on strike.

The PRO Act will prohibit employers from permanently replacing workers who go on strike. This is hugely important, because permanent replacement of strikers has been a tactic used over the last, really, 40 years to deter workers from engaging in strikes at all and taking away this very core right of withholding your labor as a way to try to get better working conditions.

I remember what happened in, for example, the meat packing industry, which used to be a largely unionized industry. And the workers' organizations were largely destroyed by preventing workers from engaging in strikes, to the point where their wages and benefits were cut massively and many of their facilities were moved, and they couldn't do anything about it.

Another thing that the PRO Act will do is prohibit offensive lockouts. Under current law, employers may offensively

lock out employees in the absence of a threatened strike with the goal of the employer being to curtail the workers' ability to strike by removing workers control over the timing and duration of a work stoppage.

Current law also permits employers to hire temporary replacements during an offensive lockout. So if the employer thinks there might be a labor dispute, even if the workers hadn't planned to go on strike, they lock the workers out and temporarily replace them, stripping them of their ability to make their own strategy about how they want to enforce their right under the act.

The PRO Act prohibits any lockouts prior to strike but it maintains employers' rights to respond to strikes with defensive lockouts, which is appropriate.

Another key change that the PRO Act would put into law after all these years from the Taft-Hartley amendments is removing limitations on secondary strikes. The idea here is that the Congress in 1947 said that workers of one company can't engage in collective activity in solidarity with workers in another company.

Workers might picket or strike or support a boycott in solidarity with other workers to improve the other workers on their own, perhaps, wages and working conditions.

□ 1845

Being allowed to protest however you want in America about what some other company might be doing is a fundamental First Amendment right.

This has been something that has bothered me for decades. It is fundamentally unfair in this country, and the PRO Act would fix this by allowing workers to have their full freedoms to engage in secondary activity.

A crucial thing that the PRO Act would do to help workers vindicate their rights under the National Labor Relations Act is prohibiting captive audience meetings.

So it is hard for people who haven't been through a union organizing campaign to really understand how absurd it is to claim that a union election is sort of just like a political election, where you go down to the local school or church or wherever you vote, and you get in line and they check whether you are on the voting rolls, and you cast your ballot in a little booth. You wouldn't dream of putting your job at risk or that anybody could do something to you for how you vote in America; it is a core thing.

That is not how it works in a union election. And one of the things that employers have been allowed to do is they can force you to attend a meeting, the sole purpose of which is to pressure you not to vote for a union. They can do that every time you go to work. They can do it for your whole shift.

If you say, "I have been to five of your presentations about the union; I don't want to go anymore," you can be

fired for not going to the employer's propaganda offensive against forming a union. It is something, without parallel, in American law and in our economy only to prohibit or try to prevent workers from forming a union.

So the PRO Act will change this at long last and say that people have their First Amendment rights, we are all grownups here, and your employer cannot make you go to an antiunion captive audience meeting on pain of termination.

I am sorry it took until 2020 for us to get to this point, but at long last we are saying captive audience meetings have no place in workers' decisions about forming unions.

There are a lot of other really important provisions I want to get to, but at this time I want to invite my esteemed colleague from the great State of Massachusetts, Representative AYANNA PRESSLEY, to join in this discussion of why it is so important that we pass the Protecting the Right to Organize Act.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. PRESSLEY).

Ms. PRESSLEY. Madam Speaker, today I rise in solidarity with my union brothers and sisters in support of the Protecting the Right to Organize Act.

Over the last few decades, we have seen the right to unionize, to ban together, and to fight for the collective rights and dignities of working people come under attack.

Throughout our Nation's history, these rights and protections have led to better wages and benefits, safer working conditions, and protections from workplace harassment and discrimination.

The hard-won battles of our Nation's unions have helped push back against the vast economic inequities that too often are fueled by the greed of big corporations and special interests.

I have witnessed many of these victories firsthand, from my early days on the picket lines with my mother, Sandy—may she rest in power—who taught me early on that our destinies are tied, that workers' rights are human rights, and that economic justice is workers' justice.

This is still true today, and the fight continues, from the Stop & Shop workers, who walked out and fought back for better healthcare for workers and their families, to the Battery Wharf Hotel workers, who braved the elements for 79 days fighting for livable wages and protections for immigrant workers, pregnant workers, and workers of color.

We cannot and must not take this power for granted.

But for too many workers, "right-to-work laws" and other calculated efforts in States across the country have attempted to diminish the power of workers. This ends this week as the House considers the PRO Act, legislation that will protect critical rights to unionize and protect the rights of workers.

Madam Speaker, I thank Representative BOBBY SCOTT for his leadership on this bill to honor and affirm a union's right to their collective voice. I also thank my colleague, my brother from Michigan, for organizing this effort.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to supporting this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I thank Representative PRESSLEY for being such a great champion for workers in Massachusetts and in our whole country.

Madam Speaker, I now yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I want to definitely thank my colleague from Michigan and also my colleague from Massachusetts for being here to support workers.

I believe that it is the labor movement that brought us the middle class. The height was really after World War II, where we saw that wages were going up for everyone—the wealthiest, the middle class, poor people could get jobs that would get them out of poverty—and the labor movement, the right of workers to organize, made the difference, to fight together, work together for better wages and working conditions.

So, today, I rise in enthusiastic support before the House of Representatives for H.R. 2474, the Protect the Right to Organize Act, for a vote that is going to take place tomorrow in the House of Representatives.

The right to form a union, which has been eroded over the last several decades, and the right to take collective action in the workplace and the right to exercise one's First Amendment rights in the form of secondary boycotts are fundamental, and it is past time that we as Americans promote their values.

For too long, employers have been able to violate the National Labor Relations Act with impunity, routinely denying workers their basic right to join with coworkers for fairness on the job. As a result, the collective strength of workers to negotiate for better pay and for better benefits has eroded, and income inequality in the United States of America has reached levels that predate the Great Depression.

What is worse is that this is a rather predictable outcome. It is not surprising if workers don't have the right to organize that their wages are not going to go up.

But I want to share a story. It is a story of a woman named Yiran Zhang. She is a graduate worker at Loyola College in my district, in Chicago, Loyola Chicago.

Yiran Zhang's parents raised their child to be a believer that education was the path to a better life. They moved to the United States from China when she was almost 2 years old. So she has grown up here. Her parents moved to the United States to earn their Ph.D.'s and work as graduate workers.

Years later, Yiran decided to follow in her parents' footsteps by pursuing a Ph.D. The philosophy major quickly learned that a lot has changed in the world since her parents were graduate workers like she is now.

We're struggling to make a living. The expectations are the same, but the conditions in higher education are so different.

The expectations of the job, she means, are the same.

She says:

As a graduate worker, I've had to miss paying bills, to skip doctor's appointments, and even work two or three additional jobs to cover living expenses. I'm fighting for a union because I know it is only by standing together with my colleagues that we can change any of this.

So Yiran and other Loyola graduate workers came together to form a union to make improvements in the school's administration. They found that the administration actually dismissed them and used the legal system to fight their efforts.

Yiran sees unions as the only way for graduate workers to be heard. I actually stood with them at a demonstration, and she said:

I've seen that the only way that we've been able to get our administration to listen is by doing sit-ins and walkouts and taking action together. Teachers across the country and people who work at things like Stop & Shop have had the same experience.

In addition to having a seat at the table, Loyola graduate workers are fighting for a higher stipend and the establishment of summer funding, which will give them the ability to do important research and writing over the summer instead of having to take on multiple part-time jobs just to make ends meet. They also want more professional support, including clear grievance procedures and accountability.

So, for young women like Yiran, the ability to join and unionize would mean that she would be able to truly build on the foundations started by her parents. She says:

I am fighting for a living wage, respect for my labor, and a better life. I shouldn't have to seek outside work up to 30 hours a week on top of my graduate worker hours just to make ends meet at the cost of finishing my program on time or being the best scholar and educator that I can be. Academia shouldn't be just for the privileged. Negotiating a fair contract with graduate workers is the first step toward addressing these harmful systemic issues.

I am going to quit. I have taken more than my time, I think. But I wanted to give you a true-life example of a woman who is trying to do her best in her job as a student worker, as a graduate worker, and because she can't organize, she can't get the benefits and the wages that she deserves. This is typical of what is going on in our country and is creating the income inequality that we see right now.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I thank Representative SCHAKOWSKY for her words. I am so glad she shared that story from Loyola. It re-

minds me of another situation of graduate employees that many of us, our colleagues, are working on right now.

Graduate employees of Harvard, in all kinds of labs, in the social sciences and in the arts, all the different departments, formed a union and were recognized something like 18 months ago by the Harvard administration, but they have never achieved a first contract.

I think something like over 20 colleagues joined me in sending a letter to the president of Harvard University, 20-some of us who are graduates. I am a graduate of Harvard Law School, and other people are graduates from the law school, undergraduates from Harvard University, the Kennedy School, doctors, whatever.

We all sent a letter to President Bacow saying we are happy that you recognized the union, but unless workers get a first contract, what have they really achieved? And we hope that both sides will come together and achieve a first contract. We continue to watch that situation.

So graduate employees, like others, need the freedom and the ability to form unions.

I want to hit on a few other areas that the PRO Act deals with, and my theme tonight really is what a comprehensive jobs bill does in trying to fix problems that prevent workers from exercising their rights.

□ 1900

Here is another one. The PRO Act will eliminate employers' ability to unilaterally withdraw recognition from a union. Now, this is problem created more recently.

On July 3, 2019, the Trump NLRB issued a decision in Johnson Controls, Incorporated that would allow an employer to announce that it will withdraw recognition of a union within a 90-day timeframe before the expiration of a collective bargaining agreement, based on its own idea that the union has lost majority support. This is just such a good example of what has happened over and over with workers' rights being chipped away at.

And so the PRO Act would overturn this decision and prohibit employers from unilaterally withdrawing recognition of a union, unless there is an election to decertify the union; just like the workers would have gone through an election to create the union in the first place.

Speaking of first contracts, almost half the time when workers organize in this country, they don't have a first contract within a year or two. And if you don't have a contract by then, you are not likely ever to get one. If you can't bargain collectively, what have you really accomplished by winning a union election?

So it is really crucial that we have first contracts. The PRO Act fixes this problem. It basically sets up a system of mediation and arbitration to ensure workers get a contract. It goes like this: Upon a written request from the

union, they have to commence bargaining in 10 days.

If, within 90 days, they haven't achieved a first contract, either party can request mediation. After 30 days of mediation, if there isn't a first contract, the case will be referred to arbitration; and the arbitration panel must be established within 14 days. And there are sensible procedures about a three-person arbitration panel, fairly picked, with each side picking one and then agreeing on the third.

Bottom line here: In 144 days, 7½ weeks from when the election is decided and the union is certified, there will be arbitration. There is no timeline for a decision, but that is reasonable because the arbitrators do this as a profession; they know how to do it; and I think we can count on them to be timely. And the decision of the arbitrators is binding for 2 years.

So bottom line, if the company doesn't want to negotiate, if the workers are having a hard time getting the company to the table, they can go to mediation and arbitration, and in 7½ weeks, they can have an arbitration panel hearing their case. It's a complete sea change from today, and very important.

Another right that workers have been denied is the right to collective action in the courtroom, to sue their employer, to go to court to vindicate their rights.

The NLRA protects workers' rights to engage in concerted activities for the purpose of mutual aid and protection. It is that broad.

But, on May 21, 2018, the Supreme Court held in Epic Systems Corporation v. Lewis that, despite this explicit protection, employers may force workers into signing arbitration agreements that waive the right to pursue work litigation jointly, collectively, or in a class action, despite the specific language of the NLRA.

So, the PRO Act would overturn that decision by explicitly stating that employers may not require employees to waive their rights to collective action in the courtroom, including class action litigation.

I started organizing unions in 1983, and I remember learning about the Excelsior list; the list that employers have to provide unions so that they can know who the workers are and help them organize the union. You can only get this list after you have a showing of interest required under the act, so there is a whole process for this.

But the lists we got were often garbage. They were wrong. They would only have a person's first name or last name. They didn't have the information required.

So the National Labor Relations Board decided in 2014 that there has to be certain information in a list, and it has to be searchable in electronic format; very common sense. Employee's full name, their home address, work location, shift, job classification and, if the employer has it, their land line and

mobile telephone numbers and email addresses.

What is the context here?

I can tell you from personal experience, when we talk about workers having the right to organize, they don't actually have the right to have access to union organizers in their workplace.

When I was organizing for SEIU, and in the 11 years I served as the assistant director of organizing at the national AFL-CIO, if we were helping workers at a facility organize and we walked on to that property, the employer would arrest us for trespassing.

Workers in the United States have no right to actually have access to unions in their workplace; so their only way to talk to representatives of the union is on the phone, or email, or at their homes. So the PRO Act makes clear that those lists have to be adequate, it's another thing that may seem small; but if we fix it, we are going to help a lot more workers exercise their rights.

Another thing that happens very often is that employers gerrymander the bargaining unit that the National Labor Relations Board finds in which to hold an election.

So the PRO Act codifies the National Labor Relations Board's 2011 decision in Specialty Healthcare, and prevents employers from doing this gerrymandering; prevents them from including individuals in the voting unit who have no interest in joining the union, but they are simply put there to try to pad the "no" vote to prevent the workers from succeeding in forming a union.

Another thing about union elections that are different from any normal election in a democracy is the workers usually vote in their workplace after an intense campaign from their employer to try to stop them from forming a union.

So the PRO Act enables the board to hold union representation elections electronically, through certified mail, or off-site, at a neutral location, to ensure that the employees can cast their ballots in a neutral, non-coercive environment.

It may seem incredibly basic in any election, but I am telling you, for the last 50 years, all union elections have taken place under physical conditions of pressure and coercion in an employer's workplace, almost all of them.

A related matter that, again, seems shocking to many; if you took a civics class or any class about government or American history and you learned how elections are supposed to take place, this is a unique aspect.

In a union election, where it is just supposed to be workers deciding whether or not they want to form a union, under our system, the employer has been a party to the election. The workers file a petition. The employer is deemed a party, and then they get to engage in litigation, delay, in order to advance their interest, which always is to stop their workers from forming a union.

So the PRO Act says no more. We are not having outside entities interfering with employees' decisions about whether to join a union or not join a union. It is just up to the workers.

This would harmonize the NLRB's procedures with those of the National Mediation Board under the Railway Labor Act, which governs labor relations for railways and airlines and in this area it works much better.

Another question is: What do you do if an employer is found to have systematically interfered with the workers' right to form a union?

What has happened regularly is the employer does anything to destroy a majority who may have signed cards seeking union representation, which leads to the election, and to get the workers to vote "no" even if a majority of them signed union cards.

A showing of interest to obtain an election for workers doesn't require a majority. It requires, I think, 30 percent.

But what the PRO Act says is, if a majority of people said they wanted to have a union, an absolute majority, they signed authorization cards, and then the employer set about and destroyed the majority through means that the National Labor Relations Board determined were illegal, the NLRB has a remedy that it shall issue an order requiring the employer to bargain, taking away the incentive and the ability of employers to destroy workers' majorities through illegal activities.

Another area that has been so lacking in our labor laws has to do with penalties. And again, if you are a civil rights lawyer or activist concerned with women's rights, or the rights of religious minorities, or the rights of racial minorities, you wouldn't believe this: In all other areas of civil rights laws, laws protecting rights of Americans, there are various forms of penalties to try to disincentivize violating American's rights; pain and suffering, treble damages, different—it depends on the statute and the area.

Here is the way it works under the National Labor Relations Act. If I am fired for trying to form a union, and the employer does it totally on purpose, just to destroy, scare everybody else, they succeed in killing the union drive, that was their goal; and there is litigation, the union backs me up. If, 3 years later, a judge finds they absolutely fired you for union activity, they violated your rights, you are right, you get your remedy. The remedy is this: Single back pay minus anything you made in the meantime. It is shocking.

Working people aren't going to stop working in the hopes that someday they will be found to have had their rights violated. They have to feed their family. So employers basically have gotten away with violating people's rights, and the penalty has been, often, virtually nothing.

So under the PRO Act, if an employee has been discharged or suffered

serious economic harm in violation of the act, now the NLRB will award back pay, without any reduction, front pay, consequential damages, and an additional amount as liquidated damages equal to two times the amount of damages awarded, which is, essentially, the normal kind of punitive damages awarded in this kind of case, to incentivize the employers not to violate the law.

Also, the workers cannot have their relief denied if they are an undocumented worker.

So let me just mention one other area where this law will help workers so much; just to vindicate their basic right of association and speech in the workplace, to come together and form a union and bargain collectively. It refers to the same situation I just mentioned.

If they fire you for trying to form a union, what happens?

Their principal motive really isn't about you as an individual. It is about the group. They are trying to scare you out of forming a union.

□ 1915

They will fire the ringleaders. They will fire one, five, however many people they think are necessary to basically have the workers fear moving forward to vindicate their rights.

Often in these cases, the courts ultimately may determine 6 months, 1 year, 5 years later that you were fired for union activity, but the union drive was killed long ago. It is immediate. It was killed within a day or weeks.

So the PRO Act requires the NLRB to seek temporary injunctive relief whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that an employer unlawfully terminated an employee or significantly interfered with employees' rights under the NLRA. And the district court is directed to grant temporary relief for the duration of the NLRB proceedings.

Essentially, they are saying: I am firing you because you did something wrong on the job. That can be determined after the election, but we are not going to let employers fire workers to scare their coworkers out of exercising their rights.

Madam Speaker, these are just a few of the ways that the PRO Act will help American workers at long last exercise their freedom to form unions and bargain collectively. I am telling you, we have passed so much legislation that would help American workers and their families, the Raise the Wage Act, protection for people with preexisting conditions, lowering prescription drug costs, but there is no bill that comes close to this one and the impact it could have on American families and workers.

MIT did a study, and it found that just under half of nonunion workers say they would like to form a union if they just had the freedom to do it. Gallup every year studies people's attitudes toward unions. They have been

doing this the same way for decades. They found the highest approval rating of unions in decades, yet just 6 percent of private-sector workers have unions.

If workers were free to form unions in this country, and not half of all non-union workers but just a fraction of them so we got back up to say a third of workers being in unions in this country again, our economy would be completely transformed because when workers form unions it is not just they themselves who benefit. Other employers raise their wages to compete to attract workers or to try to get their workers not to form a union. That is fine. It benefits all workers in this country. It benefits their children and their communities.

It is just an honor to be here to talk about the PRO Act. I am really proud of being one of Chairman SCOTT's lieutenants in this effort. Tomorrow, we are going to pass this legislation and give a leg up to all the working people in this country who just want to get their little piece of the American Dream.

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

STILL I RISE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise, with the love of my country at heart, and I rise today on this day when the Senate has concluded its trial of the President.

I rise to say that this House can be very proud of the job that it has done because, notwithstanding all that has been said, this House had the courage to do what the Constitution required pursuant to Article II, Section 4, in terms of the standard for finding a President guilty.

The House did what it was supposed to do. The House impeached this President, charged this President with two Articles of Impeachment. One was the obstruction of Congress. I like to think of it as an obstruction of a congressional investigation. The other was abuse of power.

The Senate did not find the President guilty of either of the Articles of Impeachment, but the House still did its job because the House has the duty, the responsibility, and the obligation to move forward, notwithstanding what may be the case in the Senate. The House doesn't act based on what the Senate is perceived to do or not do. The House must act based upon the evidence that is before it.

And the House did act. And the House did impeach. And as a result, regardless as to the finding of the Senate, the President is impeached forever. And it will be forever written in history that this President was impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors.

Why is this so important? It is important because notwithstanding the

finding in the Senate, the President knows now that the House has the courage to do its job. The House will put the guardrails up. The President knows that he cannot escape the House because this is where the bar of justice lies in terms of presenting Articles of Impeachment such that they can go to the Senate.

The President has to know now that the House is the sword of Damocles. For those who may not know, Damocles was a courtier. He was a person who would flatter the king, let the king believe and tell the king that he was great and that all of his subjects loved him. The king, on one occasion, decided to allow Damocles to occupy the throne. But in so doing, he wanted Damocles to understand that occupying the throne carries with it more than the accolades and all of the kind words that were being said.

So he had a sword hung above Damocles by a single hair from a horse's tail. As Damocles sat there, he understood that, at any moment, the sword might fall upon him and do him great harm. To some extent, he was proud and pleased to occupy the throne, but the reality was he realized that it was not the easy occupation that he thought it to be. So he begged the king to release him and allow him to remove himself from under the sword that was hanging over him.

The House is the sword of Damocles. We hang there above the President so that he will know that if he commits impeachable acts that the House will act.

Now, I understand that there will be those who will say that the Senate acted and found the President not guilty. Yes, "not guilty," not "innocent." The Senate did not proclaim the President innocent. They simply said he is not guilty—a lot of difference between not guilty and innocent.

To be innocent means you have been found to have done absolutely nothing wrong, you are totally without blame, and you are a person who can claim that you have done absolutely nothing wrong without any blame at all. Well, "not guilty" simply means that the evidence presented, as they reviewed it, they did not conclude that the President could be found guilty. So he was found not guilty, but he was not proclaimed innocent by the Senate.

And the Senate cannot proclaim that a President who has been found not guilty cannot be impeached again. The Senate deals with the question of a trial, and there is some question as to whether or not this was an appropriate trial pursuant to the Constitution. But the Senate deals with the trial. It is the House that deals with impeachment.

As such, the House found that the President should have been impeached, did impeach, but also, the law under the Constitution allows the House to impeach again if the President is found to have engaged in impeachable offenses. The House is not allowed simply

one opportunity to impeach a reckless, ruthless, lawless President. The House can impeach each and every time the President commits an impeachable act. And if the President has committed an impeachable act, the House can impeach.

There will be those who will say that we are now calling for impeachment again. This is not true. I will make it perspicuously clear: Not the case. Not calling for impeachment at this time, but indicating that the rules, pursuant to the Constitution, allow for impeachment at any time the President commits acts that are impeachable.

Madam Speaker, I must say if the President does commit another impeachable act, I believe that this House will uphold its responsibility, its duty, and its obligation, as it has done.

I am proud to be associated with the House and what it has done because I am proud to say we have upheld the Constitution. This is what we were required to do, to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America and not allow a President to simply do as he would without any restrictions on him. I understand that the President has decided that, as the executive, he can dictate the rules for a trial, the rules for impeachment, but the House did not allow him to do so, such that it would retreat from its responsibility.

The House has said: Mr. President, there are guardrails, and these guardrails we will not allow you to simply ignore. The guardrails are such that you will have to conform to the Constitution.

I believe that what the Senate has done has not benefited the country, but I also know that what the House has done was send a message that the President is not beyond reproach, that the House of Representatives still stands here as a sentinel on duty to assure this country that if the President steps out of line and does something that is impeachable, the House will indeed act upon what the President may have done.

I believe in the separation of powers. I believe that the executive branch has certain powers. I believe that the judicial branch has certain powers and that the legislative branch has certain powers. But I know that only the House has the power to impeach.

And I know that the President cannot withhold witnesses, cannot withhold evidence from the House such that it cannot move forward with the proper investigation. I know that he cannot do this with impunity. He can't do it with immunity of some sort. He is not immune, and the House has demonstrated this, that he is not immune. Notwithstanding his behavior, the House can still move forward with its duty and responsibility as it did and impeach.

It is also now clear that the House does not have to find out a crime has been committed, in the sense of a statutory, codified offense. There does not

have to be a crime that has been defined in law such that it is penally punished. Not so. The Constitution doesn't require it.

In fact, Andrew Johnson was impeached in 1868 for offenses that were not crimes, in the sense that they were something defined by statute, something that has already been codified. It wasn't required then; it isn't required now.

Andrew Johnson was impeached on Article X of the articles against him for acts rooted in his bigotry and his hatred. He was impeached, and the root of it was he did not want the freed slaves to enjoy the same rights as other people in this country. He fought the Freedmen's Bureau. He did everything that he could to prevent them from having the same rights as others in this country. The radical Republicans impeached Andrew Johnson in 1868 for having utterances and statements that were harmful. He demeaned the House of Representatives. But it was all rooted in his hate and racism, and as a result, no crime, but he was impeached.

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We now know that this can be done. And this President has done some things that are dreadful, some things that I would not want to see a President do and that, in my opinion, are in violation of the Constitution.

You don't have to commit a statutory offense to be found guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor. We know this now.

When we first started this journey, we had to fight this battle to convince people, and people have finally been convinced. There are some outliers who will contend that you have to commit a crime in the sense that it is defined and codified as a statute, but this is not the case. All of the leading scholars agree with the comments that I am sharing with you tonight.

So we know now that, if the President inculcates bigotry into his policies, he can be impeached. For bigotry in policies emanating from the Presidency, he can be impeached.

We don't have to have bigoted policies emanating from the President. We don't have to have this. There is no requirement in this country that we must suffer a President who presents bigotry into public discourse. There is no requirement.

We have an obligation in this country to defend all people. All of the people in this country should have equal protection under the law. We can't allow anyone in this country to present circumstances or cause circumstances to come into existence that may cause harm to people.

When you say ugly things about people and you tell police officers that you don't have to be nice when you are arresting a person, you are inviting harm to be caused to a certain person who may be arrested.

Anybody who is arrested should still be treated as a human being with cer-

tain dignity and respect simply because that certain person is in the care, custody, and control of the authorities. The authorities have a duty to respect the people that they arrest.

Well, you don't invite persons to behave otherwise, which is something this President has done.

So I want the persons within the sound of my voice to know that I am proud of what the House has done. The President now knows that he can be impeached, that we are the sword of Damocles. The House has a duty and responsibility to do what it did, and it can do it again if the President commits additional impeachable acts.

The President has said he could go out on Fifth Avenue and shoot someone and do it with immunity.

He didn't use those exact words.

Well, if he does, using his phraseology of going out and doing this dastardly deed, he will be impeached. We will not allow a President to do such a thing.

And I, quite frankly, think it is inappropriate for him to joke about such a thing. I say it only because I want people to know that I take seriously the possibility of the President doing something else, not going out on Fifth Avenue, but doing something else.

The President has demonstrated that he is a recidivist, and he will engage in recidivism; and when he does engage in recidivism, we have a responsibility to the Constitution to impeach him for his misdeeds.

Finally, this: I love this country. It means something to me to be a citizen of this country. I respect the opportunity that I have to be a part of this Congress.

I don't want it said that, on my watch, when we had a reckless, ruthless President, I failed to live up to my responsibilities. I want it said that, though I may have had to stand alone at some point, it is better to stand alone than not stand at all.

I want it said that I recognize the fact that, if you tolerate bigotry, you perpetuate it. And I want it said that I did not tolerate it, and that I did all that I could to bring a President who engaged in bigotry and racism and Islamophobia, homophobia, xenophobia, nativism, all of the invidious phobias, anti-Semitism, that I did all that I could to bring him to the bar of justice in the House of Representatives.

But I also would want the record to show that I said tonight that I will do all that I can, if he engages again, to bring him before the bar of justice, and that certain offenses that he has committed have not been brought to the bar of justice and that it is never too late, as long as he is in office, to bring the President before the bar of justice.

This is where it all starts, right here in the House of Representatives.

I am so proud of my colleagues who voted to impeach this President. The House can be proud of what it has done.

The President knows that here there is courage and there is the courage to

bring him to justice. He will forever be an impeached President.

He may have been found not guilty, but the impeachment is not eradicated, it is not obliterated, it is not eliminated by virtue of the fact that the Senate chose not to find the President guilty.

I happen to absolutely, totally, and completely disagree with the Senate and its findings. I think the Senate made the wrong decision, but it made a decision, and that decision will stand.

But I also know that that decision can be appealed. The decision of the Senate can be appealed, and it will be appealed to a higher court, the court that will convene in November. I believe that that court will have a different finding in November of this year.

I love my country.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 36 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 6, 2020, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF PAYGO LEGISLATION

Pursuant to the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (PAYGO), Mr. YARMUTH hereby submits, prior to the vote on passage, for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, that H.R. 3830, the Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act, as amended, would have no significant effect on the deficit, and therefore, the budgetary effects of such bill are estimated as zero.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3710. A letter from the Senior Legal Advisor for Regulatory Affairs, Department of the Treasury, Financial Stability Oversight Council, transmitting the Council's final interpretive guidance — Authority To Require Supervision and Regulation of Certain Nonbank Financial Companies (RIN: 4030-ZA00) received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

3711. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Flutriafof; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2018-0297; FRL-10004-03] received February 3, 2019, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec.

251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3712. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Agency, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Prohexadione Calcium; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2018-0785; FRL-10003-04] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3713. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Propanamide, 2-hydroxy-N, N-dimethyl-; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2019-0279; FRL-10003-07] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3714. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Cyantranilprole; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2017-0694; FRL-10004-23] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3715. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Difenconazole; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2018-0178 and EPA-HQ-OPP-2019-0076; FRL-10002-06] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3716. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Environmental Protection Agency Acquisition Regulation (EPAAR) Clause Update for Submission of Invoices [EPA-HQ-OMS-2018-0742; FRL-10002-43-OMS] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3717. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Ethylenebis(oxyethylene) bis[3-(5-tert-butyl-4-hydroxy-m-tolyl) propionate]; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2019-01296; FRL-10002-96] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3718. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Texas; Revisions to Control of Air Pollution by Permits for New Construction or Modification [EPA-R06-OAR-2019-0043; FRL-10004-67-Region 6] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3719. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Reasonably Available Control Technology State Implementation Plan for Nitrogen Oxides Under the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard [EPA-R03-OAR-2019-0207; FRL-10004-84-Region 3] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3720. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental

Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Chlorfenapyr; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2018-0783; FRL-10002-05] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3721. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Texas; Houston-Galveston-Brazoria Area Redesignation and Maintenance Plan for Revoked Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards; Section 185 Fee Program [EPA-R06-OAR-2018-0715; FRL-10002-70-Region 6] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3722. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Prevention of Significant Deterioration Greenhouse Gas Tailoring Rule [EPA-R05-OAR-2012-0990; FRL-10005-04-Region 5] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3723. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Connecticut; Transport State Implementation Plan for the 2008 Ozone Standard [EPA-R01-OAR-2019-0513; FRL-10004-95-Region 1] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3724. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Acetamiprid; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2018-0784; FRL-10004-12] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3725. A letter from the Associate Director of International Economics, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Direct Investment Surveys: BE-10, Benchmark Survey of U.S. Direct Investment Abroad [Docket No.: 191104-0074] (RIN: 0691-AA89) received February 3, 2019, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3726. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 23-204, "Primary Election Filing Requirement Temporary Amendment Act of 2020", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

3727. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 23-216, "Parkside Parcel E and J Mixed-Income Apartments Tax Abatement Temporary Amendment Act of 2020", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

3728. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 23-203, "Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Support Clarification Amendment Act of 2019", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

3729. A letter from the Senior Advisor, Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a notification of a discontinuation of service

in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

3730. A letter from the White House Liaison, Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs, Department of Education, transmitting a notification of a designation of acting officer and a discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

3731. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act Annual Report to Congress 2019, pursuant to 52 U.S.C. 20307(b); Public Law 99-410, Sec. 105(b) (as amended by Public Law 111-84, Sec. 587(2)); (123 Stat. 2333); to the Committee on House Administration.

3732. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Inflation Adjustment of Civil Monetary Penalties [Docket No.: 20-01] (RIN: 3072-AC79) received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3733. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment (RIN: 3133-AF09) received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3734. A letter from the Chairman, Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board, transmitting the Board's final rule — Civil Monetary Penalties--2020 Adjustment [Docket No.: EP 716 (Sub-No. 50)] received February 3, 2020, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3735. A letter from the Administrator, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report advising that the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3426-EM in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has exceeded the limit for a single emergency declaration, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 5193(b)(3); Public Law 93-288, Sec. 503(b)(3) (as amended by Public Law 100-707, Sec. 107(a)); (102 Stat. 4707); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3736. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting the 2019 Biennial Report to Congress on the Status of the Missouri River Bank Stabilization and Navigation Fish and Wildlife Mitigation Project, KS, MO, IA, NE, pursuant to Public Law 113-121, Sec. 4003(e); (128 Stat. 1313); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3737. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Reservoir Sediment Report, pursuant to Sec. 1146(f) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2018; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3738. A letter from the Executive Director, Office of Congressional Workplace Rights, transmitting the Office's Annual Report on Awards and Settlements for Calendar Year 2019 for Employing Offices of the House of Representatives and the Annual Report on Awards and Settlements for Calendar Year 2019 for Employing Offices of the Senate, and other Employing Offices, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 1381(l)(1)(A); Public Law 104-1, title III, 301(l)(1)(A) (as added by 201(a)(1)(B)); (132 Stat. 5315); jointly to the Committees on House Administration and Education and Labor.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York: Committee on Oversight and Reform. H.R. 3941. A bill to enhance the innovation, security, and availability of cloud computing services used in the Federal Government by establishing the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program within the General Services Administration and by establishing a risk management, authorization, and continuous monitoring process to enable the Federal Government to leverage cloud computing services using a risk-based approach consistent with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 and cloud-based operations, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 116-391). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. DESAULNIER: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 833. Resolution providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 826) expressing disapproval of the Trump administration's harmful actions towards Medicaid; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2474) to amend the National Labor Relations Act, the Labor Management Relations Act, 1947, and the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5687) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes (Rept. 116-392). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. PLASKETT (for herself, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. NORTON, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. SIRES, Ms. TITUS, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ):

H.R. 5756. A bill to amend the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 to extend the provision of assistance for critical services with respect to certain disasters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BARR (for himself and Ms. GABBARD):

H.R. 5757. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the care furnished to veterans with military sexual trauma; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. GUTHRIE (for himself and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 5758. A bill to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to make technical corrections to the energy conservation standard for ceiling fans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. ADAMS (for herself, Mr. DELGADO, and Ms. OMAR):

H.R. 5759. A bill to establish a career pathway grant program; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. BERA (for himself and Mr. WEBER of Texas):

H.R. 5760. A bill to provide for a comprehensive interdisciplinary research, development, and demonstration initiative to strengthen the capacity of the energy sector to prepare for and withstand cyber and phys-

ical attacks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MEUSER (for himself and Mr. BRINDISI):

H.R. 5761. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide or assist in providing an additional vehicle adapted for operation by disabled individuals to certain eligible persons; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. COSTA, Mr. PAPPAS, Mrs. BUSTOS, and Mr. BALDERSON):

H.R. 5762. A bill to establish a White House Rural Council, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. GIANFORTE (for himself and Ms. ESHOO):

H.R. 5763. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to advance telehealth by developing a plan for adoption and coordination by Federal agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. ESPAILLAT, and Mrs. DAVIS of California):

H.R. 5764. A bill to establish high-quality dual language immersion programs in low-income communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. LARSEN of Washington (for himself and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana):

H.R. 5765. A bill to reauthorize the matching grant program for school security in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCARTHY (for himself and Mr. KHANNA):

H.R. 5766. A bill to amend the Harry W. Colmer Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 to expand eligibility for high technology programs of education and the class of providers who may enter into contracts with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide such programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. OMAR (for herself, Ms. BASS, Mr. NEGUSE, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. PRESSLEY, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. SCANLON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. GOMEZ, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. CRAIG, Mr. PHILLIPS, and Mr. CLAY):

H.R. 5767. A bill to defer the removal of certain Eritrean nationals for a 24-month period, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHNEIDER (for himself, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee, and Mr. LEWIS):

H. Con. Res. 87. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. GRANGER (for herself, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. GOHMERT,

Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HICE of Georgia, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. FLORES, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. OLSON, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Ms. CHENEY, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. PALMER, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. BRADY, and Mr. GRIF-FITH):

H. Res. 832. A resolution raising a question of the privileges of the House; to the Committee on Ethics.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

158. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, relative to House Joint Resolution No. 1 and Senate Joint Resolution No. 1, submitting Virginia's ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution of the United States; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. PLASKETT:

H.R. 5756.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BARR:

H.R. 5757.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clauses 12 and 13, which gives Congress the power "To raise and support Armies," and "To provide and maintain a Navy.

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 5758.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. ADAMS:

H.R. 5759.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. BERA:

H.R. 5760.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. MEUSER:

H.R. 5761.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 5762.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.)

By Mr. GIANFORTE:

H.R. 5763.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 5764.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. art. I, §§ 1 and 8.

By Mr. LARSEN of Washington:

H.R. 5765.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1: "All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives."

By Mr. MCCARTHY:

H.R. 5766.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 12, 13, and 18.

By Ms. OMAR:

H.R. 5767.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 141: Mr. BACON.
 H.R. 155: Mr. STEUBE.
 H.R. 273: Mr. KILMER.
 H.R. 396: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
 H.R. 490: Mr. SHIMKUS.
 H.R. 587: Mr. CRIST.
 H.R. 592: Mr. BEYER.
 H.R. 616: Mr. PENCE.
 H.R. 884: Mr. TRONE.
 H.R. 906: Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio, Mr. HICE of Georgia, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. BACON, Mr. RIGGLEMAN, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. KELLER, and Ms. DEAN.
 H.R. 924: Ms. DELBENE, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SAN NICOLAS, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. TRONE.
 H.R. 969: Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee and Mr. TAYLOR.
 H.R. 1057: Ms. DEAN.
 H.R. 1195: Ms. SPANBERGER.
 H.R. 1241: Ms. WEXTON and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
 H.R. 1260: Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois.
 H.R. 1301: Mr. TRONE and Mr. WOMACK.
 H.R. 1374: Mr. ARRINGTON and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
 H.R. 1383: Mr. BEYER.
 H.R. 1400: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Mr. RASKIN.
 H.R. 1461: Mr. WEBER of Texas.
 H.R. 1530: Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina.
 H.R. 1549: Ms. PINGREE.
 H.R. 1550: Ms. MOORE.
 H.R. 1643: Ms. WEXTON.
 H.R. 1733: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. COLE, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
 H.R. 1748: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
 H.R. 1754: Mr. COOPER.
 H.R. 1766: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CLAY, Mrs. FLETCHER, and Mr. JEFFRIES.
 H.R. 1776: Mr. CORREA and Mrs. AXNE.
 H.R. 1794: Mr. PALAZZO.
 H.R. 1840: Mr. KEVIN HERN of Oklahoma.
 H.R. 1868: Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois.
 H.R. 1873: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. BEYER.
 H.R. 2070: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
 H.R. 2073: Mr. KATKO.
 H.R. 2074: Ms. UNDERWOOD.
 H.R. 2086: Mr. PANETTA.
 H.R. 2117: Ms. STEVENS and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
 H.R. 2148: Mr. CLAY.
 H.R. 2168: Mr. BILIRAKIS.
 H.R. 2179: Mr. PASCRELL.
 H.R. 2200: Mr. BERGMAN.
 H.R. 2258: Ms. DEAN.
 H.R. 2264: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 2350: Mr. RIGGLEMAN, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. COLE, Mr. ADERHOLT, and Mr. TURNER.
 H.R. 2491: Mr. HECK.
 H.R. 2577: Mrs. HAYES.
 H.R. 2616: Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois.
 H.R. 2629: Mr. LAMB.
 H.R. 2650: Mr. KIM.
 H.R. 2653: Ms. MATSUI and Ms. BASS.
 H.R. 2694: Mr. CLAY, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. BRINDISI, and Mr. BALDERSON.
 H.R. 2711: Mr. FOSTER, Ms. WILD, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Ms. MENG.
 H.R. 2733: Mr. PALLONE.
 H.R. 2777: Mr. ALLRED.
 H.R. 2895: Mr. POSEY.
 H.R. 2896: Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ and Mr. KIM.
 H.R. 2912: Mr. VELA, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. KILDEE.
 H.R. 2931: Ms. WILD and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
 H.R. 3077: Mr. CUELLAR and Mrs. MILLER.
 H.R. 3107: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mrs. MILLER, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. HIMES, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, and Mr. PHILLIPS.
 H.R. 3114: Mr. JEFFRIES.
 H.R. 3219: Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. MALINOWSKI, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
 H.R. 3222: Mr. LEWIS.
 H.R. 3414: Mr. LAMB and Mr. SIRES.
 H.R. 3493: Mr. YOUNG and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
 H.R. 3582: Ms. WILD.
 H.R. 3645: Mr. SIRES.
 H.R. 3689: Mrs. BEATTY and Ms. DELBENE.
 H.R. 3708: Mr. NORMAN and Mr. GALLAGHER.
 H.R. 3711: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
 H.R. 3742: Mr. MCCAUL.
 H.R. 3815: Ms. BASS.
 H.R. 3879: Mr. WESTERMAN.
 H.R. 3956: Mr. LYNCH.
 H.R. 3957: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 3962: Mr. ROUDA and Mr. SOTO.
 H.R. 3975: Mr. STEUBE.
 H.R. 3976: Mr. TAYLOR.
 H.R. 3979: Mr. PHILLIPS.
 H.R. 4069: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
 H.R. 4092: Ms. PINGREE.
 H.R. 4098: Mr. MARSHALL.
 H.R. 4100: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
 H.R. 4107: Ms. MATSUI.
 H.R. 4132: Mr. HURD of Texas and Mr. SERRANO.
 H.R. 4189: Mr. RESCHENTHALER and Mr. COOK.
 H.R. 4269: Mr. KHANNA.
 H.R. 4305: Mr. RUIZ.
 H.R. 4326: Mr. RUSH.
 H.R. 4350: Ms. BONAMICI.
 H.R. 4359: Ms. HAALAND.
 H.R. 4393: Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. WEXTON, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
 H.R. 4487: Mr. POCAN.
 H.R. 4542: Mr. BUCHANAN and Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
 H.R. 4674: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
 H.R. 4705: Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. CLAY.
 H.R. 4748: Mr. ALLRED.
 H.R. 4764: Mr. HARDER of California and Mr. RUSH.
 H.R. 4794: Mr. TAYLOR.
 H.R. 4840: Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 4881: Mr. JOHN W. ROSE of Tennessee.
 H.R. 4926: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
 H.R. 4964: Mr. BALDERSON.
 H.R. 4971: Mr. GRIFFITH and Mr. WITTMAN.
 H.R. 4986: Mrs. HAYES.
 H.R. 5002: Mr. MOULTON.
 H.R. 5036: Mr. KIM and Mr. KIND.
 H.R. 5037: Mr. TAYLOR.
 H.R. 5044: Mr. TIMMONS.
 H.R. 5046: Mr. CUNNINGHAM.
 H.R. 5052: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
 H.R. 5080: Mr. CUNNINGHAM and Mr. STEUBE.

H.R. 5117: Mr. HAGEDORN.
 H.R. 5138: Mr. HARDER of California and Ms. GARCIA of Texas.
 H.R. 5175: Mr. BUDD, Mr. LUCAS, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
 H.R. 5284: Mr. PAPPAS.
 H.R. 5288: Mr. LOEBSACK.
 H.R. 5289: Mrs. LESKO and Mr. BYRNE.
 H.R. 5297: Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee, and Mr. HUDSON.
 H.R. 5308: Ms. GARCIA of Texas and Mr. MOULTON.
 H.R. 5326: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
 H.R. 5390: Mr. CASE.
 H.R. 5408: Mr. LOUDERMILK.
 H.R. 5423: Ms. MENG.
 H.R. 5427: Mrs. MILLER and Mr. BALDERSON.
 H.R. 5448: Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 5465: Ms. TITUS.
 H.R. 5466: Mr. HASTINGS.
 H.R. 5467: Mr. ARMSTRONG.
 H.R. 5492: Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. POCAN.
 H.R. 5494: Ms. MOORE.
 H.R. 5503: Mr. TRONE.
 H.R. 5507: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
 H.R. 5528: Mr. VAN DREW.
 H.R. 5534: Mr. LATTA.
 H.R. 5543: Ms. SLOTKIN.
 H.R. 5546: Mr. COHEN and Mrs. RODGERS of Washington.
 H.R. 5549: Ms. LEE of California, Mr. RUSH, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.
 H.R. 5552: Ms. SCANLON, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. COOPER.
 H.R. 5554: Mr. HUFFMAN.
 H.R. 5563: Mr. POCAN.
 H.R. 5570: Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina.
 H.R. 5581: Mr. ENGEL, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEVIN of Michigan, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. GALLEGO.
 H.R. 5594: Mr. GIANFORTE, Mr. NORMAN, and Mr. ARMSTRONG.
 H.R. 5602: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
 H.R. 5605: Mr. STANTON.
 H.R. 5637: Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. STEVENS, and Mr. ROSE of New York.
 H.R. 5659: Mr. MOULTON.
 H.R. 5669: Mr. COSTA.
 H.R. 5675: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
 H.R. 5703: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN and Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 5708: Mr. WEBER of Texas.
 H.R. 5744: Mr. NEWHOUSE and Mr. NORMAN.
 H.R. 5751: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. RYAN, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
 H. Res. 174: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
 H. Res. 189: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
 H. Res. 452: Mr. DEUTCH.
 H. Res. 512: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
 H. Res. 734: Mr. BUCSHON and Mr. KING of New York.
 H. Res. 745: Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
 H. Res. 797: Mr. CROW.
 H. Res. 805: Mr. GALLAGHER.
 H. Res. 810: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. HILL of Arkansas, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. DUNN, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. BAIRD, and Mr. BACON.
 H. Res. 813: Ms. ESHOO.
 H. Res. 815: Ms. MENG, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
 H. Res. 821: Mr. DEFazio.
 H. Res. 826: Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas, Mr. KILDEE, and Ms. FINKENAUER.
 H. Res. 829: Mr. LEWIS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SCANLON, Mr. VEASEY, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. CLAY.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAXZ BENEFITS OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. NEAL

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Ways and Means in H.R. 5687 do not contain any congressional ear-

marks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. YARMUTH

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on the Budget in H.R. 5687 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative MORELLE to H.R. 2474, the Protecting the Right to Organize Act of 2019, does not contain any congressional ear-

marks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.J. Res. 25: Mr. SPANO.