

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

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 91

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring).

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR CEREMONY TO PRESENT CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO CHINESE-AMERICAN VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on April 29, 2020, for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the Chinese-American veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

(b) PREPARATIONS.—Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony described in subsection (a) shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as the Architect of the Capitol may prescribe.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR A CEREMONY AS PART OF THE COMMEMORATION OF THE DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE OF VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 87, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 87

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on April 21, 2020, for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust. Physical preparations for the ceremony shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as the Architect of the Capitol may prescribe.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RIGHTS FOR TRANSPORTATION SECURITY OFFICERS ACT OF 2020

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 877 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1140.

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

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1140) to enhance the security operations of the Transportation Security Administration and stability of the transportation security workforce by applying the personnel system under title 5, United States Code, to employees of the Transportation Security Administration who provide screening of all passengers and property, and for other purposes, with Mr. CUELLAR in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Homeland Security.

The gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1140, the Rights for Transportation Security Officers Act of 2020.

For well over a decade, Chairwoman NITA LOWEY and I have championed this legislation to provide TSA frontline security workers the basic rights and benefits they deserve.

Today, H.R. 1140 has 242 bipartisan cosponsors and is strongly supported by the American Federation of Government Employees and the Transport Workers Union of America.

When TSA was stood up after the September 11 attacks, Congress gave the agency broad authority to develop a new, more nimble personnel system to address national security issues that threatened our transportation system.

Over the years, TSA's security policies, technologies, and capabilities have evolved to provide a formidable defense against potential terrorist attacks.

Unfortunately, TSA's personnel management system has not evolved with the rest of the agency. The modern, nimble system Congress envisioned was never realized.

Instead, Transportation Security officers, or TSOs, are subject to an antiquated system that does not provide

appropriate pay, regular salary increases, or basic civil service protections.

Further, an employee subject to a disciplinary action does not have the right to appeal to an independent third party, such as the Merit Systems Protection Board. Today, the TSA Administrator serves as judge, jury, and executioner for disciplinary proceedings.

According to a former TSA Deputy Administrator, the lack of due process protections within TSA has bred a culture of retribution and arbitrary personnel practices, leading to misbehavior and a reluctance to report security vulnerabilities.

When TSA leadership has used its special personnel authorities, it has been mostly to benefit senior management, not the frontline workforce.

In one instance, a senior manager received \$90,000 in bonuses in a single year, yet the men and women in the screening workforce make starting salaries of just \$29,000 and are among the lowest paid Federal workers. They are forced to live paycheck to paycheck even as their job responsibilities have grown increasingly complex with changes in threats and technologies.

Today, few TSOs have advanced beyond the bottom levels of TSA's pay bands, even after years of service.

Under the Obama administration, the frontline TSA workforce was, for the first time, granted the ability to unionize. Many of us hoped that this change would lead to TSA abandoning unfair practices.

Disappointingly, TSA limited the range of issues subject to collective bargaining to a narrow set of issues that, over time, have been repeatedly scaled back.

TSA struggles with low morale and high attrition, consistently ranking near the bottom of the annual "Best Places to Work" survey. In fact, this year, TSA ranked 415th out of 415 agency components—dead last—on pay satisfaction.

Low morale and high attrition have had an adverse impact on the agency, crippling TSA's ability to develop a mature workforce. According to the DHS inspector general, over a 2-year span in 2016 and 2017, one in three Transportation Security officers quit.

As Members of Congress, many of us fly two or three times a week. We probably see and interact with Transportation Security officers more than any other Federal employees. We know them.

How can we ask these brave men and women to protect us from terrorist attacks, yet not provide them with the basic protections most Federal employees receive?

This bill will place TSA under title 5 like most other Federal agencies, granting the workforce better pay and regular salary increases.

Employees would have robust collective bargaining rights like other Federal employees, such as Customs and Border Protection officers in the Department of Homeland Security. And