

WATERS-WATSON COLEMAN AMENDMENT NO. 303 TO H.R.
7617

This amendment prohibits the use of funds to require hospitals, hospital laboratories, and acute care facilities to report COVID-19 data using the “teletracking.protect.hhs.gov” website that was announced by the Department of Health and Human Services in the document entitled “COVID-19 Guidance for Hospital Reporting and FAQs for Hospitals, Hospital Laboratory, and Acute Care Facility Data Reporting Updated July 10, 2020”. This guidance update requires a data reporting process that circumvents the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by ordering hospitals, hospital laboratories, and acute care facilities to send COVID-19 patient data directly to a database managed by Tele-Tracking, a private health data firm, and built by Palantir, the data mining company owned and operated by mega-Trump donor Peter Thiel. Sending COVID-19 data to a private firm instead of the CDC would harm our ability to track the spread of COVID-19.

WATERS-B. LEE-CHU AMENDMENT NO. 304 TO H.R. 7617

This amendment increases by \$5 million the funds within the account of the Office of the Secretary designated for the Minority AIDS Initiative. It is cosponsored by Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, the Co-Chair of the Congressional HIV/AIDS Caucus, and Congresswoman JUDY CHU. As a long-time leader on HIV/AIDS issues, I established the Minority AIDS Initiative in 1998, working with the Clinton Administration and the Congressional Black Caucus, and I know how important this program is for minority communities that continue to be severely and disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS. These additional funds will allow the Minority AIDS Initiative to provide HIV/AIDS prevention, screening, and treatment services to additional people in affected minority communities.

WATERS-C. SMITH AMENDMENT NO. 305 TO H.R. 7617

As the Co-Chair of the Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer’s Disease, I offered Amendment No. 305 to increase by \$5 million the funds for the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer’s Act. This bipartisan amendment is cosponsored by Congressman CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, the Republican Co-Chair of the Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer’s Disease. This amendment increases funds for BOLD from \$14.5 million to \$19.5 million, bringing the account close to the authorized level of \$20 million, in order to jump start the development of a public health infrastructure for Alzheimer’s patients, their families, and their caregivers.

WATERS-SCHAKOWSKY AMENDMENT NO. 306 TO H.R.
7617

This amendment increases by \$5 million the funds for the Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM) within the Maternal and Child Health account of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The amendment is cosponsored by Congresswoman JAN SCHAKOWSKY. The AIM program assists state-based teams to improve the quality and safety of maternity care with the goal of reducing maternal mortality and improving maternal health. According to HRSA, the rate of pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S. has more than doubled since 1987, and non-Hispanic Black and American Indian/Alaskan Native women are significantly more likely to die from pregnancy related causes than non-Hispanic White women. An increase in funds for AIM will help

improve maternal health and enable more pregnant women to safely deliver their babies.

CONCLUSION

I want to thank the Rules Committee for making in order each of these amendments, and I urge my colleagues to vote “Yes” on each of these amendments.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CHIEF ROBERT KNOX ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AS THE CHIEF OF ZIONSVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 31, 2020

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Robert Knox on the occasion of his retirement as the Chief of the Zionsville Police Department. Chief Knox has spent the last thirty-five years serving and protecting the people of Zionsville, including the last nine as Chief of Police. For the entirety of his career, Chief Knox was dedicated to his true calling as a public servant, rising through the ranks of the police department. The people of Zionsville and Indiana’s Fifth Congressional District are forever grateful for Chief Knox’s commitment to the law and the protection of the City of Zionsville.

Robert Knox grew up on the west side of Boone County where he attended Western Boone High School. Upon his graduation, Robert attended Vincennes University where he completed a four-year apprenticeship as a pipe fitter. During this time, Robert became a reserve officer for the Zionsville Police Department following in the footsteps of his father Darrel who was a military police officer. This is when he says he discovered his true calling as a police officer. Following his discovery, in 1982, Robert was offered a full-time job with the Lebanon Police Department. He graduated from the Law Enforcement Academy and on September 15, 1984, then returned to Zionsville to begin his career as a Zionsville Police Officer.

Robert fell in love with the community he was serving, getting to know the people and becoming a well-known community figure. His friends and colleagues know how adamant he is about getting out of his patrol car and getting to know the people he served and protected. Through the years, Robert rose through the ranks within the department. After his start as a patrolman, he advanced to detective, detective sergeant, detective lieutenant and captain in charge of the Criminal Investigations Division. During his time with investigations, Robert spent time assisting the Metro Drug Task Force, the Boone County Homicide Task Force and the Hamilton Boone County Joint Task Force. In 2011, after spending years serving and protecting the people of Zionsville, Robert was promoted to his role as Chief of Police.

As the chief of police, Robert continued his dedication to community engagement through programs such as “Coffee with a Cop,” the Teen and Citizens academies, the Drug Take Back program and more outreach programs all aimed at building a strong relationship with the community. Chief Knox had many successes during his tenure as the chief of ZPD, includ-

ing adjusting to a growing city. As the population increased, Chief Knox adjusted to the growth by adding officers and reinstating the department’s K-9 unit. When Chief Knox was sworn in, the department had 25 full time employees and today the department has 38 full time officers, a 50% increase. Chief Knox’s tenure also including partnering with Zionsville Community Schools to establish the School Resource Officer Initiative.

Chief Knox made a remarkable impact on his community and the lives of his friends, family and colleagues. He has truly left a legacy of success in the community of Zionsville and in the Fifth District of Indiana that will be built upon for years to come. On behalf of the City of Zionsville and the Fifth District of Indiana, I congratulate Chief Robert Knox on his extraordinary career and I extend my gratitude for all the wonderful contributions he made to our community. I wish the very best for Chief Knox and his entire family in whatever endeavor he takes on next.

IN RECOGNITION OF MISSOURI’S FIRST RESPONDERS

HON. VICKY HARTZLER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 31, 2020

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Missouri’s first responders who work selflessly to keep our communities safe. I am tremendously proud and grateful for the Police Officers, Firefighters, and Emergency Medical Professionals who leave their own families and put themselves in harm’s way to take care of others. Emergency Dispatchers communicate with terrified victims, frantic witnesses, worried family members and suicidal citizens. They are a calming influence for everyone who calls . . . the reassuring, competent voices in the night that offer peace, assistance, and comfort.

On any given day, first responders may be called to rescue someone from a burning building, break-up a vicious assault, settle a family dispute, or simply help a grandparent who has fallen. No matter what the situation demands . . . bravery, diplomacy, initiative, versatility or compassion . . . they provide exactly what is needed in that moment.

Just like during tornados and floods, first responders are on the frontlines of today’s COVID-19 crisis and they are being put in situations that were unfathomable just a few months ago. EMS workers are struggling to keep up with a dramatic increase in 9-1-1 calls while enduring shortages of protective equipment and frequent exposure to the virus. Police departments are fighting to keep the peace when large numbers of their workforce are in quarantine and morale is challenged by anti-police rhetoric dominating the national discourse. Fire departments are often understaffed, especially in rural areas, but that doesn’t stop them from working tirelessly to keep communities safe amid volunteer shortages. And, emergency dispatchers don’t have the option to work from home . . . they are managing an increase in call volume while working in close quarters, which prevents social distancing.

Missouri’s first responders embody the very best of the American spirit. With charity and

compassion, these brave men and women regularly put the well-being of others before their own. Through their actions they are heroes . . . through their example they are role models for all of us to emulate.

Madam Speaker, the current COVID-19 pandemic has presented Missouri's first responders with seemingly impossible challenges. Despite numerous obstacles, police officers, firefighters, emergency medical professionals and 9-1-1 dispatchers are showing up every day to care for their friends, neighbors, and communities. On behalf of a grateful community, I express my sincere thanks, and pray God blesses them all with peace and safety.

FIREFIGHTER EXCESS PERSONAL PROPERTY IN H.R. 6395, THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2021

HON. KIM SCHRIER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 31, 2020

Ms. SCHRIER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased that my amendment to assess the Firefighter Property Program (FFP) and the Federal Excess Personal Property Program (FEPP) implementation and best practices was included in final passage of H.R. 6395, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2021.

I would also like to include in the RECORD a letter of support for my amendment from the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC).

The Department of Defense (DOD) Firefighter Property Program (FFP) and the Federal Excess Personal Property Program (FEPP) transfer excess equipment like hoses, trucks, and aircraft and vehicle parts to the U.S. Forest Service to be distributed to states. As the National Volunteer Fire Council notes, "many of the fire departments that take advantage of FFP and FEPP are located in rural areas that have relatively small tax bases and therefore lack the resources to afford new specialized equipment and vehicles to respond to wildland fires and other unique vulnerabilities in the communities that they serve."

The FFP and FEPP programs currently offer excess equipment on a first-come, first-served basis. As the nation is facing increasing threats of extreme fire events, states are not acquiring equipment in an equitable manner. This is due to a multitude of factors. My amendment requests an assessment of FFP and FEPP implementation and best practices, taking into account community need and risk, including whether a community is an at-risk community.

It additionally requires consultation with state implementers and program recipients which will allow us to understand how these programs are operating on-the-ground, and more importantly, how we can improve access for volunteer and small fire and emergency service providers in rural communities.

I am thankful to have the National Volunteer Fire Council's support for this amendment. I want to emphasize their request that the agencies carrying out the assessment required by this amendment "establish a process for volunteer fire departments and state and national organizations representing the interests of vol-

unteer fire departments to provide input into the assessment as part of consulting with 'participants in the programs.'"

As the FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act moves to conference, I ask that my colleagues work to include this important amendment in the final bill.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL,
Greenbelt, MD, July 22, 2020.

Hon. KIM SCHRIER, MD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SCHRIER: On behalf of the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC), which represents the interests of the nation's volunteer fire, EMS, and rescue services, I am writing regarding your amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act of 2020 directing the Department of Defense (DoD), acting through the Director of the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), jointly with the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, to assess the Firefighter Property Program (FFP) and the Federal Excess Personal Property Program (FEPP).

As you know, the FFP and FEPP programs provide critical assistance to thousands of volunteer fire departments across the country each year by allowing them to acquire excess DoD property, including equipment and vehicles. Many of the fire departments that take advantage of FFP and FEPP are located in rural areas that have relatively small tax bases and therefore lack the resources to afford new specialized equipment and vehicles to respond to wildland fires and other unique vulnerabilities in the communities that they serve. These programs are extremely important to the volunteer fire service and I thank you for your interest in developing an assessment to evaluate ways that they can be improved.

One issue that I hope can be examined as part of the assessment is the extent to which additional resources could increase access to and participation in the FEPP and FFP programs by volunteer fire departments. Based on anecdotal evidence from our members I believe that more assistance devoted to helping process applications to acquire surplus property and transport surplus property from where it is stored to the fire department requesting it would make it easier for some agencies to take full advantage of these programs.

I am pleased that your amendment explicitly directs the agencies carrying out the assessment to ". . . consult with State foresters and participants in the programs . . ." State foresters play an important role in facilitating the acquisition of surplus property by fire departments in their states. Additionally, differences in state statutes authorizing fire department participation in the FEPP and FFP programs contribute to some of the variations we can observe in acquisition rates between states. All of these are important issues to be examined in the assessment. I would also encourage the Committee to direct the agencies carrying out the assessment to establish a process for volunteer fire departments and state and national organizations representing the interests of volunteer fire departments to provide input into the assessment as part of consulting with "participants in the programs."

Finally, I question the central role that DoD and DLA would play in developing the assessment under the amendment language. As you know, while DoD/DLA along with the General Services Administration are responsible for managing and disposing of a vast array of excess federal property, none of those agencies has anything to do with the management or administration of the FEPP or FFP programs, specifically. I encourage

the Committee to clarify that each agency tasked with carrying out the assessment focus on aspects of the programs that are appropriate given the scope of their actual role in administering the programs.

Thank you for your support for the FEPP and FFP programs, as well as the volunteer fire service generally. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

RON ROY,
Chair, NVFC Wildland
Committee, Division
Chief, Douglas
County Fire District
#2, East Wenatchee,
WA.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT, 2021

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 30, 2020

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the appropriations bill before us today. The bill we are debating is as partisan a bill as I have seen in my years on the appropriations committee. Not only does the package spend billions over the current bipartisan budget agreement, the bill also contains many policy items that have no place in an appropriations bill.

Despite ongoing negotiations for a new coronavirus relief package this bill adds another 24 billion dollars in coronavirus relief funding . . . this is in addition to the 3 trillion in supplemental funds that were passed in May and adding more funding beyond what was outlined in the Senate's HEALS Act.

This may seem like a worthy cause if we knew the bills were going to be signed by the President in the coming days, but that's not the case. Instead, we are sitting here wasting time and energy inserting these provisions that guarantee the bill will never be signed into law as is.

This bill contains seriously dangerous provisions that place our men and women in uniform in harm's way by repealing the AUMF's that guide our counterterrorism operations, it ties the president's hands with regard to Iran, and undercuts America's dominance of space and our ability to counter nations like China who want to gain supremacy there. Further, it eliminates several long-standing, bipartisan Second Amendment protections while also defunding the police and targeting law enforcement through overreaching regulations.

The amendments that have been made in order by the rule undercut our military leadership even further by making exemptions to policies put in place to preserve good order and discipline, turning our military into a social experiment instead of maintaining our readiness and capability as the world's preeminent fighting force.

Despite the inclusion of South Mississippi's priorities in this bill, such as ship and boat building in Pascagoula and Gulfport, rocket propulsion testing for Stennis Space Center, and many other coastal priorities, this bill fails to deliver what's necessary.

At a time where America is suffering, the country is in turmoil, and we are working to regain our footing as the world's top economy, this bill does more harm than good.