

other stimulants increased by 27 percent nationally;

(B) the number of deaths described in subparagraph (A) increased in 27 of the 38 States that provide drug-specific overdose data to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

(C) between January 2019 and January 2020, among 36 States and the District of Columbia, suspected stimulant overdoses, including methamphetamine, treated in emergency departments increased by 23 percent.

(8) Methamphetamine-related overdose deaths will likely continue to increase in 2020, due in part to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which makes obtaining treatment for substance use disorders, including methamphetamine use, more difficult.

(9) The increase in methamphetamine use and the negative respiratory and pulmonary health effects associated with its use has caused the National Institute on Drug Abuse to warn clinicians to be prepared to monitor adverse effects when treating individuals using methamphetamine who also have COVID-19.

(10) Since the onset of COVID-19 in the United States, the number of law enforcement and first responder agencies entering data into nationwide overdose mapping applications to track real-time suspected overdoses, including methamphetamine overdoses, has increased.

(11) In the first 9 months of fiscal year 2020, there was a 52 percent increase in the amount of methamphetamine seized by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

(12) Public reports indicate that Mexican cartels may be stockpiling money and illicit drugs, including methamphetamine, on both sides of the Southwest Border and that the Drug Enforcement Administration is preparing to respond to any potential surge in supply.

(13) Intentional preparation to counter any surges in production, distribution, and use are essential in lowering methamphetamine-related overdose deaths and substance use disorders.

SEC. 3. DECLARATION OF EMERGING THREAT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Congress declares methamphetamine an emerging drug threat, as defined in section 702 of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1701), in the United States.

(b) REQUIRED EMERGING THREAT RESPONSE PLAN.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy shall establish and implement an Emerging Threat Response Plan that is specific to methamphetamine in accordance with section 709(d) of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1708(d)).

AMBER ALERT NATIONWIDE ACT OF 2019

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 732 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 732) to amend the PROTECT Act to expand the national AMBER Alert system to territories of the United States, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CORNYN. I further ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 732) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 732

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 “AMBER Alert Nationwide Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. COOPERATION WITH DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

Subtitle A of title III of the PROTECT Act (34 U.S.C. 20501 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 301—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by inserting “(including airports, maritime ports, border crossing areas and checkpoints, and ports of exit from the United States)” after “gaps in areas of interstate travel”; and

(ii) in paragraphs (2) and (3), by inserting “, territories of the United States, and tribal governments” after “States”; and

(B) in subsection (d), by inserting “, the Secretary of Homeland Security,” after “Secretary of Transportation”; and

(2) in section 302—

(A) in subsection (b), in paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) by inserting “, territorial, tribal,” after “State”; and

(B) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, the Secretary of Homeland Security,” after “Secretary of Transportation”; and

(ii) in paragraph (2), by inserting “, territorial, tribal,” after “State”.

SEC. 3. AMBER ALERTS ALONG MAJOR TRANSPORTATION ROUTES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 303 of the PROTECT Act (34 U.S.C. 20503) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting “AND MAJOR TRANSPORTATION ROUTES” after “ALONG HIGHWAYS”; and

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “(referred to in this section as the ‘Secretary’)” after “Secretary of Transportation”; and

(B) by inserting “and at airports, maritime ports, border crossing areas and checkpoints, and ports of exit from the United States” after “along highways”; and

(3) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “other motorist information systems to notify motorists” and inserting “other information systems to notify motorists, aircraft passengers, ship passengers, and travelers”; and

(ii) by inserting “, aircraft passengers, ship passengers, and travelers” after “necessary to notify motorists”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “other motorist information systems to notify motorists” and inserting “other information systems to notify motorists, aircraft passengers, ship passengers, and travelers”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (D), by inserting “, aircraft passengers, ship passengers, and travelers” after “support the notification of motorists”; and

(iii) in subparagraph (E), by inserting “, aircraft passengers, ship passengers, and

travelers” after “motorists”, each place it appears;

(iv) in subparagraph (F), by inserting “, aircraft passengers, ship passengers, and travelers” after “motorists”; and

(v) in subparagraph (G), by inserting “, aircraft passengers, ship passengers, and travelers” after “motorists”; and

(4) in subsection (c), by striking “other motorist information systems to notify motorists”, each place it appears, and inserting “other information systems to notify motorists, aircraft passengers, ship passengers, and travelers”; and

(5) by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

“(d) FEDERAL SHARE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Federal share of the cost of any activities funded by a grant under this section may not exceed 80 percent.

“(2) WAIVER.—If the Secretary determines that American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, or the Virgin Islands of the United States is unable to comply with the requirement under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall waive such requirement.”;

(6) in subsection (g)—

(A) by striking “In this section” and inserting “In this subtitle”; and

(B) by striking “or Puerto Rico” and inserting “American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands of the United States, and any other territory of the United States”; and

(7) in subsection (h), by striking “fiscal year 2004” and inserting “each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the PROTECT Act (Public Law 108-21) is amended by striking the item relating to section 303 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 303. Grant program for notification and communications systems along highways and major transportation routes for recovery of abducted children.”.

SEC. 4. AMBER ALERT COMMUNICATION PLANS IN THE TERRITORIES.

Section 304 of the PROTECT Act (34 U.S.C. 20504) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(4), by inserting “a territorial government or” after “with”; and

(2) by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

“(c) FEDERAL SHARE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Federal share of the cost of any activities funded by a grant under this section may not exceed 50 percent.

“(2) WAIVER.—If the Attorney General determines that American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands of the United States, or an Indian tribe is unable to comply with the requirement under paragraph (1), the Attorney General shall waive such requirement.”; and

(3) in subsection (d), by inserting “, including territories of the United States” before the period at the end.

SEC. 5. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall conduct a study assessing—

(1) the implementation of the amendments made by this Act;

(2) any challenges related to integrating the territories of the United States into the AMBER Alert system;

(3) the readiness, educational, technological, and training needs of territorial law enforcement agencies in responding to cases involving missing, abducted, or exploited children; and

(4) any other related matters the Attorney General or the Secretary of Transportation determines appropriate.

(b) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—The Comptroller General shall submit a report on the findings of the study required under subsection (a) to—

(1) the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

(3) each of the delegates or resident commissioner to the House of Representatives from American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands of the United States.

(c) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**—The Comptroller General shall make the report required under subsection (b) available on a public Government website.

(d) **OBTAINING OFFICIAL DATA.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Comptroller General may secure information necessary to conduct the study under subsection (a) directly from any Federal agency and from any territorial government receiving grant funding under the PROTECT Act. Upon request of the Comptroller General, the head of a Federal agency or territorial government shall furnish the requested information to the Comptroller General.

(2) **AGENCY RECORDS.**—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), nothing in this subsection shall require a Federal agency or any territorial government to produce records subject to a common law evidentiary privilege. Records and information shared with the Comptroller General shall continue to be subject to withholding under sections 552 and 552a of title 5, United States Code. The Comptroller General is obligated to give the information the same level of confidentiality and protection required of the Federal agency or territorial government. The Comptroller General may be requested to sign a nondisclosure or other agreement as a condition of gaining access to sensitive or proprietary data to which the Comptroller General is entitled.

(3) **PRIVACY OF PERSONAL INFORMATION.**—The Comptroller General, and any Federal agency and any territorial government that provides information to the Comptroller General, shall take such actions as are necessary to ensure the protection of the personal information of a minor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Johnson nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Finally, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Johnson nomination be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

NOMINATION OF KRISTI HASKINS JOHNSON

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, observers of the U.S. Senate might take note that their Senators just passed a host

of bills and cleared a host of items from the calendar, representing bipartisan accomplishments on behalf of the leadership of the Senate—Republican leadership and Democratic leadership—a great deal of work by chairs and ranking members of committees and subcommittees, and I salute both sides of the aisle for these accomplishments.

In the same vein, we will vote in a few moments on a cloture motion for the judicial nomination of Kristi Haskins Johnson, and I would think that this would be another opportunity for a strong bipartisan vote. We passed two judges last week, as I recall, and both judges were confirmed with strong bipartisan support—strong support and welcome support on both sides of the aisle. And I would think that with regard to this particular nominee—our Mississippi candidate, Kristi Haskins Johnson—she would continue in that vein this afternoon and later on this week when I hope we will be voting to confirm her.

It is noteworthy that the Southern District of Mississippi has never had a woman Federal judge, and so Kristi Johnson will break new ground in that regard, and I am particularly delighted that this momentous accomplishment is right upon us.

She has had the distinct honor for the last several months of being Mississippi's first solicitor general. So this could turn out to be a groundbreaking year and a barrier-shattering year in more than one way for soon-to-be Judge Johnson.

In her current role as solicitor general, she serves as Mississippi's lead advocate for appellate litigation and works closely with the State attorney general in crafting legal strategy for significant legal cases in Mississippi and on a national scale. She has received the highest recommendation that a candidate for U.S. district judge can receive from the American Bar Association, and that is a "qualified" rating. As we know, candidates for appeals court judge can get a rating of "highly qualified." The best you can get for district judge is "qualified," so she received the highest rating she could possibly receive and rightly so.

She has a unique record of accomplishment as a public servant, a private attorney, a scholar, and a professor. She served over 5 years in the U.S. attorney's office in Jackson. There she prosecuted fraud and financial crimes as part of the Civil Division. Before that, she made her mark in private practice at the firm of Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart in Jackson, MS, focusing there on labor law and employment issues.

Kristi Johnson is a native of Hurley, MS, population 985, in Jackson County, MS. She attended school there and then went on to receive her undergraduate degree at the University of Mississippi, graduating in 2003. And then she was admitted to law school at Mississippi College School of Law, where she graduated summa cum

laude, second in her class. As a law student, she served not only on the law review but as executive editor of the Mississippi College Law Review and received numerous American jurisprudence awards in areas such as criminal procedure, legal research and writing, and employment discrimination.

So excellence all the way through, including the time that she served as a clerk, both as a clerk at the district court level for Judge Sharion Aycock, Mississippi's first female district court judge in the Northern District of Mississippi, and then for appeals court judge, Leslie Southwick in the Fifth Circuit.

She takes time to share her skills as a teacher and an adjunct professor at her alma mater of Mississippi College School of Law. Ms. Johnson is a member of the American Inns of Court, the Federal Bar Association, and the Federalist Society. She resides in Brandon, MS.

In summary, I am just delighted by the fact that we are going to make some news and hurdle some previously existing barriers with this outstanding nominee. She has the academic, judicial, and personal qualifications necessary for a Federal jurist. I think she is going to make a great judge. People back home in Mississippi believe this also. It is my hope that we can invoke cloture in just a few moments in a strong bipartisan way, leading to the confirmation later on this week of Kristi Haskins Johnson.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

FREE SPEECH

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I think everyone has been watching a lot of news lately, and I will tell you I have talked to some Tennesseans this weekend who feel like they can tell that the journalists working at our mainstream media outlets are getting frustrated by how much pressure we are putting on big tech companies like Facebook, Twitter, and Google. But, you know, we are putting pressure on them. It is important for them to be in their lanes. It is important that if they are going to be news sources, that they do something like hire a news director.

I think they have fallen into the same trap that a lot of people fall into when a story dominates the headlines for awhile, and then it doesn't resolve itself quickly. You know, they get pretty sick of hearing about it. They saw the initial reports of censorship, bias, and antitrust concerns. They didn't feel that personal sense of outrage about what was happening and either checked out of the conversation or let their frustration breed resentment against those who would very much like for their tweets to stay put.

But they knew something was going on out there that made them a little bit uneasy. They were hearing about censorship. They were hearing about blocking and throttling and shadow banning, and, you know, they were a