The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EZELL).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 29, 2024.
I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE EZELL to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE
The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 9, 2024, 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 1:50 p.m.

EPA DELIVERED A DEVASTATING BLOW TO AMERICAN ENERGY GENERATORS
The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last week, the EPA delivered a devastating blow to American energy generators with the decision to impose severe regulations that are designed to close the power plants that Pennsylvania communities rely on each and every day.

This heavy-handed approach to regulation is the clearest sign yet that President Biden is more interested in catering to the far left than supporting American families.

Instead of investing in the resources that are underneath the feet of my constituents in Pennsylvania, President Biden has chosen to placate his far-left base by attempting to close the coal-powered plants that generate nearly 20 percent of our electricity.

It is time to send a clear message that this administration cannot gamble away our energy stability by relying on inconsistent Green New Deal technologies like windmills and solar panels.

Risking blackouts during the heat of summer, when the loss of power can ultimately be deadly, is too high a price to pay in order to score political points. The EPA must immediately reverse its course of action and allow American energy producers to continue to lead the way on reliable production of energy.

SECURE OUR BORDER AND PUT AN END TO THE OPIOID CRISIS
Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, California announced that it had seized 1.1 million fentanyl pills as well as 523 pounds of methamphetamine in just 7 days.

The active components of fentanyl are shipped from China with the consent of the Chinese Communist Party, manufactured by cartels in Mexico, and then shipped into the United States. This process has fueled the opioid crisis that continues to make each and every State a border State.

We have seen the devastating consequences that these drugs have on our area. Right now, more than 40 percent of Americans know someone who has been killed by an overdose. Furthermore, I feel that each and every Member of Congress knows multiple individuals who have died from fentanyl poisoning.

Sadly, these deaths are preventable, and it is time for President Biden to take the necessary steps to secure our southern border. A border crisis that allows millions of fentanyl pills to enter our Nation endangers the lives of each and every American.

By ending the remain in Mexico policy and by reinstating catch and release, President Biden has sent a clear message to the Mexican cartels that they can continue to break American laws. It is time to secure our border. It is time to put an end to this crisis.

CONDEMNING ANTI-JEWISH DEMONSTRATORS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES
The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Long companion error...
Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the anti-Semitic and anti-Jewish, pro-Hamas demonstrators who, amidst Passover, are wreaking havoc on campuses around the country and threatening violence against local Jewish communities and students.

Such violence is unacceptable anywhere, but to witness this at our universities is truly painful. Places of education are supposed to be of discourse and learning and rising above, and all those who choose to attend deserve peace and respect.

My heart goes out to all of the Jewish students who no longer feel safe at American universities. They deserve better than this.

Mr. Speaker, the purveyors of anti-Semitism must be stopped. I ask my colleagues to join me in condemning these anti-Semitic protesters and continue the push to combat anti-Semitism and stand with our Jewish friends and neighbors.

RECOGNIZING ELIVIA PAPCUN’S EQUESTRIAN ABILITIES

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend Elivia Papcun, an Iowa native, who overcame a severe injury to become a top-ranked NCAA equestrian recruit.

Just a short while ago, Elivia had an accident that shook her to her core. As she rode her beloved horse, a moment of misfortune turned into a nightmare as her horse stumbled, leaving Elivia critically injured. The severity of her injuries left her unable to move, her future hanging in the balance.

However, Elivia refused to give up. When each passing day, she fought tirelessly to reclaim her strength and through grueling rehabilitation and unwavering determination, she defied the odds and emerged stronger than ever before.

Elivia has recently reentered and committed to Texas Christian University. This commitment is akin to being recruited to play football at Alabama or Georgia in the equestrian world. It underscores not only Elivia’s remarkable talent and dedication, but also the recognition of her potential by one of the top programs in the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, let us commend Elivia Papcun for her remarkable journey and wish her continued success as she embarks on this exciting new chapter.

RECOGNIZING 911 OPERATORS AMY KEMNER AND KRIS DECKER

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Indianola Fire Chief Greg Chia, who recently announced his retirement, which is set to take effect on December 31, 2024.

Chief Chia originally began his career in 1985 as a firefighter in Des Moines, and throughout his tenure worked up the ranks to reach chief officer.

In May 2015, Chief Chia was appointed to become the first fire chief for Indianola and has since led the response to multiple crises with poise and gravitas.

Under his leadership, the Indianola Fire Department has served as an illustrative example of top-notch community safety, and his absence will be felt by many.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues today to join me in celebrating Chief Chia’s incredible career and his commitment to safety and in wishing him the best on a well-deserved retirement.

IOWA CITY FARMERS MARKET

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the return of the Iowa City Farmers Market for its 52nd year on May 4, and to congratulate Bill Lane on being appointed director of the Iowa City Farmers Market.

In recent years, the Iowa City Farmers Market has become a cultural staple in town with welcoming tens of thousands of residents yearly. The market puts Iowa’s rich agricultural history on display for everyone with countless local vendors, serving a wide variety of Iowa’s best agricultural products.

With live music and activities for everyone to enjoy as well, the Iowa City Farmers Market is sure to enjoy another amazing year as a preeminent venue for residents to shop, dine, and enjoy time with friends and family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating this phenomenal Iowa City staple and, once again, congratulate director Bill Lane on what is sure to be another great year for the Iowa City Farmers Market.

AMERICA’S SOUTHERN BORDER IS NOT A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. LALOTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LALOTA. Mr. Speaker, America’s southern border is not a social construct.

On a trip to the U.S.-Mexico border this past weekend, an academic from a prestigious institution shocked our bipartisan group by stating that he teaches students the border is a social construct to facilitate the free flow of people and ideas.

What the heck, Mr. Speaker?

It is appalling, but it sheds light on the ideology guiding President Biden’s border policy decisions. These decisions include: halting border wall construction, implementing a mass parole system, and failing to promptly expel noncitizens who illegally cross in between ports of entry.

This mindset ignores the fundamental importance of border security and the rule of law. By dismissing the border as a mere social construct, it undermines the legitimate efforts to protect our Nation’s sovereignty and ensure the safety of our citizens.

We must reject such dangerous rhetoric and work toward policies that prioritize border security.

ACCESSIBLE FEDERAL CONTRACTING FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Mr. LALOTA. Mr. Speaker, the hurdles facing America’s small businesses in obtaining Federal contracts are unjustifiably high.

These businesses, the lifeblood of our economy, shouldn’t require a legal team or extensive compliance infrastructure just to compete for Federal contracts. That is why I have introduced H.R. 7987, the Plain Language in Contracting Act, aimed at simplifying the process for small businesses to secure government contracts:

I extend my gratitude to my colleague Representative THANEDAR of Michigan, for co-leading this crucial legislation across party lines.

With over 33 million small businesses in America, only a small fraction secure Federal prime contracts. Many entrepreneurs cite the complexity of government procurement processes as a major deterrent. The language used in contract solicitations can be ambiguous and unnecessarily complex, deterring small businesses from even attempting to bid.

A study by the Naval Postgraduate School revealed that less than 3 percent of DOD contract solicitations are written in plain English. This complexity drives small businesses away from Federal contracting, eroding competition, and harming our economy.

My bill mandates Federal agencies to use clear language in contract solicitations, fostering greater accessibility to contracts for small businesses.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense legislation, recognizing the pivotal role small businesses play in our Nation’s economy.

Let’s pave the way for a more accessible Federal contracting process for all businesses. Doing so benefits small businesses, the Federal Government, and its taxpayers.
By ending partisan gerrymandering, we can restore fairness and ensure that voters are the ones choosing their politicians; not the other way around. This is something that has been tried and has worked in a handful of States already. In Arizona, Colorado, and others, independent, nonpartisan redistricting commissions have drawn electoral maps that are more responsive to the will of the people than maps drawn by politicians in other States.

Voters should choose their politicians; politicians shouldn’t choose their voters. While my name will not be on the ballot in 2024, I am not giving up or going out quietly in the fight for fair maps and an end to partisan gerrymandering. I will continue to fight with every ounce of my energy for an end to partisan gerrymandering and to protect the right to vote for every single North Carolinian.

CONGRATULATING THE UAW ON HISTORIC CONTRACT AGREEMENT

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the hardworking men and women of the UAW in my home State of North Carolina. UAW workers reached a historic new agreement with Daimler Trucks, which included a record wage increase, profit sharing for the first time ever, a cost-of-living increase, and much more.

Right now, support for unions is near all-time high, and we are seeing this momentum pick up in North Carolina and across the South. I am proud to stand with the new generation of workers as they exercise their collective strength and make their voices heard. Unions built our middle class, and I will always stand with the men and women of labor at the local, State, and Federal levels.

Once again, I congratulate the UAW on this historic contract agreement.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o’clock and 17 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARL) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

God, our guide, we look to You and ask for the strength only You can provide. On this day and the week ahead, may Independents stand always. We pray that we, individually and corporately, would try hard to live rightly. Together, with pure hearts, may we trust You and walk in faith, love, and peace.

Dissuade us from fruitless and foolish arguments, lest they descend into destructive disputes. As Your servants, may we avoid quarreling and show kindness and patience with each other. When we know we are right, may we be gentle with those who disagree. When we realize we are wrong, may we, with humility, seek to advance the truth.

It seems so simple to ask, but even our best intentions can get ensnared in our pride and prejudices. Guide us, then, in Your truth through the complex influence of these contentious times.

It is in Your mercy that we dare to pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day’s proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof. Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore 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.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o’clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas) at 3 o’clock and 29 minutes p.m.

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.
pass the bill (H.R. 5333) to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to exclude from the limit on leverage certain amounts invested in smaller enterprises located in rural or low-income areas and small businesses in critical technology areas, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk reads the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5333

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 “Investing in All of America Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. SBIC MAXIMUM LEVERAGE EXCLUSION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 103(b) of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 662(b)) is amended—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by striking “and” and at the end;

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(ii)—

(A) in clause (I), by striking “estab-

lished prior to October 1, 1987”; and

(B) in clause (II), by striking “or” and insert-

ning “,” and”;

(iii) by inserting “, or a foundation, endow-

ment, or trust of a college or university” after “institution”;

(C) in clause (III), by striking the semi-

icolon at the end and inserting “,” and”;

and

(iv) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) does not include any funds obtained directly or indirectly from any Federal, State or local government or any govern-

ment agency or instrumentality, except for funds described in subclauses (I) through (III) of subparagraph (B)(iii), for the purpose of approval by the Administrator of any request for leverage.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Section 303(b)(2) of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 683(b)(2)) is amended—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “300” and inserting “200”;

(ii) in subparagraph (C)—

(A) in the heading—

(i) inserting “OR RURAL” after “LOW-IN-

COME”; and

(ii) by inserting “OR CRITICAL TECHNOLOGY AREAS” after “GEOGRAPHIC AREAS”; and

(B) clause (i)—

(i) by striking “(i) In calculating” and insert-

ning the following:

“(i) In GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (i), in calculating;

(ii) by inserting “or companies” after “of a company”; and

(iii) by striking “paragraph (A)” and in-

serting “paragraph (A)” and “(B)”; and

(iv) by striking “equity”;

(v) by striking “the company in a smaller enter-

prise” and all that follows and insert-

ning the following: “the company or compa-

nies”—

“(I) a smaller enterprise located in a low-

income geographic area (as defined in section 689 of this title) or in a rural area; or”;

and

(vi) by adding at the end the following new subclause:

“(II) a small business concern in an area of critical technology (as defined in section 6801 of this title 10, United States Code) vital to main-

taining the national security of the United States.”;

(c) by amending clause (ii) to read as follows:

“(ii) LIMITATION.—While maintaining the limitation of subparagraph (A)(i) and consis-

tent with a leverage determination ratio issued pursuant to section 301(c), the aggre-
gate amount excluded for a company or compa-

nies under clause (i) from the calculation of the outstanding leverage of such company or companies for the purposes of subparagraph (A)(i) have exceeded the lesser of—

((i) 50 percent of the private capital of such company or companies or $125,000,000.”; and

(D) by amending clause (iii) to read as fol-

lows:

“(III) PROSPECTIVE APPLICABILITY.—An in-

vestment by a licensee is eligible for exclu-

sion from the calculation of outstanding le-

verage under clause (i) only if such invest-

ment is made by such licensee after the date of enactment of the Investing in All of Amer-

ica Act of 2023.”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(E) ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT.—The Adminis-

trator shall adjust the dollar amounts de-

scribed in subparagraphs (A) and (B)—

(i) on the date of the enactment of this sub-

paragraph, by a percentage equal to the percentage (if any) by which the Consumer Price Index (all items, United States city av-

erage), as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, increased during the period—

“(I) beginning on December 18, 2015, and ending on the date of the enactment of the exclusion under this paragraph, for subparagraph (A); and

“(II) beginning on June 21, 2018, and ending on the date of the enactment of this subpara-

graph, for subparagraph (B); and

(ii) on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this subpara-

graph, and annually thereafter, by a percentage equal to the percentage (if any) by which the Consumer Price Index (all items; United States city average), as published by the Bu-

reau of Labor Statistics, increased during the one-year period preceding the date of the adjustment under this clause.”.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than June 30 of the first year beginning after the date of the en-

actment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Administrator of the Small Business Ad-

ministration shall submit to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives a report on the results of the exclusion under subparagraph (C) of section 303(b)(2) of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 683(b)(2)), as amended by subsection (a), including an economic activity generated and jobs directly and indirectly cre-

ated by the exclusion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursu-

ant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentle-

man from New York (Ms. VELAZQUEZ) each will control 20 min-

utes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5333, and I reserve the bal-

ance of my time.

Ms. VELAZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may con-

cise.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today as we celebrate National Small Business Week.

More than 60 years ago, President John F. Kennedy first enacted a procla-

mation to celebrate small businesses, and every year since then our country has honored the contributions of small business owners all throughout the country.

Small businesses employ roughly half of the private workforce, create the majority of new jobs, and generate almost half of our Nation’s economic ac-

tivity. They are the heart and soul of communities. Whether it is our local plumber or contractor, a chef launch-

ing a restaurant, or a medical profes-

sional, they are creating neighborhood communities. Whether it is our local

business navigate the current economic challenges and increase avenues to ac-

cess capital.

This program has never cost tax-

payers any money and has always been seen as a positive return on invest-

ment. These commonsense changes will allow more businesses to access crit-

cal funding without increasing the risk of the government losing money.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to sup-

port H.R. 5333, and I reserve the bal-

ance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may con-

sider.

Mr. Speaker, we all know small busi-

nesses are the backbone of the Amer-

ican economy.

State or local government or any govern-

ment agency or instrumentality, except for funds described in subclauses (I) through (III) of subparagraph (B)(iii), for the purpose of approval by the Administrator of any request for leverage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursu-

ant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentle-

man from New York (Ms. VELAZQUEZ) each will control 20 min-
utes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their re-

marks and include extraneous material

in which to revise and extend their re-

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marks and include extraneous material
That is good news and gives us a reason to celebrate. But more work needs to be done, and today we are considering four bipartisan bills that will create additional opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Turning to our first bill, H.R. 5333, as amended, makes statutory improvements to the Small Business Investment Company program to provide SBICs access to additional leverage when they invest in a small business critical to national security or located in a rural or underserved community.

Due to their often capital intensive nature, small businesses operating in America’s critical technology sector need institutional investors with long-term time horizons to raise capital. Yet, due to statutory constraints, these investors are often limited in their ability to participate in the SBIC program, making it an unsuitable option for critical technology innovators to raise capital.

By providing SBICs with additional leverage flexibility, H.R. 5333 more appropriately matches the SBIC program with the capital needs of this industry. Doing so will enable the SBA and DOD to successfully carry out the joint SBIC/National Security Technology Initiative.

At the same time, the evidence demonstrates there continues to be a significant lack of private investment in small businesses in rural and underserved communities.

By providing SBICs with additional bonus leverage, we are encouraging investment in our communities that need it the most. I thank Representatives SCHOLTEN and MEUSER for their leadership on this bill.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER).

Mr. Speaker, I yield. Mr. Speaker, I thank our chairman, Mr. ROGER WILLIAMS from the great State of Texas, for yielding and for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today during National Small Business Week in support of H.R. 5333, the Investing in All of America Act of 2023, introduced by myself and Representative SCHOLTEN. This legislation aims to incentivize greater private capital investments in small businesses located in rural or low-income areas as well as small businesses, again, in the national security technology sector.

Dollars invested in these areas will not count against individual SBIC’s $175 million leverage cap. By creating this bonus leverage, the SBIC program will be able to provide additional capital to small businesses located in rural or low-income areas, as well as small businesses, again, in the national security technology sector.

This legislation would also adjust the SBIC leverage caps to account for inflation. SBIC leverage caps have not been adjusted since 2015 for single licensees and since 2018 for a family of funds. Since the last adjustment, as we know, inflation has risen rapidly. As we continue to increase private investment in our communities, it is important that the SBIC program keep pace.

The existing successful private capital ratio to SBA leverage has kept the program operating at no subsidies for the SBIC leverage cap. It will build on the success of the Small Business Investment Companies program to ensure that more capital can reach the small businesses that need it most. Our legislation will incentivize deployment of additional capital by changing how investments are counted against the SBIC’s leverage cap. In doing so, small businesses will be able to access more capital than before, especially those in underserved communities, and, as my colleague noted, without offsetting the taxpayers additional dollars.

Recent studies have shown that less than 20 percent of SBIC funds reach low-income and rural communities. That disparity is unacceptable, and if we pass this bill we can change this statistic. It is incumbent on this body to invest in the people who are investing in our communities.

I am known to say back home that we are bringing boring back to Congress. That is what I set out to do yesterday, to get it done.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative SCHOLTEN for holding this important hearing during National Small Business Week.

Mr. Speaker, I yield my balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the ranking member for their leadership and support of this legislation. Mr. Speaker, I encourage a “yes” vote.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Ms. SCHOLTEN), the ranking member for the Committee on Contracting and Infrastructure Subcommittee.

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WILLIAMS and Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ for holding this important hearing during National Small Business Week.

Mr. Speaker, 99.6 percent, that is the number of businesses in Michigan that are considered small businesses. That is nearly 1 million small businesses that call our State home.

As diverse as these businesses are, there is one thing that binds them all together. These small business owners consistently tell me that access to capital is the number one thing that they need and rely on to keep their doors open.

This is especially true for our small businesses in low-income and rural communities.

That is why this bipartisan bill with my colleague, DAN MEUSER, the Investing in All of America Act, is so important.

It will build on the success of the Small Business Investment Companies program to ensure that more capital can reach the small businesses that need it most. Our legislation will incentivize deployment of additional capital by changing how investments are counted against the SBIC’s leverage cap. In doing so, small businesses will be able to access more capital than before, especially those in underserved communities, and, as my colleague noted, without offsetting the taxpayers additional dollars.

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Mr. Speaker, I yield my balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Ms. SCHOLTEN), the ranking member of the Committee on Contracting and Infrastructure Subcommittee.

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WILLIAMS and Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ for holding this important hearing during National Small Business Week.

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Recent studies have shown that less than 20 percent of SBIC funds reach low-income and rural communities. That disparity is unacceptable, and if we pass this bill we can change this statistic. It is incumbent on this body to invest in the people who are investing in our communities.
is making historic investments. In fiscal year 2023, the SBIC program provided a record-high $38 billion in investment and collectively financed more than 1,200 small businesses and startups resulting in over 180,000 jobs. H.R. 5333 will build on this monumental success and unleash even further investment in America’s small firms.

Innovation is the cornerstone of economic growth and U.S. global competitiveness. Most often, the most innovative and R&D is happening in our small business community. H.R. 5333 will encourage more SBIC investment in small businesses operating in our innovative sector and in rural and underserved areas all over the country.

Mr. Speaker, I, again, thank Representatives SCHOLTEN and MEUSER for leading this effort. I encourage Members to vote “yes,” and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense legislation that will provide more opportunities for our Nation’s small businesses to access capital. I once again thank Representatives MEUSER and SCHOLTEN for bringing this solution to the table, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5333, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, passed. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AGENCY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2024

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7103) to amend the Small Business Act to require Federal agencies to testify and report on scores received under the scorecard program for evaluating Federal agency compliance with small business contracting goals, to testify for failure to meet Governmentwide contracting goals, to testify for failure to meet small business contracting goals, for awarding contracts to small businesses, and for failing America’s small businesses.

The Federal Government is one of the largest customers in the world. In order to ensure small businesses are able to access this vital customer, President Ronald Reagan signed into law a goal for Federal agencies to award a certain percentage of government contracts to small businesses. Not only has this opened the Federal marketplace to small businesses, it also ensures a strong and resilient industrial base.

Unfortunately, not every Federal agency is meeting the commitment to contract with the little guys. Worse than that, when an agency misses its small business contracting goals, they face no consequences.

The Agency Accountability Act will help solve these issues. This bill will force agencies to testify to Congress and explain why they aren’t meeting their small business goals and what they will do to rectify these issues. Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote for H.R. 7103, and I reserve the balance of my time.
Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Agency Accountability Act.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I emphasize that this bill specifies that agencies that have not met two or more of their subcategory goals must also testify before our committee.

Each of the categories, including and especially the WOSB program, continue to need additional focus to ensure the acquisition and contracting professionals are maximizing contracting opportunities for those small businesses.

Again, I thank the sponsors of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on the Agency Accountability Act.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question was taken; and (two-thousand) the rules and passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentleman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. WILLIAMS.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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 bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of H.R. 7985, the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Reporting Act of 2024, introduced by Representatives MCGARVEY and MOLINARO.

This legislation will require the SBA to issue a report to Congress on the challenges individuals with disabilities face when starting a business. Further, it will require the SBA to look at resources across the Federal Government that assist individuals with disabilities.

The Government Accountability Office estimates that there are nearly 50 programs across nine Federal agencies that support employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. However, Federal agencies often fail to coordinate or collaborate on such programs to ensure that their efforts are not duplicated and are working as efficiently as possible. The Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Reporting Act of 2024 will require the SBA to look at this fragmented system and do its part to coordinate and streamline those efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representatives MCGARVEY and MOLINARO for their

ENTREPRENEURS WITH DISABILITIES REPORTING ACT OF 2024

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7985) to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to submit to Congress a report on the entrepreneurial challenges facing entrepreneurs with a disability, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7985

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 “Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Reporting Act of 2024”.

SEC. 2. REPORT ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGES OF ENTREPRENEURS WITH DISABILITIES.

(a) In General.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the challenges that entrepreneurs with a disability encounter with starting and operating a business.

(1) an assessment of the challenges and needs of entrepreneurs with a disability;
leadership on this important issue and for introducing this bill. I urge a ‘yes’ vote on the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, today we are considering H.R. 7985, which would require the SBA to submit a report to Congress on the challenges facing entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Because we know that increasing employment rates to only 26 percent of people with disabilities participate in the labor force. That is why we need a comprehensive study to assess the resources that are available to people with disabilities, examine their effectiveness, and determine what actions need to be taken to support entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the efforts of Mr. MCGARVEY and Mr. MOLINARO to increase opportunities for people with disabilities. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7985. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from the State of New York (Mr. MOLINARO).

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 7985, the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Reporting Act, which I am very proud to co-lead alongside my colleague, Representative MCGARVEY. I am grateful for his leadership and commitment to move the legislation forward and also to address an important need in our communities across this country.

This bipartisan bill will provide much-needed clarity for our entrepreneurs with disabilities as they navigate the SBA’s complex maze of over 50 different programs geared to support individuals with intellectual, physical, and developmental disabilities as they start and grow their businesses.

As of April 2022, 74 percent of adults with disabilities work outside the traditional workforce. Approximately 1.8 million of these adults with disabilities were business owners themselves.

From limited access to affordable capital to a scarcity of supports and services tailored to their unique needs, the SBA needs to step up and, frankly, provide much greater support in working to consolidate this fractured and complex system.

Entrepreneurs of every ability should have a fair shot at pursuing their passion. As chair of the Small Business Subcommittee on Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Workforce Development, I remain committed, as I know my colleague, Mr. MCGARVEY, do, to empowering our entrepreneurs with disabilities to contribute more to Main Street and lead more independent lives.

The absence of adequate reporting data on entrepreneurs with disabilities renders this eager and highly competent community to the sidelines. The Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Reporting Act would provide a comprehensive assessment of the needs of our entrepreneurs with intellectual, physical, and developmental disabilities and help inform lawmakers of legislative solutions to address the challenges that individuals face in order to break down barriers so they can pursue their own employment options and create opportunities to own their own businesses.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Representatives MCGARVEY for his partnership and all my colleagues to support this commonsense, bipartisan legislation, and I look forward to continuing to show America what it means to think differently, breaking down barriers and creating opportunities for every individual of every ability.

Ms. VELAZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. MCGARVEY).

Mr. MCGARVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Reporting Act.

I think too often the outside focus on this body is on what isn’t working. There isn’t enough attention paid to when things come together and when it works the way it should.

I think too often the gentleman from New York, talking about her coffee shop. I brought up Cody Clark from Louisville, a truly inspiring young man who not only is an entrepreneur who told us about his experience, but I think he performed the first-ever magic trick in front of the Small Business Committee.

We had a subcommittee hearing, and Chairman MOLINARO brought up Mavee, a young woman from New York, talking about her coffee shop. I brought up Cody Clark from Louisville, a truly inspiring young man who not only is an entrepreneur who told us about his experience, but I think he performed the first-ever magic trick in front of the Small Business Committee.

This bill helps ensure that every American—every American has the chance to succeed. The better Congress understands the barriers away and make sure every American has the chance to succeed.

I again thank Chairman WILLIAMS, Ranking Member VELAZQUEZ, Chairman MOLINARO, and everyone else involved for their leadership and support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7985.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELAZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Entrepreneurship provides people with disabilities a viable option to participate in the labor force and improve their quality of life. SBA’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, comprised of nearly 1,000 resource partners across the country, can provide individuals with free counseling and training to launch and grow their small businesses.

We do not know how well SBA and its resource partners are meeting their needs and what more could be done to better serve these individuals. This bill will go a long way in assessing the outside focus on the SBA’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, comprised of nearly 1,000 resource partners across the country, can provide individuals with free counseling and training to launch and grow their small businesses.

We do not know how well SBA and its resource partners are meeting their needs and what more could be done to better serve these individuals. This bill will go a long way in assessing the outside focus on the SBA’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, comprised of nearly 1,000 resource partners across the country, can provide individuals with free counseling and training to launch and grow their small businesses.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have held hearings this year that have highlighted the great work our Small Business Administration serves entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Mr. MCGARVEY and Mr. MOLINARO for their bipartisan efforts, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have held hearings this year that have highlighted the great work our Small Business Administration serves entrepreneurs across the country. I thank Representatives MCGARVEY and MOLINARO again for offering this solution to ensure the government is working efficiently to offer these individuals the resources that are already available.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7985.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the
PLAIN LANGUAGE IN CONTRACTING ACT

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7987) to require plain language in the Federal contracts to ensure that small business concerns and others are treated fairly and equitably.

SEC. 1. INTRODUCTION.

This Act may be cited as the “Plain Language in Contracting Act”.

SEC. 2. ACCESSIBILITY AND CLARITY IN COVERED NOTICES FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each covered notice shall be written—

(1) in a manner that is clear, concise, and accessible to a small business concern; and

(2) in a manner consistent, to the extent practicable, with the Federal plain language guidelines established pursuant to the Plain Writing Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-330).

(b) INCLUSION OF KEY WORDS IN COVERED NOTICES.—Each covered notice shall, to the maximum extent practicable, include key words in the description of the covered notice such that a small business concern seeking contract opportunities using the single government-wide point of entry described under section 1708 of title 41, United States Code, can easily identify and understand such covered notice.

(c) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall issue rules to carry out this section.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED NOTICE.—The term “covered notice” means a notice pertaining to small business concerns published by a Federal agency on the single Government-wide point of entry described under section 1708 of title 41, United States Code.

(2) SMALL BUSINESS ACT DEFINITIONS.—The terms “Federal agency” and “small business concern” have the meanings given those terms, respectively, in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632).

SEC. 3. COMPLIANCE WITH CUTGO.

No agency shall make any change to a small business concern's proposal that was not made at the request of the concerned small business concern and that was not included in the notice issued by the agency.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELAZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this common-sense legislation recognizing the pivotal role small businesses play in our Nation’s economy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. THANEDAR).

Mr. THANEDAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7987, the Plain Language in Contracting Act, which I am co-leading with Representative NICK LALOTA of New York. I applaud Representative LAZLO, and it is a pleasure to work with him on this bipartisan bill.

I am also, as an entrepreneur, delighted and excited to be working on the Small Business Committee led so well by Chairman WILLIAMS and Ranking Member VELAZQUEZ.

Having experienced the challenges of running a small business, I recognize the urgent need to cut through the jargon of bureaucracy and provide clear, comprehensible, and accessible Federal Government and administration of our Nation’s small business owners.

This bill would require all notices related to small business concerns to comply with the Federal plain language guidelines established by the Plain Writing Act of 2010, reflecting our core values of transparency, efficiency, and unwavering dedication to fostering a level playing field for all businesses, regardless of size.

By including key words and sticking to the Federal plain language guidelines, we are not just drafting legislation. We are empowering small businesses to navigate the complexity of
This is about more than just policy. It is about supporting our economy and ensuring that every entrepreneur has the opportunity to succeed. Wars come from the streets of my district, I meet a lot of small business owners every day. Often, I hear from these small businesses, the mom-and-pop shops, the entrepreneurs who are working so hard, that the complexity of the federal contracting process contributes to the difficulty in obtaining Federal contracts.

This bill goes a long way in simplifying the matter, helping our small businesses that create most of the jobs to be able to acquire Federal contracts and work with the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas, Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELAZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Again, I thank the sponsors for their work on this bill, and I believe that the goals are laudable.

It is a mandate of our committee to regularly review the processes that SBA and Federal agencies put in place to recruit, retain, and contract with small businesses—and do so with the goal of making it easier for them to compete for and win Federal awards.

Given that small businesses are leaving the Federal market at a record pace, and fewer small businesses are bidding out to help America. We can get it done in Washington, D.C.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7967.

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.

FIRE WEATHER DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2024

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4866) to direct the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to establish a program to improve fire weather and fire environment forecasting, detection, and local collaboration, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

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 “Fire Weather Development Act of 2024”.

SEC. 2. FIRE WEATHER FORECASTING AND DETECTION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall establish a program (in this Act referred to as the “Program”) to improve fire weather and fire environment forecasting, detection, and delivery of products or services through collaboration with Federal, State, local, Tribal, and other relevant stakeholders.

(b) GOALS.—The goals of the Program shall be to develop and improve accurate fire weather and fire environment forecasts and warnings in order to reduce loss of life, reduce injuries, protect property, and reduce damage to the economy from wildfires. The Program shall seek to improve the assessment of fire weather and fire environments, including relevant stakeholders regarding fire weather and fire environments.

The Program shall seek to improve the understanding, monitoring, and prediction of wildfires and the impacts of such.

(c) COLLABORATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS.—In developing the Program required under this section, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall solicit and take into consideration input from the weather industry, such academic entities as the Administrator considers appropriate, and other relevant stakeholders.

(d) ACTIVITIES.—To achieve the goals specified in subsection (b), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may conduct research, development, testing, demonstration, and operational transition activities related to fire weather and fire environments, including reducing the following:

(1) Tools and services to inform, support, and complement active land management, local emergency personnel, the United States Forest Service, and State, local, and Tribal entities during their response and mitigation efforts.

(2) Sensing technologies, such as infrared, microwave, and active sensors suitable for potential deployment on spacecraft, aircraft, and unmanned aircraft systems, to improve the monitoring and forecasting of fire fuel moisture and danger levels, wildfire behavior models and forecasts, mapping efforts, and the prediction of wildfires and the impacts of such.

(3) Grid-based assessments and outlooks of fuel moisture and danger levels.

(4) Social and behavior sciences related to fire weather and fire environment warning products.

(5) Advanced satellite detection products coupled with atmosphere and fire weather modeling systems.

(e) EDUCATION AND TRAINING.—The Administrator may expand the number of students and researchers in areas of study and research related to wildfires, fire weather, and fire environments.

(f) MODELING SYSTEMS.—The Administrator may facilitate the use of operational and operational transition activities related to fires at the wildland-urban interface.

(g) CLIMATE CHANGE.—The Administrator shall develop, test, and deploy programs, and take steps, to address the impacts of climate change and its impacts on fire weather and fire environments.

(h) THE UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS.—The Administrator shall develop, test, and deploy programs, and take steps, to address the impacts of fire weather and fire environments.

(i) THE STRATEGIC APPROACH.—The Administrator shall develop, test, and deploy programs, and take steps, to address the impacts of fire weather and fire environments.

(j) THE INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH.—The Administrator shall develop, test, and deploy programs, and take steps, to address the impacts of fire weather and fire environments.

SEC. 3. FIRE WEATHER FORECASTING AND DETECTION—THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION.

(a) EXECUTIVE DIRECTORSHIP.—The Administrator shall appoint an executive director of the Program.

(b) PROGRAM OFFICER.—The Administrator shall designate a Program officer for the Program.

(c) STAFF.—The Program officer shall, in consultation with the heads of the agencies and other Federal agencies, develop and implement a structure for the Program.

(d) GOALS.—The goals of the Program shall be to improve fire weather and fire environment forecasting, detection, and delivery of products or services through collaboration with Federal, State, local, Tribal, and other relevant stakeholders.

(e) ACTIVITIES.—To achieve the goals specified in subsection (b), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may conduct research, development, testing, demonstration, and operational transition activities related to fire weather and fire environments, including reducing the following:

(1) Tools and services to inform, support, and complement active land management, local emergency personnel, the United States Forest Service, and State, local, and Tribal entities during their response and mitigation efforts.

(2) Sensing technologies, such as infrared, microwave, and active sensors suitable for potential deployment on spacecraft, aircraft, and unmanned aircraft systems, to improve the monitoring and forecasting of fire fuel moisture and danger levels, wildfire behavior models and forecasts, mapping efforts, and the prediction of wildfires and the impacts of such.

(3) Grid-based assessments and outlooks of fuel moisture and danger levels.

(4) Social and behavior sciences related to fire weather and fire environment warning products.

(5) Advanced satellite detection products coupled with atmosphere and fire weather modeling systems.

(f) EDUCATION AND TRAINING.—The Administrator may expand the number of students and researchers in areas of study and research related to wildfires, fire weather, and fire environments.

(g) MODELING SYSTEMS.—The Administrator may facilitate the use of operational and operational transition activities related to fires at the wildland-urban interface.

(h) CLIMATE CHANGE.—The Administrator shall develop, test, and deploy programs, and take steps, to address the impacts of climate change and its impacts on fire weather and fire environments.

(i) THE UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS.—The Administrator shall develop, test, and deploy programs, and take steps, to address the impacts of fire weather and fire environments.

(j) THE STRATEGIC APPROACH.—The Administrator shall develop, test, and deploy programs, and take steps, to address the impacts of fire weather and fire environments.

(k) THE INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH.—The Administrator shall develop, test, and deploy programs, and take steps, to address the impacts of fire weather and fire environments.

(l) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORSHIP.—The Administrator shall appoint an executive director of the Program.

(m) PROGRAM OFFICER.—The Administrator shall designate a Program officer for the Program.

(n) STAFF.—The Program officer shall, in consultation with the heads of the agencies and other Federal agencies, develop and implement a structure for the Program.

SEC. 4. FIRE WEATHER FORECASTING AND DETECTION—THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION.

(a) EXECUTIVE DIRECTORSHIP.—The Administrator shall appoint an executive director of the Program.

(b) PROGRAM OFFICER.—The Administrator shall designate a Program officer for the Program.

(c) STAFF.—The Program officer shall, in consultation with the heads of the agencies and other Federal agencies, develop and implement a structure for the Program.

SEC. 5. FIRE WEATHER FORECASTING AND DETECTION—THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION.

(a) EXECUTIVE DIRECTORSHIP.—The Administrator shall appoint an executive director of the Program.

(b) PROGRAM OFFICER.—The Administrator shall designate a Program officer for the Program.

(c) STAFF.—The Program officer shall, in consultation with the heads of the agencies and other Federal agencies, develop and implement a structure for the Program.
stakeholders, including commercial partners, shall develop novel tools and technologies to support the activities of the Program and which may be applied to broader wildfire and smoke detection, and monitoring activities, as practicable and appropriate.

(f) Extramural Research.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall collaborate with and support the non-Federal wildland fire research community, which includes institutions, non-governmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, by making funds available through competitive grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements.

(g) Commercial Data.—
   (1) In General.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in consultation with the heads of other Federal agencies and relevant stakeholders, may enter into contracts with one or more private sector entities to obtain additional airborne and space-based data and observations that may enhance or supplement the understanding and prediction of fire, weather and fire environments, and the relevant Program activities under this section.
   (2) Consultation.—In carrying out activities under paragraph (1), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall consult with private sector entities through the National Advisory Committee on Wildfires under section 609 of title 42, United States Code, to identify needed tools and data that can be best provided by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration satellites and are most beneficial to wildfire and smoke detection and monitoring.

(h) Nonduplication.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall consult with the National Interagency Fire Center, including the Joint Fire Science Program, to avoid duplication of activities under this section and ensure the Administration’s focus on unique research activities best suited for transition to operations.

(1) unmanned aircraft systems.—
   (1) In General.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall—
   (A) assess the role and potential benefits of unmanned aircraft systems to improve data collection in support of fire weather and fire environment modeling, meteorological observation, and forecasting;
   (B) identify objectives for testing such systems’ use for obtaining fire weather and fire environment observations, and other relevant activities; and
   (C) transition unmanned aircraft systems technologies from research to operations as the Administrator considers appropriate.

(2) purposes.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall brief the appropriate committees of Congress on the activities under paragraph (1).

(3) Program.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may conduct pilot programs of unmanned aircraft systems for fire weather and fire environment observations, including relating to the following:
   (A) Testing of unmanned aircraft systems in approximations of real-world scenarios.
   (B) Evaluation of the utility of meteorological data collected from fire response and assessment aircraft.
   (C) Input into appropriate models of collected data to predict fire behavior, including coupled atmosphere and fire models.
   (D) Collection of best management practices data and best practices on unmanned aircraft systems for fire weather and fire environment observations.

(4) Prohibition.—
   (A) In General.—Except as provided under subparagraphs (B) and (C), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may not procure any unmanned aircraft systems that are manufactured or assembled by an entity in a foreign country of concern.
   (B) Exemption.—The prohibition under subparagraph (A) shall apply only to the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration if the Administrator determines, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, that the procurement of an unmanned aircraft system is necessary for the sole purpose of marine or atmospheric science or management.

(5) Waiver.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may waive the prohibition under subparagraph (A) on a case-by-case basis—
   (I) with the Secretary of Homeland Security; and
   (II) upon written or electronic notification to appropriate committees of Congress not later than 90 days after the Administrator determines a waiver is needed.

(6) Airspace Operations System.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in cooperation with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall utilize the capabilities of unmanned aircraft systems as appropriate for fire weather and fire environment observations and may use a wildfire airspace operations system that accounts for piloted aircraft, unmanned aircraft systems, and other new and emerging capabilities after such airspace operations system is developed and determined ready for operational use by the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(7) Authorization of Appropriations.—There is authorized to be appropriated $5,000,000 for fiscal year 2025 to carry out this subsection.

(8) Definitions.—In this section:
   (A) Appropriate committees of Congress.—The term "appropriate committees of Congress" means the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation for operational use by the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
   (B) Committee.—The Committee shall be the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
   (C) Director.—The Committee shall be the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
   (D) Extramural research.—The term "extramural research" means the term given such meaning in section 1016(e) of Public Law 107–56 (42 U.S.C. 5195c(e)).
   (E) Foreign country of concern.—The term "foreign country of concern" has the meaning given such term in section 9001 of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (12 U.S.C. 4651).
   (F) Institution of higher education.—The term "institution of higher education" means the term given such meaning in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).
   (G) unmanned aircraft system.—The term "unmanned aircraft system" has the meaning given such term in section 408(b) of title 49, United States Code.
   (H) Weather industry.—The term "weather industry" has the meaning given such term in subsection 409(c) of the National Weather Service Act and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8501).

SEC. 3. INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON WILDFIRES.

(a) Establishment.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall establish an interagency coordinating committee to be known as the "Interagency Committee on Wildfires" (in this section referred to as the "Committee"). The chair of the Committee shall be the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(b) Purpose.—The Committee shall coordinate the development of accurate and timely wildfire forecasting, detection, and delivery of related products or services that best assist State and local emergency officials while avoiding duplication of activities.

(c) Membership.—In addition to the chair, the Committee shall be composed of the heads or appropriate designees of the following program agencies:
   (2) The United States Fire Administration.
   (3) The United States Forest Service.
   (4) The National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
   (5) The Department of Agriculture.
   (6) The United States Geological Survey.
   (7) The Office of Science and Technology Policy.

(d) Other Agencies.—Any other Federal department or agency that is involved in wildfire, including interagency coordination, shall be represented on the Committee.

(e) Consultation.—In carrying out the purposes of this Act, the Committee shall consult with the heads or appropriate designees of the agencies listed in paragraph (1) that are involved in wildfire, including interagency coordination.

(f) Authorization of Appropriations.—There is authorized to be appropriated $5,000,000 for fiscal year 2025 to carry out this section.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WILDFIRES.

(a) Establishment.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, under the direction of the Committee, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall establish an interagency committee to be known as the "National Advisory Committee on Wildfires" (in this section referred to as the "Committee").
to as the “Advisory Committee”). The Advisory Committee shall consist of not fewer than seven and not more than 15 members who are qualified to provide advice regarding wildfire forecasting, detection, monitoring, and delivery of related products or services, including the following entities: (A) Research and academic institutions. (B) Public communication or broadcast entities. (C) Emergency management agencies. (D) State, local, or Tribal governments. (E) The National Association of State Foresters. (F) Business communities. (G) Other entities as designated by the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

(2) PROHIBITION.—Members of the Advisory Committee may not be employees of the Federal Government.

(b) ASSESSMENT.—Members of the Advisory Committee shall offer assessments and recommendations relating to the following:

(1) Tailored forecasting, detection, and monitoring products and tools.

(2) Communication and delivery methods of wildfire forecasting, detection, and monitoring information.

(3) Opportunities to streamline Federal forecasting, monitoring, and detection information to local emergency personnel and communities.

(4) The management, coordination, implementation, and activities of the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Wildfires under section 3.

(5) The effectiveness of the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Wildfires in meeting its purposes.

(c) COMPENSATION.—Members of the Advisory Committee shall serve without compensation.

(d) RIGHTS.—Not less frequently than biennially, the Advisory Committee shall report to the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy on the assessments carried out under subsection (b) and its recommendations for ways to improve the coordination and dissemination of wildfire forecasts, warnings, and detection and monitoring information.

(e) CHARTER.—Notwithstanding section 1013(b)(2) of title 5, United States Code, the Advisory Committee shall not be required to file a charter subsequent to its initial charter, filed under section 1008(c) of such title, before the termination date specified in subsection (f).

(f) TERMINATION.—The Advisory Committee shall terminate on September 30, 2028.

(g) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—An Advisory Committee member shall recuse himself or herself from any Advisory Committee activity in which he or she has an actual pecuniary interest.

SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRE WEATHER TESTBED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall establish a fire weather testbed to enable engagement across the Federal Government, State and local governments, academic and federally funded research laboratories, the private sector, and end-users in order to evaluate the accuracy and usability of technology, models, fire weather products and services, and other research to accelerate the implementation, transition to operations, and use of new capabilities by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Federal and land management agencies, and other relevant stakeholders.

(b) RESOURCES.—In carrying out this section, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may not transfer or reprogram any funds, detail any personnel, or make use of any infrastructure from cooperative institutes of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in existence as of the date of the enactment of this Act, the act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the Congress a report containing the recommendations published under paragraph (1).

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated $4,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2028 to carry out this section.

SEC. 6. INCIDENT METEOROLOGIST WORKFORCE.

(a) WORKFORCE AND TRAINING ASSESSMENT.—Not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the Congress a report containing the recommendations published under paragraph (1).

(b) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall transmit the recommendations under paragraph (1) to the Committees on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Senate on the results of an assessment of National Weather Service workforce and training challenges for Incident Meteorologists, and a roadmap for overcoming such challenges. Such assessment shall take into consideration information technology support, logistical and administrative operations, anticipated weather and climate conditions, and feedback from relevant stakeholders, and shall include, to the maximum extent practicable, recommendations by the National Weather Service of the following:

(1) The expected number of Incident Meteorologists needed over the next five years.

(2) Potential hiring authorities necessary to overcome any identified workforce and training challenges.

(3) Alternative services or assistance options the National Weather Service could provide to meet operational needs.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) FIRE ENVIRONMENT.—The term "fire environment'' means—

(A) atmospheres, including air quality, chemical phenomena, including air quality, chemical phenomena, and fire behavior; and

(B) Any meteorological, atmospheric, or oceanographic parameter, including air quality, chemical phenomena, and fire behavior.

(2) TECHNOLOGY MANUFACTURERS.—The term "technology manufacturers'' means any person who participates in wildland firefighting activities.

(3) WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT RESEARCH OFFICIALS.—The term "wildfire management research official'' means any person, or make use of any infrastructure from any Advisory Committee activity in which he or she has an actual pecuniary interest.

SEC. 7. RESEARCH ON WILDLAND FIRE COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Public Safety Research.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall submit to the Secretary of Commerce a report containing the recommendations published under paragraph (1).

(b) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Senate on the results of an assessment of National Weather Service workforce and training challenges for Incident Meteorologists, and a roadmap for overcoming such challenges. Such assessment shall take into consideration information technology support, logistical and administrative operations, anticipated weather and climate conditions, and feedback from relevant stakeholders, and shall include, to the maximum extent practicable, recommendations by the National Weather Service of the following:

(1) The expected number of Incident Meteorologists needed over the next five years.

(2) Potential hiring authorities necessary to overcome any identified workforce and training challenges.

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(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

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(2) TECHNOLOGY MANUFACTURERS.—The term "technology manufacturers'' means any person who participates in wildland firefighting activities.
speed and direction, and atmospheric composition and chemistry, including emissions and mixing heights.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIMÉNEZ). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) and the general from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to review and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4866, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4866, the Fire Weather Development Act of 2024, offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MIKE GARCIA), my friend and colleague on the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

This bill directs the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to improve the forecasting and detection of fire weather as well as increase collaboration with State and local partners to predict and fight fires.

Just over a month ago, the largest wildfire in U.S. history burned over a million acres in the Texas Panhandle and parts of my district in western Oklahoma.

The Smokehouse Creek fire, as it is now known, was the result of extremely dry and windy conditions that saw a half million acres burn within 24 hours of the fire's start.

With two fatalities, along with hundreds of homes and thousands of cattle lost, the effects of this fire will be felt in this region of our country for many years.

If it wasn't for a shift in wind direction at just the right time, my property would have been a part of that destruction.

At home, I had to take the precaution of moving cattle into fields that were less likely to burn, if the fire kept coming our way.

Looking back on this event today, there are two things I can take from it: We know with certainty that the National Weather Service has the tools and capability for fire weather forecasting and prediction that can protect lives and property.

The National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center began mentioning the potential for fire weather conditions in their extended forecast 6 days before the Smokehouse Creek fire started.

In my case, I closely monitored this weather outlook and made critical decisions based on the weather data, models, and forecasts that were available.

While two lives were lost, and that is too many, it is likely there would have been more, if not for the work of the National Weather Service.

With an increased innovative focus provided by direction from Congress and its partners, NOAA and the NWS can expand their capabilities and ensure every region of our country is prepared for the extreme weather events of the future.

Every citizen can and should have the most accurate tools readily available, just like us who are considering today, the Fire Weather Development Act, is a critical step in that direction.

H.R. 4866 directs NOAA to develop and improve accurate fire weather and fire environment forecasts and warnings.

It places an emphasis on developing and using novel technologies such as advanced weather, advanced satellite detection paired with AI modeling systems, or active sensors for potential deployment on unmanned aircraft systems.

These technologies will improve wildfire behavior models, mapping efforts, and the monitoring of fire fuel and active fires, while also eliminating the risk of sending firefighters and operators into potential danger.

The Fire Weather Development Act also recognizes the critical need for Federal collaboration by establishing an Interagency Coordinating Committee on Wildfires.

With all the relevant bodies working together, this committee will coordinate the development of accurate and timely wildfire forecasting, detection, monitoring, and delivery of products or services that best assist State and local emergency officials.

Lastly, this bill establishes an independent National Advisory Council on Wildfires to ensure that local officials, communities, and people who are directly affected by wildfires have a seat at the table and can provide input on what tools or services are most needed.

I thank Representative MIKE GARCIA for introducing this bill along with his cosponsors, Representatives CARAVEO and KIM.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to join us in supporting this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, in Hawaii, California, Colorado, and Michigan, wildfires are posing an increasing threat to the lives and livelihoods of so many Americans.

Over the last 30 years, the wildfire season in the West alone has lengthened by seven months, and the total number of acres burned per year has nearly doubled.

Climate change has contributed to warmer temperatures and drier conditions, causing more frequent and intense wildfires.

Understanding the fundamental science behind wildfires, including the impacts of climate change, is absolutely essential to our ability to improve the prediction and forecasting of increasingly severe wildfires.

Another essential element to our response to wildfires is the effective communication of information and risks to local managers and to those living in wildfire-vulnerable areas.

To accomplish that, we have H.R. 4866, a phenomenal bipartisan piece of legislation to direct NOAA to establish a program that will increase the accuracy of, and effectively communicate, fire forecasts and warnings.

The brave and tireless work of incident management teams is absolutely the cornerstone of successful wildfire response. This includes incident meteorologists, or IMETs, who work around the clock at active fire sites for days or weeks at a time, providing lifesaving information about wildfire and environmental conditions to firefighters and the public.

The bill also requires NOAA to leverage collaborations with State, local, and Tribal governments, Federal agencies, academia, and the private sector to increase the number of lives and property from wildfires and support fire response personnel.

I truly commend Congressman MIKE GARCIA and my colleague from Colorado (Ms. CARAVEO) for working on this important legislation that truly put the United States in a better position to respond to increasing threats of wildfires.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MIKE GARCIA) to speak on this bill.

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his leadership on this bill.

In my district, it is all about security. It is about economic security. It is about national security. It is about school security, neighborhood security, and yes, border security, as well as protecting Social Security.

If you live in my district, you will recognize that this bill, H.R. 4866, is truly about security. My district, in north L.A. County, is the most dense and largest interface of wildlands with human beings and housing developments.

They are all too familiar, my constituents, with the dangers that wildfires pose to our homes and to our livelihoods.

For my constituents, wildfire mitigation isn’t a red or blue issue. It is not a Republican or Democratic issue. It is a life-or-death world. That is why I have made it a top priority since coming to Washington to improve our ability to predict and to fight these disasters in order to keep our firefighters, public safety personnel, and our communities safe.
This bill will dramatically improve NOAA’s ability to predict, prevent, and respond to wildfires and to get information down to the local emergency responders.

It would be easy, the last 2 years have been relatively calm fire seasons, to get lulled into a false sense of security in southern California, but the next big fire season is right around the corner.

We have had 2 years of record rain that has spurred an explosion of grass and dense shrubbery across the hills in my district.

As the weather starts to dry out again, so will the forest, transforming green areas into an abundance of fuel and flammable trees. If a stray spark or lightning strike can set ablaze in a moment’s notice.

Southern California will be a tinderbox this fall, and the time to prevent wildfires is now. We can't afford to wait for another wildfire season like we had in 2020 where California lost over 4 million acres and 10,000 buildings due to mismanagement in years prior, like the fires that we saw in Texas just recently and in Hawaii just last year, so horrifically taking the lives of so many Americans. Half the wildland in my district falls in Federal forests, so this is very important that we, at the Federal level, take care of this issue.

We need to be investing now, not just for our prediction efforts, but to ensure that our firefighters have every possible tool at their disposal to respond.

Firefighters are like frontline combat operators against wildfires, and there is no reason they shouldn’t be as well-equipped as they fight fires as our soldiers are when they fight our enemies overseas.

They need the tools this bill provides: advanced imaging to see the fires before they grow out of control, drones to reach the small and remote fires, and improved communications to adjust the forward line of combat operations quickly and safely.

Just like our soldiers, we also need to send the firefighters into dangerous situations only when it is absolutely necessary.

My bill invests in fuel mapping, unmanned vehicles, unmanned aerial vehicles, the fire behavior models and more, and all the steps to make 1 firefighter fight like 10 and to minimize the need to put them in danger. More importantly, to make sure that when they fight, they come home each night.

The side benefit of all of this is there is an average 12% reduction in insurance companies in California, and this is going to improve lives outside of just the wildfire events as well.

This bill will give NOAA the tools it needs to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to fire weather technology by allowing the agency to do things like access airborne and space-based data to enhance fire weather and fire environment monitoring. The bill also gives NOAA the ability to use drone usage to improve data collection and even conduct drone pilot programs. Finally, the bill helps our local and State responders even more through several provisions focused on improving communications, especially around forecasting.

The Front Range and northern Colorado know how important it is that we do what we can to better predict fire weather, especially when it means protecting our homes and economic well-being.

In Colorado’s Eighth District, we have a burgeoning energy sector and the largest agriculture economy in the State, but as we saw in Texas earlier this year, one wildfire can cause enormous damage to that. By passing the Fire Weather Development Act, we are ensuring that we keep bolstering the tools we have to respond to fire weather.

I look forward to continuing to work with Representatives MIKE GARCIA and Kim to get this commonsense solution in this bill across the finish line as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Mr. Speaker, we find ourselves at a prominent moment here on the House floor, hopefully seeing the passage of H.R. 4866 to address some of these extraordinary fire considerations that have taken place. I continue to encourage my colleagues to join those of us who do this hard and great work on the Science Committee to pass this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Over the last 5 years, the average annual cost of Federal firefighting suppression has been $2.8 billion. While forest and land management can help prevent wildfires, long- and short-term weather observations, or modeling, play a critical role in limiting their spread and damage.

The Fire Weather Development Act takes immediate action to address this by increasing NOAA and the National Weather Service’s activities to best protect lives and property at risk of wildfires.

I again thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MIKE GARCIA) for working tirelessly to get this bill across the finish line and increasing the lifesaving services available to his constituents.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr.
LUCAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4866, as amended.

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. LUCAS, 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.

CLEAN ENERGY DEMONSTRATION TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2023

Mr. LUCAS, Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1069) to amend the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to require reporting regarding clean energy demonstration projects, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1069

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 “Clean Energy Demonstration Transparency Act of 2023.”

SEC. 2. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

Subsection (h) of section 41201 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (42 U.S.C. 18001) is amended by adding at the end following new paragraph:

“(3) FURTHER REPORTS.—

“(A) In general.—Not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this paragraph and at least semiannually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Appropriations Committees of the Senate a report, and make publicly available in digital online format, that contains, for the period covered by each such report, for each covered project or other demonstration project administered or supported by the program, the following:

“(i) A copy of any initial contracts or financial assistance agreements executed between the Department and an award recipient, including any related documentation, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(ii) A list of any material, technical, or financial milestones that have or have not been met.

“(iii) Any material modifications to the scope of the contract or funding profile (including cost-share requirements), project partners or participating entities, or budget of the project.

“(B) SYMMETRIZING.—To the extent practicable, the Secretary may synchronize the reports required under subparagraph (A) with other required reports, such as those required under—

“(i) paragraph (1); and

“(ii) section 9005(e) of the Energy Act of 2020 (42 U.S.C. 7256c(e); enacted as division Z of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) and the gentle-woman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have a copy of the report that Mr. CAREY is referencing and extend their remarks and include any additional material on H.R. 1069, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1069, the Clean Energy Demonstration Transparency Act of 2023 offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CAREY).

This commonsense legislation will provide Congress with the necessary tools to conduct thorough oversight on the Department of Energy’s growing number of demonstration projects.

Specifically, H.R. 1069 requires the Secretary of Energy to report to Congress on all demonstration projects administered by the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations. As part of this report, DOE will provide all contracts, milestones, schedules, and funding profiles, including cost-share agreements.

DOE established OCED to carry out the technology demonstration projects that were authorized by the Energy Act of 2020 and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This includes projects with bipartisan support such as the Advanced Reactor Demonstration Program and Long-Duration Energy Storage Demonstrations.

Historically, DOE’s applied energy offices have administered these programs, creating a natural pipeline from the lab to the field. With the creation of OCED, DOE put these activities in a new and untested office, separating expertise and adding a new layer of bureaucracy. At the same time, the infrastructure bill and the Inflation Reduction Act appropriated $27 billion to OCED to fund these projects.

This organizational change and influx of money should concern every lawmaker given previous instances of DOE’s mismanagement of demonstration projects. Already, OCED has been slow to award recipients and struggled to identify projects not covered by the applied energy offices.

Currently, Congress lacks the necessary safeguards and the ability to conduct rigorous oversight over OCED and its demonstration projects. For example, when the Science Committee tried to get more information on DOE waiving the cost-share requirement for a multimillion-dollar project, DOE had no requirement to document or justify their decision.

H.R. 1069 requires DOE to submit semianual reports which include all contracts, agreements, and funding breakdowns, and enables Congress to have the tools to protect taxpayers’ dollars, hold OCED accountable, and ensure a truly competitive selection process based on merits.

I am proud to cosponsor this bill, along with Ranking Member LOFGREN, and I extend my appreciation to Representative CAREY for continuing his leadership on this issue while no longer sitting on the Science Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is one of the moments where we find ourselves so grateful for the House RECORD, as we yet again are moving to pass a bipartisan piece of legislation, H.R. 1069, the Clean Energy Demonstration Transparency Act in a bipartisan fashion here, forever commemorated on the House floor.

We are recognizing that here in the United States of America, our phenomenal Department of Energy, now being run by Michigan’s former Governor, Secretary Jennifer Granholm, is doing clean energy. These are clean energy projects that are coming to fruition because of our clean energy agenda promulgated by the President of the United States, the great Joe Biden.

We have already in place, 3 years on, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law which established one of its kind clean energy demonstration office centrally coordinating the Department of Energy’s larger-scale clean energy technology development. I really appreciate when we can say, as Democrats and Republicans, yes to transparency because we do want the world to see that we are doing clean energy, and we will lead the sustainability vision for the future.

We also know that $25 billion coming out of this Bipartisan Infrastructure Law legislation is funding and scaling emerging technologies such as clean hydrogen and advanced nuclear energy, which is needed to tackle some of our most pressing climate challenges and certainly to achieve our net zero goals that we have established for ourselves.

One of the initiatives that has been supported by the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations, one that I am very excited about and has great meaning to us in Michigan, the automotive supply chain innovation capital of the world, is hydrogen hubs. We have these hydrogen hubs that have come to fruition or are being invested in out of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Certainly, as I mentioned, these hubs are helping make our Michigan. We have got the Midwest Alliance for Clean Hydrogen, and it is going to leverage my State’s famous industrial power to lead the Nation in this clean energy hydrogen production.

The hubs annual going to benefit from this transparency legislation, this network of hydrogen hubs which are seeking to lower our emissions as a Nation
Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote “yes” on this bill, which will give Americans confidence that their taxpayer dollars are being used wisely in our pursuit of energy independence.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close once the gentlewoman from Michigan does.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, in closing, again, I feel passionate about this legislation. I thank Mr. CAREY for his remarks and for joining us on the House floor. I look forward to seeing this bill become law.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, one of our most important responsibilities in Congress is to serve as the stewards of taxpayers’ dollars. I take that job very seriously.

I want to see DOE and all of our Federal research agencies succeed in developing next-generation technologies. At the same time, we need to be conscious of the body and keep a watchful eye on the progress of these projects well before their costs balloon into multibillions of dollars.

H.R. 1069 allows us to do exactly that. It increases transparency between DOE and Congress, enabling both sides to have beneficial information and insight into the successes of Federal demonstration projects.

Once again, I thank Mr. CAREY for leading this bill along with his co-sponsors, Representatives WILLIAMS, DAVIDS, and DONALDS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to continue to push forward in a bipartisan fashion the passage of H.R. 1069.

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CAREY).

Mr. CAREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a bill that will lead America toward an all-hydrogen power grid in the future, H.R. 1069, the Clean Energy Demonstration Transparency Act.

First, I thank Chairman LUCAS, Ranking Member LOFGREN, and Energy Subcommittee Chairman WILLIAMS for their work on bringing this bill to the floor. I also thank the Science, Space, and Technology Committee staff for their bipartisan efforts in moving this legislation forward.

Strengthening the energy category of domestic energy production, including renewables, oil, gas, coal, and nuclear, will safeguard our supply chains, defend our national security, and, in fact, boost our economy.

H.R. 1069 is a commonsense bill that will increase transparency and oversight of the investments in homegrown, clean energy, including the billions of taxpayer dollars entrusted to the newly established Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations.

Specifically, the bill requires the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations to submit periodic reports to Congress regarding the budget, schedule, and participating entities of their demonstration projects.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote “yes” on this bill, which will give Americans confidence that their taxpayer dollars are being used wisely in our pursuit of energy independence.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close once the gentlewoman from Michigan does.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, in closing, again, I feel passionate about this legislation. I thank Mr. CAREY for his remarks and for joining us on the House floor. I look forward to seeing this bill become law.

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Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.
data collection, sharing, and analytics performed by the public and private sectors.

(d) Report on Privacy Enhancing Technology Research.—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, acting through the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Program, shall, in coordination with the Director of the National Science Foundation, the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and the heads of other Federal agencies, as appropriate, submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Subcommittee on Commerce, Science, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, and the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, a report containing information relating to the following:

(1) The progress of research on privacy enhancing technologies;
(2) The progress of the development of voluntary resources described under subsection (c)(2)(B);
(3) Any policy recommendations that could facilitate and improve coordination and cooperation between the private sector and relevant Federal agencies for the implementation and adoption of privacy enhancing technologies;

(e) Protecting Personal Identifying Information.—Any personal identifying information collected or stored through the activities authorized under this section shall be protected in accordance with part 690 of title 45, Code of Federal Regulations (relating to the protection of human subjects), or any successor regulation.

(f) Definition.—In this section, the term ‘‘privacy enhancing technology’’ means any software or hardware solution, technical process, or other technological means of mitigating individuals' privacy risks arising from data processing by enhancing predictability, manageability, disassociation, and confidentiality; and (2) may include—

(A) cryptographic techniques for facilitating computation or analysis on data while mitigating privacy risks;

(B) techniques for—

(i) publicly sharing data without enabling inferences to be made about specific individuals;

(ii) giving individuals’ control over the dissemination, sharing, and use of their data; and

(iii) generating synthetic data; and

(C) any other technology or approach that reduces the risk of re-identification, including with other information.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) and the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4755, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4755, the Privacy Enhancing Technology Research Act, offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. KEAN). The bill supports research activities to advance innovative technologies to safeguard individuals' privacy.

As Americans have moved more and more of their lives online, it has resulted in a greater amount of digital consumer data and personal information being generated than ever before. This personal information has long been a target of cybercriminals, and the threat has only worsened over time. In 2023, the Federal Trade Commission received more than 1 million reports of identity theft. This problem is exacerbated by the failure of some companies to properly safeguard consumer data.

This data is a valuable asset. When safely utilized, it can do a great deal to spur our economy and support innovations like artificial intelligence and quantum computing. Our task is to ensure that this information is only used by the hands of bad actors, putting Americans’ private information at risk.

Privacy enhancing technologies, PETs, may be part of the solution. PETs utilize cryptography and statistical techniques to minimize the amount of personally identifiable information while ensuring the datasets are still usable. However, more research is needed to understand PETs’ applicability and to encourage further development and adoption.

This bill requires the National Science Foundation to support fundamental research into PETs, the mathematics that underlie them, and the additional technologies that promote data minimization.

The legislation also directs NIST to work with stakeholders to develop voluntary consensus standards for incorporating these technologies into Federal and commercial applications. Similar legislation passed the House last Congress, which is a testament to the value of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Representatives STEVENS and KEAN for their leadership on this issue. I encourage my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4755, the Privacy Enhancing Technology Research Act, is another very important bipartisan piece of legislation that we bring to the House floor this evening on the heels of the pronouncement of the Speaker and minority leader to form an AI task force that is led by Mr. OBERNOLTE of California on the Republican side and Mr. LIZER of California, on the Democratic side.

What the Privacy Enhancing Technology Research Act gets us is an opportunity to further strengthen and utilize Federal agencies to regulate our artificial intelligence.

This legislation has been met with the endorsement of the Federation of American Scientists, the Carnegie Mellon University, the University of California system, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Future of Privacy Forum.

I thank my colleagues, Congressman Kean, for joining me in this legislation. I also recognize Senator CATHRINE CORTEZ MASTO of Nevada and Senator DEM FISCHER of Nebraska for working in the other Chamber and for their contributions to the legislation.

I have a path to see this pass here in the House but to see it pass in the Senate and become Federal law.

We are living, as we all know, in the time of the modern digital economy, probably a hyper-digital economy, that is fueled by an astronomical amount of personal data compounded over decades at this point in time. In this AI-powered world, privacy protection is absolutely imperative. There is certainly a struggle with the processes that can protect and enable the protection of the productive use of personal data and secure the confidentiality of information it includes.

In 2023, a survey by the Pew Research Center found that 81 percent of American adults are concerned about how companies use their personal data. Data breaches are common, with clicking, purchasing, and browsing. What is going on with all of that?

It is certainly in conversations regarding AI in Congress, with friends of mine, and with my constituents back home in Oakland County, Michigan.

There remain lots of opportunities to capture the benefits of data, including for safer roads, improved public health, better educational outcomes, and tackling inequities and other disparities. However, in any use of personal data, we must ensure privacy and confidentiality. A critical way to achieve that is through the development of privacy enhancing technologies.

PETs are a broad range of technologies that allow organizations to collect, share, and use data while mitigating the privacy risks that arise from those activities.

The goal is to make systems that use personal information private by default, opening up those data to a wide range of researchers who would otherwise not have access. These technologies even have the potential to enable broader use of Federal datasets, as privacy risks are often the greatest barrier to open government data efforts. Unfortunately, the technology itself is still really immature, and it is not ready for widespread use.

What we are looking to do with H.R. 4755 is to support the research, workforce development, standard setting, and government coordination for PETs. We are going to direct the National Science Foundation to conduct fundamental privacy research that can improve these technologies, assess their...
limitations, and broaden their applicability.

The National Science Foundation will also support workforce development activities in order to help address some of the exacerbating shortage of privacy professionals across the United States and also spurring demand for cybersecurity workforce developments that have taken place from years prior.

H.R. 4755 also supports activities at the National Institute of Standards and Technology to facilitate the development of those standards and best practices for integration of PETs in public and private sectors.

Mr. Speaker, these two groups, the public sector and private sector, are encouraging of this legislation. They are asking for us to act in this way.

Finally, H.R. 4755 directs the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to coordinate Federal activities to accelerate the development of PETs across government.

Congress, I know, has been debating proposals on privacy legislation for a long time. Sometimes we are even wondering if we have legislation, but we have H.R. 4755, which takes an amazing and necessary step for ownership of this new technology that we want to own and manage here in this country.

So, yes, let us be encouraged by bipartisan activity. Let us continue to come together and ensure that we have the necessary tools to fully implement privacy legislation without stifling innovation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank, again, my colleague, Congressman KEAN of New Jersey, for his bipartisan efforts.

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. KEAN).

Mr. KEAN of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be the co-lead on H.R. 4755, the Privacy Enhancing Technology Research Act of 2023, with my colleague, Congresswoman STEVENS.

Mr. Speaker, I have had many conversations about data privacy concerns with parents and constituents in the Seventh District in New Jersey. Ensuring their specific needs and concerns are met for safeguarding their privacy rights online is a top priority. I am pleased that the House is considering this critical piece of legislation to improve personal data protections for all Americans and to commit to enhancing individuals’ privacy and security online.

In an increasingly interconnected world where digital technologies touch every aspect of our lives, safeguarding personal privacy has become a critical concern for all Americans, especially during a time when vast amounts of personal data is collected online.

As we navigate through a landscape of evolving cyber threats, data breaches, and the development of artificial intelligence, the need for cutting-edge, privacy enhancing technologies has never been more pressing.

Recognizing the significance of these challenges and the threats we face online, this legislation directs the National Science Foundation to support competitive, fundamental research on privacy enhancing technologies. Our goal is to enhance user safety and provide safety measures for how our data is collected and used.

This legislation also directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology to facilitate the development of voluntary consensus standards to better integrate privacy enhancing technologies into public and private sectors. This is a key step toward mitigating risks and promoting trustworthiness.

The Privacy Enhancing Technology Research Act represents a promising opportunity to prioritize protecting an individual’s data privacy in our ever-growing interconnected world.

Additionally, the bill will not only facilitate crucial research efforts but also contribute to the development of a skilled workforce and foster effective government coordination to ensure an impactful implementation of these technologies.

Advancing our legislation will support the development of robust safeguards for how people interact online and how their data is collected. This legislation seeks to empower individuals with greater control over their personal information, mitigating the risks of unauthorized access and misuse and maintaining trust in our digital ecosystem.

Through cutting-edge research and technologies, we will develop innovative solutions to not only shield sensitive data from malicious actors but also establish robust standards for data collection and sharing practices, fostering a more transparent and secure online environment.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Congresswoman STEVENS for her extraordinary leadership in this regard and the chairman and the ranking member for helping advance this legislation. I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. STEVENS, Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I continue to call on my colleagues to join me, Congressman KEAN, the chairman of the Science Committee, and the ranking member of the Science Committee in passing H.R. 4755. This certainly will mark a very important moment in time when the United States chooses to lead on privacy enhancing technologies for the betterment of all.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleagues from Michigan and New Jersey on an outstanding piece of legislation, and I urge the body to adopt it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question was taken.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. Speaker, on that I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CARBON SEQUESTRATION COLLABORATION ACT

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4824) to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to require the Secretary of Energy to carry out Terrestrial Carbon Sequestration research and development activities, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4824

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 “Carbon Sequestration Collaboration Act”.

SEC. 2. CARBON SEQUESTRATION RESEARCH INITIATIVE.

Section 963 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16293) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively;

(B) by inserting before paragraph (2), (as so redesignated, the following new paragraph:

“(1) CARBON SEQUESTRATION IN OROGRAPHIC FORMATIONS.—The term ‘carbon sequestration in geologic formations’ means carbon sequestration methods or technologies utilizing existing permeable or porous formations in geologic settings, such as basins or aquifers;”;

and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) TERRESTRIAL CARBON SEQUESTRATION.—The term ‘terrestrial carbon sequestration’ means carbon sequestration methods or technologies engineered by humans and targeted to carry out terrestrial carbon sequestration, including through soil amendments such as biochar and carbon mineralization utilizing mine tailings;”;

and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “shall establish” and inserting “, establishing”, in coordination with the heads of relevant Federal agencies, carry out”; and

(ii) by inserting “, including through terrestrial carbon sequestration in geologic formations” before the period;
Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4824, the Carbon Sequestration Collaboration Act. The bill amends the carbon storage provisions of the bipartisan Energy Act of 2020 to support research and development on ways to sequester carbon in terrestrial ecosystems, agriculture, and forestry.

Recent academic research has found that agricultural approaches that enhance the carbon uptake of soils have many potential benefits, including increased productivity and improvements in the stability of yields.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will help us better understand the potential short-term or long-term behavior of sequestered carbon and help identify any scientific barriers to the widespread deployment of those technologies.

This is not to mention the added benefit of removing carbon from the atmosphere, making this one of many solutions we need to advance if we are to slow down or even reverse the effects of climate change.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 4824, and I reserve the balance of my time.
Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BAIRD) to speak on his bill.

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) for yielding and for all the work done in committee to get this important piece of legislation to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I also thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN), the ranking member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, for her leadership and support on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of misconceptions about what this bill does, and, unfortunately, there are some who are intentionally spreading misinformation about this bill for political gain. Before I continue any further, let’s put these rumors to rest by telling the American people what this bill does not do.

This bill does not give Federal agencies any authority to seize private property. I am a farmer and a private landowner, and I would never sponsor or support a bill that would give the Federal Government more power to seize private land.

This bill does not specify any land for carbon capture projects or undermine the property rights of American citizens.

This bill does not directly benefit or impact private companies with an interest in carbon sequestration.

The United States has been using carbon sequestration methods to store excess carbon emissions underground for over 50 years, and President Biden’s Department of Energy is currently studying large-scale carbon sequestration at the Federal level. The problem is that our Federal agencies are not communicating properly about this technology, leaving a knowledge gap that wastes taxpayer dollars and could result in important findings falling through the cracks.

H.R. 4824 will force the executive branch to submit a plan to Congress and require Federal agencies to share research, data, and current sequestration activities. Simply put, this bill puts guardrails on the administration’s national energy plan by adding a reporting requirement to Congress and requires Federal agencies to talk to one another and share research in the most efficient way.

Mr. Speaker, I am sponsoring this legislation because I believe every Hoosier and every American, for that matter, should have the best information that is available when making informed decisions about their land and their community.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 4824, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4824 is a practical bill that lets Federal agencies collaborate on this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I would note that before my father’s family lived in Oklahoma, we lived in Indiana. I would also note to my colleague on the other side of the aisle that before they lived in Indiana, they lived in Pennsylvania.

Nonetheless, this is an important piece of legislation, and we need to pass this.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to adopt it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question was taken.

Mr. Speaker, I would note that before they lived in Indiana, we lived in Indiana. I would also note that before they lived in Oklahoma, my father’s family lived in Oklahoma, and, unfortunately, there are some who are intentionally spreading misinformation about this bill for political gain. Before I continue any further, let’s put these rumors to rest by telling the American people what this bill does not do.

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That is why, Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 4824, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4824 is a practical bill that lets Federal agencies collaborate on this important issue.
The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4877.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4877, the Abandoned Well Remediation Research and Development Act. Across the country, there are around 3 million abandoned oil and gas wells in urgent need of remediation or plugging.

In Pennsylvania, there are well over 350,000 abandoned wells, but only 27,000 of these have been identified and documented in order to be plugged.

These abandoned wells not only contribute to the climate crisis by leaking methane, but they also expose our families to cancer-causing toxins like benzene, leave our homes vulnerable to explosive gases, and lower property values making it tougher for families to maintain and sell their homes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4877. This bill will capitalize on Federal investments to plug abandoned wells we have already delivered to western Pennsylvania from the infrastructure act by authorizing a new research, development, and demonstration program at the Department of Energy to locate, identify, and address the problems associated with abandoned oil and gas wells.

This bipartisan bill we have introduced builds on the $23 million worth of Federal investments to plug abandoned wells we have already delivered to western Pennsylvania from the infrastructure act by authorizing a new research, development, and demonstration program at the Department of Energy to locate, identify, and address the problems associated with abandoned oil and gas wells.

This program will enhance our ability to locate these wells and direct research toward improving remediation, plugging, and understanding what causes some of these wells to become super emitters, posing the most harm to our health and our climate. It will also fuel the development of uses for these wells, such as evaluating whether they are suitable for conversion to geothermal power production.

Mrs. BICE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member LOFGREN for authoring this legislation, as well as Representative BICE for joining me in championing this issue for bringing this important bipartisan bill to the floor.

Today, the Science Committee has twice unanimously approved this bill, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Mrs. BICE).

Mrs. BICE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman LUCAS for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4877, the Abandoned Well Remediation Research and Development Act. In Oklahoma, there are over half a million oil and gas wells, which allow our State to rank eight in oil and gas production in the country. While active wells support hundreds of thousands of jobs, legacy sites and abandoned wells can present environmental and economic problems.

Across the country, some abandoned or orphaned wells are slowly leaking harmful gases and chemicals into the ecosystem. This is partly due to some wells being left unaddressed after their use. However, most leaks are the result of plugging procedures or materials that have not withstood the test of time.

To remedy this issue, different States have implemented plugging and cleanup programs with varying levels of success. For example, the Oklahoma Energy Resources Board has invested $132 million to successfully clean up over 18,000 sites across our State.

Additionally, the Federal plugging and remediation program established last Congress provided $25 million in
initial grants to Oklahoma. This was a great first step, but unless we want to continue to spend on temporary solutions, we must have innovation.

H.R. 4877 will address this innovation gap and potentially save billions of dollars in future efforts. Through the research, development, and demonstration activities authorized by this bill, the Department of Energy will improve the data on the location of abandoned wells, the process for plugging, reclaiming, and repurposing wells, and the ability to mitigate potential environmental impacts of leaking wells.

In the future, we won’t need another $4 billion in Federal plugging programs. The innovation spurred by this bill could cut those costs in half and save billions in taxpayer funds.

H.R. 4877 directs the type of forward-looking research and development that will solve our legacy challenges, while allowing responsible environmental stewardship to continue into the next generation.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to lead this bill with my colleagues from Pennsylvania (Ms. Lee), I thank her for working alongside me in a bipartisan fashion to get this bill to the floor, which is an example of innovating to solve a real-world issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a “yes” vote from my colleagues.

Ms. Lee of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 4877, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, we all share concern about the tens of thousands of known abandoned oil and gas wells across the country that have the potential to leak methane, pose health and safety risks, and pollute local ground water. This is a major step in addressing that.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 4877. I thank Congresswoman Lee and Congresswoman Rice for their effort, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Strong). The question is on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4877), as amended.

The question is on the motion. Through the research, development, and demonstration activities authorized by this bill, the Department of Energy will improve the data on the location of abandoned wells, the process for plugging, reclaiming, and repurposing wells, and the ability to mitigate potential environmental impacts of leaking wells.

In the future, we won’t need another $4 billion in Federal plugging programs. The innovation spurred by this bill could cut those costs in half and save billions in taxpayer funds.

H.R. 4877 directs the type of forward-looking research and development that will solve our legacy challenges, while allowing responsible environmental stewardship to continue into the next generation.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to lead this bill with my colleagues from Pennsylvania (Ms. Lee). I thank her for working alongside me in a bipartisan fashion to get this bill to the floor, which is a great example of innovating to solve a real-world issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a “yes” vote from my colleagues.

Ms. Lee of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 4877, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, we all share concern about the tens of thousands of known abandoned oil and gas wells across the country that have the potential to leak methane, pose health and safety risks, and pollute local ground water. This is a major step in addressing that.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 4877. I thank Congresswoman Lee and Congresswoman Rice for their effort, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Strong). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. Lucas) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4877, as amended.

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. Lucas. 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.

WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING INNOVATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2023

Mr. Lucas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6093) to improve the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s weather research, support improvements in weather forecasting and prediction, expand commercial opportunities for the provision of weather data, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6093

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Reauthorization Act of 2023” or the “Weather Act Reauthorization Act of 2023.”

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.
Sec. 3. National Weather Service Weather Innovation for the Next Generation.
Sec. 4. National Weather Service Forecasting and Research.
Sec. 6. National Weather Service Flood Monitoring and Forecasting.
Sec. 7. National Weather Service Advanced Storm Prediction.
Sec. 10. National Weather Service Research and Development.
Sec. 11. National Weather Service Climate Change and Impacts.
Sec. 15. National Weather Service Equipment and Facilities.
Sec. 16. National Weather Service Operational Storm Prediction.
Sec. 27. National Weather Service National Weather Service Act Reauthorization.
Sec. 34. National Weather Service National Weather Service Act Reauthorization.
Sec. 42. Hazardous weather or water event risk communication.
Sec. 43. Hazard communication research and engagement.
Sec. 44. National Weather Service Communication and engagement.
Sec. 45. NOAA Weather Radio modernization.
Sec. 46. Post-storm surveys and assessments.
Sec. 47. Government Accountability Office report on alert dissemination for hazardous weather or water events.
Sec. 48. Data collection, management and protection.

TITLE V—IMPROVING WEATHER INFORMATION FOR AGRICULTURE AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Sec. 501. Weather and climate information in agriculture and water management.
Sec. 503. National Mesonet Program.
Sec. 504. National Coordinated Soil Moisture Monitoring Network.
Sec. 505. National water center.
Sec. 506. Satellite transfers report.
Sec. 507. Precipitation forecast improvement program.

SECOND DEFINITIONS. (a) IN GENERAL.—In this Act, the term “weather data” means information used to track and predict weather conditions and patterns, including forecasts, observations, and derivative products from such information."

TITLE I—REAUTHORIZATION OF THE WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING INNOVATION ACT OF 2017

SECTION 101. PUBLIC SAFETY PRIORITY.

Section 101 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8511) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(5) WEATHER DATA.—The term ‘weather data’ means information used to track and predict weather conditions and patterns, including forecasts, observations, and derivative products from such information.”

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS.

(1) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

"(5) WEATHER DATA.—The term ‘weather data’ means information used to track and predict weather conditions and patterns, including forecasts, observations, and derivative products from such information.”

TITLE I—REAUTHORIZATION OF THE WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING INNOVATION ACT OF 2017

SECTION 101. PUBLIC SAFETY PRIORITY.

Section 101 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8511) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"The Under Secretary shall ensure the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration remains focused on providing accurate and timely weather forecasts that protect lives and property and enhance the national economy by disseminating to the public and core partners through nimble, flexible, and mobile methods critical weather information and impact-based decision support services.”

SECTION 102. UNITED STATES WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING.

Section 102 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8511) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 110. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

“(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research to carry out this title the following:

(1) $155,000,000 for fiscal year 2024 of which—

(A) $90,000,000 is authorized for weather laboratories and cooperative institutes; and

(B) $30,000,000 is authorized for the National Weather Science Program;

(2) $20,000,000 is authorized for tornado, severe storm, and next generation radar research; and
pretation and information integration from maintain a program for rapidly improving collaboration with the United States weath-

er Research and Forecasting Innovation Act

SEC. 103. VERIFICATION OF THE ORIGINS OF RO-
totechnology transfer initiative described in

search; and

- technology transfer initiative described in

States Weather Research Program; laboratories and cooperative institutes;

- technology transfer initiative described in

search; and

- technology transfer initiative described in

.Executor, in coordination with the program established under section 406, shall—

execute tornado modeling and forecasting, as appropriate, social, behav-

or, risk, communication, and economic sciences;

- execute workforce training on radar interpretation and use of tornado warning systems; and

- expand computational resources to support higher-resolution modeling to ad-

vance the capability for warn-on-forecast.

TORNADO RATING SYSTEM.—The Under Secretary, in collaboration with local com-

munities and emergency managers, shall—

evaluate, using as of the date of the enactment of this section to rate the severity of tornadoes;

- determine whether updates to such system necessary, such ratings accurately reflect the severity of tornadoes; and

- if determined necessary, update such system.

ANNUAL BUDGET.—The Secretary shall, not less frequently than annu-

ally, submit to Congress a proposed budget corresponding with carrying out this sec-

tion.

CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 104 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 is amended by adding the item relat-

ing to section 103 to read as follows:

ivation and Economic Sciences Subcommittee, improv-

ing the social, behavioral, risk, communica-

tions, and economic sciences research related to vulnerabilities, risk communication, and de-

delivery of information critical for reducing the loss of life or property related to torna-

does.

Improving the physical sciences, computer modeling, and tools related to tornado formation, the impacts of tornadoes on the built and natural environment, and the interaction of tornadoes with the

atural and built environment, and the
computer modeling, and tools related to tornado

vulnerabilities, risk communication, and de-

garding Hurricanes Act Reauthorization.

improving the physical sciences, operational modeling, and tools related to hurri-

cane formation, the impacts of wind and water-based hurricane hazards on the built and natural environment, and the inter-

ction of hurricanes and tornadoes.

Improving the physical sciences, operational modeling, and tools related to hurri-

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cane formation, the impacts of wind and water-based hurricane hazards on the built and natural environment, and the inter-

ction of hurricanes and tornadoes.
(2) in paragraph (7), by striking "and" after the semicolon;
(3) in paragraph (8), by striking the period and inserting "; and"; and
(4) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:
"(9) to ensure data and metadata are managed, archived, and made available for operational research and education, and mitigation activities in accordance with section 305 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017.";

(c) TSUNAMI FORECASTING AND WARNING PROVISION.—Section 304 of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3233) is amended—
(1) in subsection (b)—
(A) in paragraph (4), by inserting "industry and scientific best practices," after "operational condition";
(B) in paragraph (8), after "system (GNSS) network;" and
(C) by amending paragraph (6) to read as follows:
"(6) ensure data quality and management systems, support data and metadata access and archiving, and support the requirements of the program pursuant to the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–353) and chapter 31 of title 44, United States Code;"

(d) TSUNAMI WARNING ALERT LEVEL EVALUATION.—The Administrator, in collaboration with social scientists, emergency personnel, and high-risk communities, shall—
(1) evaluate tsunami alert levels terminology, timing, and effectiveness;
(2) determine if such alerts produce the desired response and understanding from possible tsunami-prone communities; and
(3) if necessary, update the alert level system for increased effectiveness.

(e) REPORTING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph and annually thereafter until such time as all relevant requirements have been satisfied, the Administrator shall provide to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate an update briefing on the progress of the following:
(A) Standardizing information security procedures under paragraph (5), including tsunami assessments, forecast guidance, and related protocols;
(B) Migrating the message generation systems of the centers supported or maintained under paragraph (1) to the Advanced Weather Information Processing Systems, or successor systems.

"(F) (i) by striking "global seismic network" and inserting "Global Seismic Network;
(ii) by redesigning subparagraphs (D), (E), (F), and (G), as subparagraphs (E), (F), (G), and (H), respectively; and
(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following new subparagraph:
"(D) TSUNAMI WARNING ALERT LEVEL EVALUATION.—The Administrator, in collaboration with social scientists, emergency personnel, and high-risk communities, shall—
(1) evaluate tsunami alert levels terminology, timing, and effectiveness;
(2) determine if such alerts produce the desired response and understanding from possible tsunami-prone communities; and
(3) if necessary, update the alert level system for increased effectiveness.

(6) in subsection (f), as so redesignated—
(A) in paragraph (1), and such centers shall—
(i) continue to coordinate with partners and stakeholders products and services of the centers supported or maintained under paragraph (1); and
(ii) provide a fail-safe warning capability for the tsunami warning centers supported or maintained under paragraph (1) to ensure seamless continuity of operations and mitigate risk of operational failure by prioritizing investments that include—
(1) replacing end of life equipment;
(2) ensuring product consistency;
(3) enabling consistent operational processes for backup capabilities;
(4) mitigating existing operational security risks; and
(5) meeting information security requirements specified in chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code; and
(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:
"(7) REPORTING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph and annually thereafter until such time as all relevant requirements have been satisfied, the Administrator shall provide to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate an update briefing on the progress of the following:
(A) (i) by striking "global seismic network" and inserting "Global Seismic Network;
(ii) by redesigning subparagraphs (D), (E), (F), and (G), as subparagraphs (E), (F), (G), and (H), respectively; and
(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following new subparagraph:
"(D) TSUNAMI WARNING ALERT LEVEL EVALUATION.—The Administrator, in collaboration with social scientists, emergency personnel, and high-risk communities, shall—
(1) evaluate tsunami alert levels terminology, timing, and effectiveness;
(2) determine if such alerts produce the desired response and understanding from possible tsunami-prone communities; and
(3) if necessary, update the alert level system for increased effectiveness.

(7) in paragraph (9), by striking "used to" after "fail-safe";
(8) in paragraph (10), by striking the period and inserting "; and"; and
(9) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:
"(11) update tsunami inundation maps, models, or other geographic products, in order to best support, as appropriate, relevant agencies with tsunami mitigation and recovery activities.";
(7) in subsection (b)(2)(A), as so redesignated, by striking "accuracy of the tsunami model used" and inserting "timeliness and accuracy of the forecast used to issue the warning"; and

(d) NATIONAL TSUNAMI HAZARD MITIGATION PROGRAM.—Section 805(c) of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3206(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), and (H) as subparagraphs (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), and (H), respectively;

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph:

"(i) continuity digital elevation models (DEMs) to support the development of inundation maps;"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(1) Evaluation of the variation of inundation impact resulting from tsunami-driven sediment transport.

"(J) Evaluation of tsunami debris impact on critical infrastructure (as such term is defined in section 101(e) of Public Law 107–56 (42 U.S.C. 5195c(e)) and lifelines.

"(K) development and research to operations plan for regions not covered by existing inundation and sediment transport.

(2) in paragraph (7)(C), by inserting "and behavioral" after "social";

(e) THE TSUNAMI RESEARCH PROGRAM.—Section 806 of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3206) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking "section 805(d)") and inserting "section 805(b)"; and

(B) by inserting "and management" after "data collection";

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting "deployment and" after "may include";

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking "social science research" and inserting "social and behavioral science research, including data collection,";

(C) in paragraph (4), by striking "and" after the semicolon;

(D) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (7); and

(E) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

"(5) develop decision support tools;

"(6) leverage and prioritize research opportunities; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(c) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN.—Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this subsection and not less frequently than every 36 months thereafter, the Administrator, in consultation with the Interagency Council for Advancing Meteorological Services, shall develop a research and development and research to operations plan to improve tsunami detection and forecasting capability.

"(1) identifies and prioritizes research and development priorities to satisfy section 804;

"(2) identifies key research needs for better detecting tsunamis that may occur in open ocean and along the coastlines of the United States and its territories, improve forecasting of tsunamis that are not seismically driven, and other opportunities determined appropriate;

"(3) develops plans for transitioning research to operations; and

"(4) identifies non-instrumentation opportunities that may further align tsunami research, development, warnings, and operations between the centers supported or maintained under section 804, the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Center for Tsunami Research, the National Science Foundation, the United States Geological Survey, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, institutions of higher education, private entities, stakeholders, and others determined appropriate;

"(i) global tsunami warning and mitigation program, pursuant to section 807(d) of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3206(d)) is amended by inserting "and management of" after "data sharing";

"(g) TSUNAMI SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY PANEL.—Section 808(b)(1) of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3206(b)(1)) is amended by inserting "and behavioral" after "social";

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 809 of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3207) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 809. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

"There are appropriated for each fiscal year shall be for

"(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (C), (D), (E), (F), and (G) as subparagraphs (A), (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), and (G), respectively;

"(B) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph:

"(C) provision of emergency supplemental funds for research efforts in artificial intelligence and machine learning enabled advanced computing capabilities. Each such center may carry out activities that include

"(1) leveraging robust public-private partnership models to provide access to training,
experience, and long-term development of workforce and infrastructure.

(2) Developing and optimizing tools, libraries, algorithms, data structures, and other supporting compare and related applied discoveries and advanced methodologies to address current and future

(3) Applying modern artificial intelligence tools that enable learning of advanced data analysis technologies to address current and future climate challenges.

(4) To the maximum extent practicable, explore and implement opportunities for adaptation partnerships with public, private, and academic entities to improve the accuracy and resolution of weather predictions.

(4) Methods for meeting the cloud computing, or high-performance computing, or high-performance computing infrastructure or systems with an unfunded contingent liability in the event of cancellation.

(5) A report.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this section, the Under Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report containing—

(1) The effectiveness of the initiative required under subsection (b), including applied research discoveries and advanced modeling improvements achieved.

(2) A best estimate of the overall value of high-resolution probabilistic forecast guidance for hazardous weather events (as used in section 4901) using a next-generation weather forecast and warning framework.

(3) The needs for cloud computing, quantum computing, or high-performance computing, visualization, and dissemination collaboration between the Department of Energy and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(4) A timeline and guidance for implementation of the following:

(A) High-resolution numerical weather prediction to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's mission.

(B) Methods for meeting the cloud computing, quantum computing, or high-performance computing, visualization, and dissemination needs identified under paragraph (3).

SEC. 109. EARTH PREDICTION INNOVATION CENTER.

Paragraph (5) of section 102(b) of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8531) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (1) and redesignating paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) as paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), respectively;

(2) by adding subsection (b) to read as follows:

"(b) NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION SATELLITE SYSTEMS AND DATA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall maintain a fleet of Administration space-based observation platforms that provide critical operations-focused data and information to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's mission to monitor the global environment in order to protect lives and property from extreme weather and other natural phenomena.

(2) COLLABORATIVE EFFORT.—The Under Secretary shall implement recommendations from the NOAA Observing Systems Council to ensure an appropriate mix of government, academic, commercial, and international partnerships in the provision of data and information, including a broadened effort on data acquisition through the Commercial Data Program under section 502 when cost effective and beneficial to the Administration.

(3) PRIORITY.—The Under Secretary shall ensure that Administration platforms maintained under paragraph (1) prioritize the development of products and services that are tailored to meet the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's mission.

(4) NATIONAL CENTERS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION.—The Under Secretary shall maintain the National Centers for Environmental Information to provide a long-term archive and access to the Administration's national and global data and metadata; and

(5) in subsection (f)(1), by striking "2030" and inserting "2025."
resources needed to maintain and operate the Intergency Council.

(7) Enhancing communication and coordination and promoting sharing within relevant Federal departments and agencies and across the Intergency Council.

(8) Developing, recruiting, and sustaining a professional and diverse workforce for meteorological research and services.

(e) DATA INVENTORY.—The Intergency Council, in coordination and avoidance of duplication with the United States Group on Earth Observations, shall promote data and metadata access and archive activities to increase accessibility, interoperability, and reusability by maintaining a data inventory of meteorological observations. Such activities shall occur more frequently than annually for a period of five years beginning on the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Intergency Council shall solicit updated information from private sector entities identifying current and near future sources of such data. Such data shall be made available to member departments and agencies under subsection (a).

(f) COORDINATION OFFICE.—The Intergency Council shall develop the Intergency Council Data Program which administrative and logistical support as the Intergency Council may require, as determined by the co-chairs.

(g) SHARED BENEFITS.—Member departments and agencies of the Intergency Council under subsection (a) may provide reimbursable financial support to the Intergency Council Meteorological Coordinating Office to enhance cost-sharing and collaboration related to weather research and forecast innovation activities.

(h) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this section and annually thereafter, the Intergency Council shall publish a report which identifies among member agencies the following:

(1) Federal programs that use meteorological observations, data sources, and capabilities.

(2) Federal programs that acquire such data from private sector entities.

(3) Advancements in meteorological data collection, and forecasting that could improve Federal programmatic operational capabilities.

(4) Barriers to acquiring meteorological observations, data sources, and capabilities that could be used to better meet Federal programmatic needs.

REFERENCES.—For reference to the Intergency Council for Advancing Weather Services in any law, rule, regulation, paper, record, map, or other such document of the United States shall be deemed to be a reference to the Intergency Council for Advancing Meteorological Services.

SEC. 113. OCEAN OBSERVATIONS.

Section (b) of section 12304 of the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 (33 U.S.C. 6301) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

(5) SHIPS OF OPPORTUNITY PILOT PROGRAM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in coordination with the heads of relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall, subject to relevant regulations and certifications, maintain pilot programs or projects to contract with research or commercial ship operators for data collection and assess the potential costs, benefits, and viability of a global network of ocean and atmospheric observing instruments operating on research or commercial vessels, including vessels in the Arctic, in order to supplement the Integrated Coastal, Great Lakes, and Ocean Observation System in improving understanding of coastal and ocean systems and their relationships to human activities.

(B) STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS.—The Administrator shall acquire through the pilot program established pursuant to subparagraph (A) meets the most recent standards and specifications required for observation services as published pursuant to subsection (c) of section 302 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017.

(C) The Administrator, not later than five years after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, shall submit to Congress a report on the requirements for a global network of ocean and atmospheric instruments operating on research or commercial vessels for measurement and data transmission.

(D) SUNSET.—This paragraph shall terminate on the earlier of—

(i) September 19, 2029; or

(ii) one year after the date on which the report required under subparagraph (B) is submitted by the Administrator.

SEC. 114. CONCURRENT RESOLVES.

(a) WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING INNOVATION ACT OF 2017.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 is amended—

(A) in section 102 (15 U.S.C. 8512), by striking subsection (d);

(B) by amending section 105 (15 U.S.C. 8515) to read as follows:

SEC. 105. WEATHER RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN.—

Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this section and not less frequently than semiannually thereafter, the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, in coordination and avoiding duplication with the United States Group on Earth Observations, shall promote data and metadata access and archive activities to increase accessibility, interoperability, and reusability by maintaining a data inventory of meteorological observations. Such activities shall occur more frequently than annually for a period of five years beginning on the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Intergency Council shall solicit updated information from private sector entities identifying current and near future sources of such data. Such data shall be made available to member departments and agencies under subsection (a).

(f) SHARED BENEFITS.—Member departments and agencies of the Intergency Council under subsection (a) may provide reimbursable financial support to the Intergency Council Meteorological Coordinating Office to enhance cost-sharing and collaboration related to weather research and forecast innovation activities.

(h) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this section and annually thereafter, the Intergency Council shall publish a report which identifies among member agencies the following:

(1) Federal programs that use meteorological observations, data sources, and capabilities.

(2) Federal programs that acquire such data from private sector entities.

(3) Advancements in meteorological data collection, and forecasting that could improve Federal programmatic operational capabilities.

(4) Barriers to acquiring meteorological observations, data sources, and capabilities that could be used to better meet Federal programmatic needs.

REFERENCES.—For reference to the Intergency Council for Advancing Weather Services in any law, rule, regulation, paper, record, map, or other such document of the United States shall be deemed to be a reference to the Intergency Council for Advancing Meteorological Services.

SEC. 115. NATIONAL LANDSLIDE PREPAREDNESS ACT REAUTHORIZATION.

The National Landslide Preparedness Act (43 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 3 (43 U.S.C. 3102)—

(A) in subsection (a)(3), by striking “protect” and inserting “contributes to protecting”;

(B) in subsection (b)(1)(C)(ii), by striking “implement” and inserting “disseminate”;

(C) in subsection (c)(2), by adding at the end the following:

“(J) The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;”;

(D) in subsection (b), by striking “2024” and inserting “2029”;

(2) in section 5 (43 U.S.C. 3104)—

(A) in subsection (a)(1), by striking paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “and derivative” after “3D elevation”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)(B)(i), by striking “, processing and integrating” and inserting “acquire”;

(C) in subsection (b)(3)—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (D) and (E) as subparagraphs (E) and (F), respectively; and

(ii) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

“(D) The 3D Hydrography Program Working Group;”;

(C) in subsection (d)(3), by striking “publicly” and inserting “publicly”;

(3) in subsection (e), by striking “2024” and inserting “2029”;

SEC. 116. AMENDMENTS TO HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA RESEARCH AND CONTROL ACT OF 1998.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—Section 623 of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 4001) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesigning paragraphs (13) and (14) as paragraphs (14) and (15); and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (12) the following new paragraph:

“(13) the Department of Energy;”;

(2) by striking subsections (b), (c), (d), (e), (h), and (i) and redesigning subsections (f) and (g) as subsections (b) and (c), respectively;

(3) in subsection (b), as so redesignated—

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

“(d) ANNUAL BRIEFING.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, in coordination and avoiding duplication with the Senate and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the House of Representatives, shall prepare a full brief on commerce, science, and technology of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the United States most effectively; and

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents in section 111 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 is amended by striking the items relating to sections 408 through 414 and inserting the following new items:

“Sec. 408. Weather enterprise outreach. "Sec. 409. Hurricane hunter aircraft.”;


(1) in section 105 by striking subsection (c) (15 U.S.C. 1357); and

(2) in section 108 (15 U.S.C. 5320)—

(A) by striking subsection (b); and

(B) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (b).
(A) in paragraph (1), by striking "coastal waters including the Great Lakes" and inserting "marine, estuarine, and freshwater systems"; and

(b) in subparagraph (2)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

"(A) examine the causes and ecological consequences of hypoxia on marine and aquatic species in their natural environments, and socio-cultural or economic costs of hypoxia, including impacts on food safety and security;"

(ii) by redesigning subparagraphs (B) through (D) as subparagraphs (B) through (F), respectively;

(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraphs:

"(B) examine the effect of other environmental stressors on hypoxia;"

"(C) evaluate alternatives for reducing, mitigating, and controlling hypoxia and its environmental impacts;"

(iv) in subparagraph (D), as so redesignated, by striking "biological" and inserting "ecological"; and

(v) in subparagraph (E), as so redesignated, by striking "hypoxygenation and monitoring" and inserting "hypoxygenation modeling, forecasting, and monitoring and observation data"; and

(vi) in subsection (c), as so redesignated, to read as follows:

"(c) ACTION STRATEGY AND SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT FOR MARINE AND FRESHWATER HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS.—

(1) Not less often than once every 5 years, the Task Force shall complete and submit to Congress an action strategy, including a scientific assessment, of harmful algal blooms in the United States (in this Act referred to as the 'Action Strategy'). Each such Action Strategy, including scientific assessment, shall examine both marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms, including those in the Great Lakes and upper reaches of estuaries, those in freshwater lakes and rivers, and those that originate in freshwater lakes or rivers and migrate to coastal waters.

(2) Each Action Strategy under this section shall—

(A) examine the causes and ecological consequences of harmful algal blooms and the potential ecological, social, cultural, and economic costs and benefits of such methods;

(B) identify priorities for research needed to advance techniques and technologies to detect, predict, monitor, respond to, and minimize the occurrence, duration, and severity of harmful algal blooms, including impacts on food safety and security, of harmful algal blooms;

(C) examine potential methods to prevent, control, and mitigate harmful algal blooms and the potential ecological, social, cultural, and economic costs and benefits of such methods;

(D) identify priorities for research needed to advance techniques and technologies to detect, predict, monitor, respond to, and minimize the occurrence, duration, and severity of harmful algal blooms, including impacts on food safety and security, of harmful algal blooms;

(E) design and implement research and development programs authorized under this title relating to the immediate development and dissemination of the Harmful Algal Bloom Operational Forecast System of the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall be considered, for purposes of section 1342 of title 31, United States Code, services for emergencies involving the safety of human life or the protection of property. Such consideration shall only apply to areas with active harmful algal blooms during any lapse in appropriations that occurs before the date of enactment of this subsection;

(F) by redesigning paragraphs (4), (5), and (6) as paragraphs (3), (4), and (5), respectively;

(G) include regional chapters relating to the regions and entities described in this paragraph in order to highlight geographically and ecologically diverse locations with significant ecological, social, cultural, and economic impacts from harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;"
reduce the frequency, severity, and impacts of harmful algal bloom and hypoxia events; (E) identify opportunities to improve monitoring of harmful algal bloom and hypoxia, the causes and potential actions to address them, focusing on coastal waters that may affect fisheries, public health, or subsistence harvest; (F) examine the effects of other environmental stressors on harmful algal blooms and hypoxia; (G) assess the effects of multiple environmental stressors on living marine resources and coastal ecosystems; and (H) evaluate adaptation and mitigation strategies to address the impacts of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia; (5) to the greatest extent practicable, leverage existing resources and expertise available from local research universities and institutions; and (6) use cost effective methods in carrying out this section.

(b) INTEGRATED COASTAL AND OCEAN OBSERVATION SYSTEM.—The collection of monitoring data described in subsection (a) shall comply with all data standards and protocols developed pursuant to the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2000 (33 U.S.C. 4003 et seq.), such data shall be made available through the system established under that Act.

(2) Clerical Amendment.—The table of contents in section 2 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–383) is amended by adding the item relating to section 663B to read as follows:

"Sec. 663B. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration activities.

(4) to the extent practicable, leverage existing resources and expertise available from local research universities and institutions; and

(5) enhance communication and coordination among Federal agencies carrying out marine and freshwater harmful algal bloom and hypoxia activities and research;

(2) develop and maintain forecasting and monitoring systems and monitor real time to fresh water harmful algal blooms in lakes, reservoirs, rivers, and estuaries (including tributaries thereof);

(3) enhance communication and coordination among Federal agencies carrying out freshwater harmful algal bloom and hypoxia activities and research;

(1) an incubator shall conduct research on the ecology and human health impacts of freshwater harmful algal blooms;

(2) develop and maintain forecasting and monitoring systems and monitor real time to freshwater harmful algal blooms in lakes, reservoirs, rivers, and estuaries (including tributaries thereof);

(3) enhance communication and coordination among Federal agencies carrying out freshwater harmful algal bloom and hypoxia activities and research;

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, acting through the National Centers for Coastal Ocean and Ecosystem Research (referred to in this section as ‘NCCOS’) and the Integrated Ocean Observation System (referred to in this section as ‘IOOS’) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall integrate Federal, State, regional, and local observing capabilities to establish a national network of harmful algal bloom observing systems and the monitoring, detection, and forecasting of harmful algal blooms by leveraging the capacity of IOOS regional associations, including through the incorporation of new data and new data integration methods, such as artificial intelligence.

(c) COORDINATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the IOOS Program Office shall—

(1) coordinate with NCCOS regarding observations, data integration, and information dissemination; and

(2) establish a Harmful Algal Bloom Data Assembly Center to integrate, disseminate, and provide a central source to support ecological forecasting.

(d) Clerical Amendment.—The table of contents in section 2 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–383) is amended by adding the item relating to section 683B to read as follows:

"Sec. 683B. Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 4008) is amended by—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking "means the action strategy, in

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

"(4) to the greatest extent practicable—

(1) an incubator shall conduct research on the ecology and human health impacts of freshwater harmful algal blooms;

(2) develop and maintain forecasting and monitoring systems and monitor real time to freshwater harmful algal blooms in lakes, reservoirs, rivers, and estuaries (including tributaries thereof);

(3) enhance communication and coordination among Federal agencies carrying out freshwater harmful algal bloom and hypoxia activities and research;

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 606 of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 4008) is amended—

(2) in paragraph (3), to read as follows:

"(3) APPROPRIATE FEDERAL OFFICIAL.—The term "appropriate Federal official" means—

(1) in the case of systems or Great Lakes hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, including those in estuarine areas, the Under Secretary;

(2) in the case of a freshwater hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, the Administrator, in consultation with the Under Secretary;

(3) by striking paragraph (9);

(4) by redesignating paragraphs (4), (5), (6), (7), and (8) as paragraphs (6), (7), (8), (10), and (11);

(5) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraphs:

"(4) HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM; HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM EVENT.

(A) HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM.—The term 'harmful algal bloom' means marine or freshwater algae or macroalgae, including diatoms, cyanobacteria, and other toxic concentrations, resulting in nuisance conditions or harmful impacts on marine and freshwater ecosystems, communities, or human health through the production of toxic compounds or other biological, chemical, or physical impacts of the algae outbreak.

(B) HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA EVENT.—The term 'harmful algal bloom and hypoxia event' means the occurrence of a harmful algal bloom or hypoxia as a result of a natural, anthropogenic, or undetermined cause.

"(5) HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM OR HYPOXIA EVENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.—The term 'harmful algal bloom or hypoxia event of significance' means an event that has had or will likely have significant detrimental environmental, economic, social, subsistence use, or public health impacts.

"(6) in paragraph (6), as so redesignated, the following new subparagraphs:

(1) by striking "aquatic" and inserting "marine or freshwater"; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (6), as so redesignated, the following new subparagraph:

"(9) HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM OR HYPOXIA EVENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.—The term 'harmful algal bloom or hypoxia event of significance' means an event that has had or will likely have significant detrimental environmental, economic, social, subsistence use, or public health impacts.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Under Secretary to carry out this title $27,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028; and

(b) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(c) TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—The Under Secretary is authorized to make a direct non-expenditure transfer of funds authorized to be appropriated to the head of any Federal department or agency, with the concurrence of such head, to carry out, as appropriate, relevant provisions of this title.

(1) NATIONAL LEVEL INCUBATOR PROGRAM; HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM OR HYPOXIA EVENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.—

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"Sec. 611. NATIONAL LEVEL INCUBATOR PROGRAM.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in consultation with research universities and institutions, shall establish a national level incubator program to increase the number of available control strategies and technologies relating to harmful algal blooms. Such incubator shall establish a framework for preliminary assessments of novel harmful algal bloom prevention, mitigation, and control technologies in order to determine the potential for effectiveness and scalability.

"(b) OPERATION.—The incubator established under subsection (a) shall provide merit-based funding for harmful algal bloom control strategies and technologies that eliminate or reduce through biological, or physical means the levels of harmful algae and associated toxins.

"(c) DATABASE.—The incubator established under subsection (a) shall include a database to catalog the licensing and permitting requirements, economic costs, feasibility, effectiveness, and scalability of both novel and established prevention, control, and mitigation measures.

"(d) PRIORITIZATION.—In carrying out the incubator established under subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall prioritize proposed activities that would, to the maximum extent practicable—

(1) protect key habitats for fish and wildlife;

(2) maintain biodiversity;

(3) protect public health;

(4) protect the resources of national, historical, and cultural significance; or

(5) seek to partially or fully benefit communities of color, low-income communities, Indian tribes or Indigenous communities, and rural communities.

"(2) Clerical Amendment.—The table of contents in section 2 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–383) is amended by adding after the item relating to section 683B the following new item:

"(5) NATIONAL HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA OBSERVING NETWORK. —

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 606 of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 4005) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 606. NATIONAL HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM OBSERVING NETWORK.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, acting through the National Centers for Coastal Ocean and Ecosystem Research (referred to in this section as 'NCCOS') and the Integrated Ocean Observation System (referred to in this section as 'IOOS') and the Integrated Ocean Observation System (referred to in this section as 'IOOS') of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall integrate Federal, State, regional, and local observing capabilities to establish a national network of harmful algal bloom observing systems and the monitoring, detection, and forecasting of harmful algal blooms by leveraging the capacity of IOOS regional associations, including through the incorporation of new data and new data integration methods, such as artificial intelligence.

"(b) COORDINATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the IOOS Program Office shall—

"(1) coordinate with NCCOS regarding observations, data integration, and information dissemination; and

"(2) establish a Harmful Algal Bloom Data Assembly Center to integrate, disseminate, and provide a central source to support ecological forecasting.
(j) HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM OR HYPOXIA EVENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.—Section (g)(6) of the National Waterfowl Production and Drought Restoration and Improvement Act of 2018 (33 U.S.C. 401(b)(6)) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (g)(6), by striking the words "subject to" and substituting thereof the word "including"; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new sentence: "The Under Secretary shall provide to Congress a report on the implementation of the Program, the Under Secretary, in consultation with the Interagency Council for Advancing Meteorological Services, shall—(1) partner with the private sector, academia, and local, State, and Tribal governments; and (2) any other entity the Under Secretary considers appropriate;"

(2) identify, evaluate, and test existing or near-commercial technologies and solutions that improve radar coverage and performance, including by mitigating the potential impact of interferences, beam blockage, or ghost echoes; and

(3) to the maximum extent practicable, research additional solutions that could mitigate the effects of interferences on weather radar, such as—

(A) signal processing algorithms; (B) short-term forecasting algorithms to replace contaminated data; or

(C) focusing efforts on dual polarization characteristics in mitigating the effects of wind tur-"
SEC. 203. DATA VOIDS IN HIGHLY VULNERABLE AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in coordination with the Director of the National Weather Service and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in consultation with the United States weather industry, academic partners, and in accordance with activities implemented through existing regional atmospheric, coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes observational systems, shall carry out activities to ensure equitable and comprehensive weather observation coverage and emergency information sharing in the United States and territories that are considered under-observed, underserved, or highly vulnerable regions.

(1) Reviewing areas in the continental United States and the territories that are considered under-observed, underserved, or highly vulnerable regions and identifying associated challenges to providing such coverage.

(2) Increasing weather observations and developing new weather observational capabilities, such as urban heat island mapping campaigns, with respect to under-observed, underserved, or highly vulnerable regions.

(b) PILOT PROGRAM.—In carrying out this section, the Under Secretary shall establish an interagency partnership to support pilot projects that accelerate coordination and use of such observational systems, such as regional weather networks, including urban and offshore regions, and identifying associated challenges to providing such coverage.

(1) Increasing weather observations and developing new weather observational capabilities, such as urban heat island mapping campaigns, with respect to under-observed, underserved, or highly vulnerable regions.

(2) Establishing or supporting testbeds to develop and integrate new weather, water, and climate observation or emergency information sharing tools, such as automated or static sensors, or regional or supplemental radars for weather observations, in under-observed, underserved, or highly vulnerable regions.

(c) INNOVATIVE OBSERVATIONS AND MODELING.—The Under Secretary shall ensure the continued development, testing, and evaluates the value of incorporating innovative observations, such as novel sensor technologies, observation networks, soil moisture, and reservoir storage, observations from crewed or uncrewed systems, and hosted instrumental on commercial aircrafts, vessels, and satellites, with respect to the improvement of atmospheric river forecasts, predictions, and warnings.

(d) PROGRAM PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary shall develop a plan that details the specific research, development, data acquisition, and technology transfer activities, as well as corresponding resources, limitations, and timelines, necessary to achieve the goal of the program under subsection (b).

(e) ANNUAL BUDGET FOR PLAN SUBMITTAL.—After the development of the plan pursuant to subsection (d), the Under Secretary shall, not less frequently than annually, submit to Congress and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in consultation with the Integrated Ocean Observing System, the United States weather industry, academic partners, steering such effort, and innovative observations, such as novel sensor technologies, observation networks, soil moisture, and reservoir storage, and evaluates the value of incorporating innovative observations, such as novel sensor technologies, observation networks, soil moisture, and reservoir storage, observations from crewed or uncrewed systems, and hosted instrumental on commercial aircrafts, vessels, and satellites, with respect to the improvement of atmospheric river forecasts, predictions, and warnings.

SEC. 205. COASTAL FLOODING AND STORM SURGE FORECAST IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in collaboration with the Integrated Ocean Observing System, the United States weather industry, and academic partners, shall establish an atmospheric river forecast skill improvement program (in this section referred to as the “program”).

(b) GOAL.—The goal of the program shall be to reduce through the development and extension of accurate, effective, and actionable forecasts and warnings the loss of life or property from coastal flooding, including high tide flooding, and storm surge events.

(c) PRIORITY.—In implementing the program, the Under Secretary shall prioritize activities that carry out the following:

(1) Improving and capacity for real-time operational prediction of the ocean’s role in coastal flooding, including high tide flooding, and storm surge events.

(2) Predicting or prevent the impacts of coastal flooding, including high tide flooding, and storm surge events, including by improving the understanding and capacity of coastal communities to perceive, comprehend, and respond to forecast information.

(3) Developing probabilistic coastal flood, including high tide flooding, and storm surge forecasts, predictions, and warnings the loss of life or property from in situ distributed sensors into models.

(4) Developing probabilistic coastal flood, including high tide flooding, and storm surge forecasts, predictions, and warnings the loss of life or property from in situ distributed sensors into models.

SEC. 206. AVIATION WEATHER AND DATA INNOVATION.

(a) PROGRAM.—The Under Secretary shall maintain an airborne observation program (in this section referred to as the “program”) for the acquisition of atmospheric sensor data and the deployment of atmospheric sensors, in partnership with the weather enterprise.

(b) ACTIVITIES.—The program shall include activities that carry out the following:

(1) Procurement of weather data available from commercial aircraft, as determined by the Under Secretary.

(2) Acquisition of additional vertical profile observations that provide spatial and temporal density, as determined by the Under Secretary.

(3) Analysis of procured data when incorporated into the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s unified forecast system, in order to provide improved forecast information for aircraft.
appropriated up to $10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028 to carry out the program.

(e) AVIATION WEATHER AND TURBULENCE FORECASTING.—The Director of the National Weather Service shall include turbulence events, icing conditions, or other phenomena in the capabilities of the National Aviation Service’s Aviation Weather Center, and deliver operational forecasts with consistent, timely, and accurate weather and turbulence information for the airspace system and the protection of lives and property.

(f) COORDINATION.—In carrying out subsection (e), the Director of the National Weather Service shall give consideration to recommendations from the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration in furtherance of section 44720 of title 49, United States Code, and improve weather and turbulence forecasting capabilities by—

(1) designating or establishing within the Federal Government an interagency working group to determine weather and environmental data or observation requirements, needs, and potential solutions related to aviation weather and turbulence modeling or forecasting;

(2) developing current and future potential data gaps related to turbulence events or phenomena that can—

(A) identify or inform route specific flight plans and routing;

(B) be supplemented or filled by commercial aviation tools;

(3) transitioning research initiatives and pilot programs, including a pilot program of instrumentation for observing greenhouse gases and other atmospheric factors deployed on commercial aircraft and supporting the evaluation of a sustained observing network using such platforms, into operations that improve the forecasting missions of the Aviation Weather Center;

(4) developing and deploying improved probabilistic aviation weather forecast guidance technology; and

(5) updating interagency agreements as appropriate, including to address reimbursable agreements.

(g) NEXT GENERATION AVIATION RESEARCH.—Paragraph (3) of section 102(b) of the Weather and Floods Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8512(b)), is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (F) and (G) as subparagraphs (G) and (H), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following new subparagraph:

"(F) atmospheric composition and turbulence, to improve scientific understanding and forecast capabilities for the airspace system;"

(h) AVIATION INFORMATION DISSEMINATION.—The Under Secretary shall ensure the Aviation Weather Center is able to, on a timely manner, deliver full resolution aviation weather data, forecasts, and information to meet the needs of aviation users.

SEC. 205. NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE TRANSITION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Administrator for the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service, in consultation with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall—

(1) establish and maintain a program to identify, develop, and solicit comments on significant gaps in real-time weather data and forecasts and in the delivery of weather and climate services; and

(2) develop a framework for working with the private sector, academia, and other Federal and non-Federal agencies.

(b) TRANSITION PROGRAM.—To support the development of next-generation technology, missions, data systems, spacecraft, and instrument design, the Assistant Administrator of the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service, in consultation with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall maintain a program to transition selected awards from research and study to operational phases for demonstrating potential solutions for both current and future mission needs. The Assistant Administrator shall consider technologies, missions, data systems, spacecraft, and instrument design.

(c) OPERATIONAL PLANNING.—In carrying out the transition program under subsection (b), the Assistant Administrator of the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation an annual plan that outlines the progress made in the joint venture partnership program under subsection (a), the transition program for demonstrations under section (b), and transition to operational architecture planning under subsection (c).

(d) ANNUAL PLAN.—The Assistant Administrator of the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology an annual plan that outlines the progress made in the joint venture partnership program under subsection (a), the transition program for demonstrations under section (b), and transition to operational architecture planning under subsection (c). The Under Secretary and Congress an assessment of the progress made in developing and deploying improved probabilistic aviation weather forecast guidance technology; and

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—From amounts authorized to be appropriated to the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service, there is authorized to be appropriated $20,000,000 for fiscal years 2024 through 2028 to carry out this section.

SEC. 206. ADVANCED WEATHER INTERACTIVE PROCESSING SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, acting through the National Weather Service, shall develop a strategy to transition operations of the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System to an operational National Environmental Satellite System in an operational cloud-based environment in order to enable a more nimble, flexible, and mobile workforce.

(b) SERVICES.—The Under Secretary shall ensure that the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System in an operational cloud-based environment referred to in subsection (a) provides impact-based decision support services to emergency managers at the Federal, State, local, and Tribal levels, and continues to provide the following services:

(1) Integrating and displaying forecast data, including meteorological, hydrological, climate, ocean, satellite, and radar data, for National Weather Service field offices and national centers.

(2) Acquiring and processing observational data from sensors and local sources.

(3) Providing an interactive communications system, including the satellite broadcast network, to connect relevant National Weather Service employees and sites.

(4) Initiating the dissemination of weather, aviation, and Federal and non-Federal human and environmental impact data, and space warnings and forecasts in a rapid and highly reliable manner.

(c) ELEMENTS.—The transition strategy developed pursuant to subsection (a) may include the following:

(1) Establishment or support of testbeds, pilot programs, and functional testing activities to facilitate remote evaluation and automated testing.

(2) Coordinated training efforts needed for Federal and non-Federal employees of the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System in an operational cloud-based environment referred to in subsection (a).

(3) Evaluation of handover requirements to achieve a quality user experience.

(4) Installation of circuits to reduce lapes in network operations and support backup circuits.

(5) Establishment of a cloud-based, remotely accessible repository for data referred to in subsection (b).

(6) Development and deployment of virtualized systems to replace physical hardware at operational sites.

(7) Evaluation of commercial cloud providers, including hybrid approaches, to meet mission needs.

(8) Development, testing, demonstration, evaluation, and operationalization of forecast products and services that align with the mission and scientific expertise of the Administration.

(d) TRANSITION DEADLINE.—The Under Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to ensure the transition strategy described in subsection (a) is completed by not later than September 30, 2030.

(e) UPDATES TO CONGRESS.—The Under Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate periodic updates on the implementation of this section.

(f) CONTINUED INNOVATION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting the development of new forecast capabilities, sub-systems, or implementing modeling advancements on the operational computing systems of the Administration.

SEC. 209. REANALYSIS AND REFORECASTING.

The Under Secretary may support reanalysis and reforecasting activities within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, including through the hazardous weather testbed of the Administration, for improving weather forecasts, extreme weather events, and climate datasets.

SEC. 210. NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WORKFORCE.

(a) HIRING.—The Director of the National Weather Service shall annually submit to the Under Secretary and Congress an assessment of the milestones, timelines, and service level expectations required for the expeditious hiring and timely on-boarding of employees of the National Weather Service. Each such assessment may include the following:

(1) Recommendations to outsource hiring to any entity other than the National Weather Service in order to meet such milestones, timelines, and service level expectations.

(2) Determinations of the number of staff and designated positions required at each forecasting office to provide services to protect lives and property in the geographic region of responsibility.

(b) HEALTH AND MORALE ASSESSMENT.—The Director of the National Weather Service shall contract or continue to partner with an entity other than the National Weather Service to conduct an assessment of medical care available to employees, including short-term and long-term health impacts, on National Weather Service employees related to required rotating shift
work. Such assessment may include options for mitigating such impacts on employees and recommendations for improving benefits related to required rotating shift work.

(2) DESIGNATION OF SERVICE HYDROLOGIST.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Weather Service shall designate at least one service hydrologist at each Weather Forecast Office of the National Weather Service.

(2) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize or require a change in the authorized number of full-time equivalent employees of the National Weather Service or otherwise result in the employment of any additional employees.

(3) PERFORMANCE BY OTHER EMPLOYEES.—

Notwithstanding paragraphs (4) and (5), the Director of the National Weather Service may assign the performance of the responsibilities described in this subsection to such other staff of the National Weather Service as the Director considers appropriate.

(4) RESPONSIBILITIES.—In order to increase impact-based decision support services, each service coordination hydrologist designated under paragraph (1) shall, with respect to hydrology, carry out the following:

(A) Be responsible for providing service to the general public, emergency managers, the public, media, and the public through the agency’s Water Information System.

(B) Liaise with users of products and services of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, including extended range streamflow forecasts, drought outlooks, and drought information.

(C) Collaborate with the National Water Center, River Forecast Centers, other Weather Forecast Offices, the Drought Information System, Administration offices, and Federal, State, local, and Tribal government agencies, as the Director considers appropriate, in developing, proposing, and implementing plans to develop, modify, or tailor such products and services to improve the usefulness of such products and services.

(D) Engage in interagency partnerships with Federal, State, local, and Tribal government agencies to explore the use of forecast-based decision support operations to reduce flood risk and inform decisions related to water resources management.

(E) Ensure the maintenance and accuracy of flood and surface water inundation information, maintain partner call lists, appropriate office hydrologic service policy or procedures, and other hydrologic information or dissemination methodologies or strategies.

(F) Work closely with Federal, State, local, and Tribal emergency and floodplain management agencies, other agencies related to wetlands management, private sector users, and identified users in the private and government sectors to provide a planned, coordinated, and effective preparedness and response effort.

(5) ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—A service coordination hydrologist designated under this subsection may, with respect to hydrology—

(A) work with a State agency to develop plans to ensure the incorporation of effective products and services of the National Weather Service throughout the State concerned;

(B) identify priority community preparedness objectives;

(C) develop plans to carry out the responsibilities described in paragraph (4); and

(D) conduct hazard preparedness planning and citizen education efforts with and through various State, local, and Tribal government agencies and other disaster management-related organizations.

TITLE III—COMMERCIAL WEATHER AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBSERVATIONS

SEC. 301. COMMERCIAL DATA PROGRAM.

The Weather Research and Forecasting In

Notwithstanding paragraphs (4) and (5), the Director of the National Weather Service may assign the performance of the responsibilities described in this subsection to such other staff of the National Weather Service as the Director considers appropriate.

(3) PERFORMANCE BY OTHER EMPLOYEES.—

Notwithstanding paragraphs (4) and (5), the Director of the National Weather Service may assign the performance of the responsibilities described in this subsection to such other staff of the National Weather Service as the Director considers appropriate.

(4) RESPONSIBILITIES.—In order to increase impact-based decision support services, each service coordination hydrologist designated under paragraph (1) shall, with respect to hydrology, carry out the following:

(A) Be responsible for providing service to the general public, emergency managers, the public, media, and the public through the agency’s Water Information System.

(B) Liaise with users of products and services of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, including extended range streamflow forecasts, drought outlooks, and drought information.

(C) Collaborate with the National Water Center, River Forecast Centers, other Weather Forecast Offices, the Drought Information System, Administration offices, and Federal, State, local, and Tribal government agencies, as the Director considers appropriate, in developing, proposing, and implementing plans to develop, modify, or tailor such products and services to improve the usefulness of such products and services.

(D) Engage in interagency partnerships with Federal, State, local, and Tribal emergency and floodplain management agencies, other agencies related to wetlands management, private sector users, and identified users in the private and government sectors to provide a planned, coordinated, and effective preparedness and response effort.

(E) Ensure the maintenance and accuracy of flood and surface water inundation information, maintain partner call lists, appropriate office hydrologic service policy or procedures, and other hydrologic information or dissemination methodologies or strategies.

(F) Work closely with Federal, State, local, and Tribal emergency and floodplain management agencies, other agencies related to wetlands management, private sector users, and identified users in the private and government sectors to provide a planned, coordinated, and effective preparedness and response effort.

(G) ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—A service coordination hydrologist designated under this subsection may, with respect to hydrology—

(A) work with a State agency to develop plans to ensure the incorporation of effective products and services of the National Weather Service throughout the State concerned;
there shall be a Commercial Data Pilot Program to engage with external partners and providers to test and develop shared standards and methodologies for quality, use, licensing, and accessibility of observing services and data, and to ensure quality, impact, and compatibility of such services and data with relevant United States and international Administration modeling capabilities, meteorological situational awareness, and forecasting. The Program is authorized to test and evaluate types of observing services, imagery, products, and data from private sector entities, including new and innovative surface-based, airbone-based, satellite-based, and coastal- and ocean-based data, metadata, and model components.

(b) Criteria.—The Under Secretary shall ensure that data acquired through the Commercial Data Pilot Program described in subsection (a) meets the most recent standards and specifications required for observing services and data as published pursuant to section 302(c).

(3) Contractors.—The Under Secretary shall, through an open competition, regularly enter into pilot contracts with private sector entities capable of providing observing services and data referred to in subsection (a) that meet the standards and specifications published pursuant to section 302(c) for providing such services and data in a manner consistent with the Administration to calibrate and evaluate such services and data for use in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration activities.

(4) Assessment of Viability.—The Under Secretary shall annually assess and submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a summary of the pilot contracts entered into pursuant to paragraph (3) and the extent to which such contracts meet the standards and specifications published pursuant to section 302(c), and any additional information determined necessary related to the following:

(1) The viability of assimilating observing services and data from private sector entities into National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration forecasts and models.

(2) The expected value added or improvements from such services and data so assimilated and the extent to which such services and data provide added value and benefit to Federal departments and agencies utilizing data, and the extent to which such services and data are also used by other Federal departments and agencies, and how such capability is in the national interest and in the public interest.

(3) The accuracy, quality, timeliness, visibility, reliability, usability, information technology integration, and cost-effectiveness of obtaining observing services and data from private sector entities.

(4) Steps to integrate within one year such services and data into operational use by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or any associated challenges in doing so.

(e) Obtaining Future Data.—If an assessment under subsection (d) demonstrates the ability of commercial services and data to meet the standards and specifications established pursuant to section 302(c), the Under Secretary shall—

(1) when cost-effective and feasible, obtain observing services and data from private sector entities through the Commercial Data Program under section 302;

(2) as early as possible in the acquisition process for any future National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration satellite system, determine whether there is a suitable, cost-effective, commercial capability available to develop and deploy satellites and launch instruments to meet the needs of the Commercial Data Program under section 302;

(3) whenever possible, use both commercial and Federal services and data to ensure that Federal and commercial observing services and data are used in concert, including data from non-Federal observing services and data in the National Centers for Environmental Information.

SEC. 304. CONTRACTING AUTHORITY AND AVOIDANCE OF DUPLICATION.

(a) General.—Consistent with other Federal agencies that contract and partner with private sector entities, the Under Secretary is authorized to use contracting mechanisms and enter into agreements that utilize commercial data, and to enter into agreements to reduce costs and delays to members of the weather enterprise.

(b) Savings Clause.—Nothing in this title may be construed as infringing on the acquisition authority or strategy of Federal entities authorized under title 10, United States Code.

(c) Unnecessary Duplication.—In meeting the requirements under this title, the Under Secretary shall avoid unnecessary duplication of acquiring and using data, and shall coordinate and partner with other Federal departments and agencies and information technology and cloud service providers to reduce costs and delays to members of the weather enterprise.

(d) Data Assimilation.—

(1) General.—The Under Secretary shall ensure that Federal departments and agencies utilizing Federal observing services and data and non-Federal observing services and data, as appropriate, for use.

(2) Fair Compensation for Interagency Needs.—The Under Secretary, to the maximum extent practicable, shall ensure that Federal departments and agencies utilizing observing services and data under sections 302 and 303 fairly compensate the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the non-Federal entities providing such services and data, as appropriate, for use.

SEC. 305. DATA ASSIMILATION, MANAGEMENT, AND SHARING PRACTICES.

(a) Data Standards.—The Under Secretary, in collaboration with the other Federal departments and agencies, under the direction of the Chief Information Officer, shall develop and implement data-assimilation and data sharing practices to ensure the public interest.

(b) Data Infrastructure.—

(1) General.—The Under Secretary, in consultation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall work with Federal departments and agencies to ensure that the data infrastructure needs established under this section do not undermine the public interest.

(2) Federal Partnerships.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Under Secretary may enter into agreements with Federal departments and agencies to ensure the public interest.

SEC. 306. DATA STANDARDS, MANAGEMENT, AND SHARING PRACTICES.

(a) General.—The Under Secretary shall ensure that Federal departments and agencies utilize data that is consistent with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the non-Federal entities providing such services and data, as appropriate, for use.

(b) Savings Clause.—Nothing in this title may be construed as infringing on the acquisition authority or strategy of Federal entities authorized under title 10, United States Code.

(c) Unnecessary Duplication.—In meeting the requirements under this title, the Under Secretary shall avoid unnecessary duplication of acquiring and using data, and shall coordinate and partner with other Federal departments and agencies and information technology and cloud service providers to reduce costs and delays to members of the weather enterprise.

(d) Data Sharing with the Weather Enterprise.—To the greatest extent practicable, the Under Secretary shall make accessible to members of the weather enterprise that are United States persons data not subject to redistribution contract permissions and purchased through the Commercial Data Program under section 302 or shared through international government programs.

(e) Cloud Computing.—The Under Secretary shall develop a cloud computing strategy that is designed to maximize utility of data assimilation and forecasting models or automated forecast guidance to satisfy redistribution contract permissions, and the Under Secretary shall not delay to members of the weather enterprise that are United States persons the numerical weather prediction model or automated forecast guidance output, as the case may be.

(f) Data Assimilation.—

(1) General.—The Under Secretary, in coordination with the Com-
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Title IV—Communicating Weather to the Public

Sec. 401. Definitions.

In this title:

(1) HAZARDOUS WEATHER OR WATER EVENTS.—The term ‘‘hazardous weather or water events’’ has the meaning given such term in section 406 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-25; 131 Stat. 109), as amended by section 402 of this Act.

(2) IN GENERAL.—To carry out subsection (b), the Under Secretary shall maintain a social, behavioral, risk, communication, and economic science community and user feedback, shall identify, evaluate, or modify, as necessary, redundant, or confusing terms for communications regarding hazardous weather or water events and add new terminology, as appropriate.

(3) TERMINOLOGY.—The Program, in coordination with the performance and evaluation branches of the National Weather Service and Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, shall develop metrics for such branches to track and evaluate the degree to which recommended hazardous weather or water events and associated risks under paragraph (4).

(4) METHODS.—In carrying out this section, the Program shall develop and implement recommendations to:

(A) be based on the best and most recent understanding from social, behavioral, economic, risk, and communications science research;

(B) be validated by social, behavioral, risk, and communications science, taking into account the importance of methods that support reproduction and replication of scientific studies, use of rigorous statistical analyses, and, as applicable, data analysis supported by artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies;

(C) account for the needs of various demographics, vulnerable populations, and geographic regions;

(D) account for the differences between various types of hazardous weather or water events;

(E) correspond to the needs of Federal, State, and local government partners and media partners; and

(F) account for necessary changes in the infrastructure, technology, and protocols for developing and disseminating watches and warnings.

(5) COORDINATION.—In carrying out this section, the Program shall coordinate with:

(A) Federal partners, including National Laboratories, cooperative institutes, and regional integrated sciences and assessments consortia thereof;

(B) State and local government partners; and

(C) Tribal governments.

(6) Hazard Risk Communication Improvement and Simplification.—The term ‘‘hazard risk communication improvement and simplification’’ has the meaning given such term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 101).

(7) WATCH; WARNING.—The terms ‘‘watch’’ and ‘‘warning’’ have the same meanings given such terms in section 406 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-25; 131 Stat. 109), as amended by section 402 of this Act.

(8) TIMELINESS AND CONSISTENCY.—The term ‘‘timeliness and consistency’’ has the same meaning given such term in section 406 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-25; 131 Stat. 109), as amended by section 402 of this Act.

(9) PUBLIC CLOUD.—The term ‘‘public cloud’’ means a computing service, including compute and storage services, that allows for the widest dissemination of information.

(10) DATA ASSIMILATION, MANAGEMENT, AND SHARING PRACTICES SECURITY.—The activities under this subsection shall be in a manner consistent with subtitle D of title VI of the Research and Development, Competition, and Innovation Act (enacted as division B of Public Law 115-167; 22 U.S.C. 1923 et seq.).

(11) HAZARDOUS WEATHER OR WATER EVENT RISK COMMUNICATION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(A) Severe storms, such as hurricanes and tropical storms, and tornadoes.

(B) are validated by social, behavioral, risk, and communications science, taking into account the importance of methods that support reproduction and replication of scientific studies, use of rigorous statistical analyses, and, as applicable, data analysis supported by artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies.

(C) account for the needs of various demographics, vulnerable populations, and geographic regions;

(D) account for the differences between various types of hazardous weather or water events;

(E) correspond to the needs of Federal, State, and local government partners and media partners; and

(F) account for necessary changes in the infrastructure, technology, and protocols for developing and disseminating watches and warnings.

(1) IN GENERAL.—To carry out subsection (b), the Under Secretary shall maintain a social, behavioral, risk, communication, and economic science community and user feedback, shall identify, evaluate, or modify, as necessary, redundant, or confusing terms for communications regarding hazardous weather or water events and add new terminology, as appropriate.

(2) TERMINOLOGY.—The Program, in coordination with the performance and evaluation branches of the National Weather Service and Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, shall develop metrics for such branches to track and evaluate the degree to which recommended hazardous weather or water events and associated risks under paragraph (4).

(3) METHODS.—In carrying out this section, the Program shall develop and implement recommendations to:

(A) be based on the best and most recent understanding from social, behavioral, economic, risk, and communications science research;

(B) be validated by social, behavioral, risk, and communications science, taking into account the importance of methods that support reproduction and replication of scientific studies, use of rigorous statistical analyses, and, as applicable, data analysis supported by artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies;

(C) account for the needs of various demographics, vulnerable populations, and geographic regions;

(D) account for the differences between various types of hazardous weather or water events;

(E) correspond to the needs of Federal, State, and local government partners and media partners; and

(F) account for necessary changes in the infrastructure, technology, and protocols for developing and disseminating watches and warnings.

(4) COORDINATION.—In carrying out this section, the Program shall coordinate with:

(A) Federal partners, including National Laboratories, cooperative institutes, and regional integrated sciences and assessments consortia thereof;

(B) State and local government partners; and

(C) Tribal governments.

(6) Hazard Risk Communication Improvement and Simplification.—The term ‘‘hazard risk communication improvement and simplification’’ has the meaning given such term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 101).

(7) WATCH; WARNING.—The terms ‘‘watch’’ and ‘‘warning’’ have the same meanings given such terms in section 406 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-25; 131 Stat. 109), as amended by section 402 of this Act.

(8) TIMELINESS AND CONSISTENCY.—The term ‘‘timeliness and consistency’’ has the meaning given such term in section 406 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-25; 131 Stat. 109), as amended by section 402 of this Act.

(9) PUBLIC CLOUD.—The term ‘‘public cloud’’ means a computing service, including compute and storage services, that allows for the widest dissemination of information.

(10) DATA ASSIMILATION, MANAGEMENT, AND SHARING PRACTICES SECURITY.—The activities under this subsection shall be in a manner consistent with subtitle D of title VI of the Research and Development, Competition, and Innovation Act (enacted as division B of Public Law 115-167; 22 U.S.C. 1923 et seq.).

(11) HAZARDOUS WEATHER OR WATER EVENT RISK COMMUNICATION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(A) Severe storms, such as hurricanes and tropical storms, and tornadoes.

(B) are validated by social, behavioral, risk, and communications science, taking into account the importance of methods that support reproduction and replication of scientific studies, use of rigorous statistical analyses, and, as applicable, data analysis supported by artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies.

(C) account for the needs of various demographics, vulnerable populations, and geographic regions;

(D) account for the differences between various types of hazardous weather or water events;

(E) correspond to the needs of Federal, State, and local government partners and media partners; and

(F) account for necessary changes in the infrastructure, technology, and protocols for developing and disseminating watches and warnings.

(4) EVALUATIONS.—The Program, in coordination with the performance and evaluation branches of the National Weather Service and Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, shall develop metrics for such branches to track and evaluate the degree to which recommended hazardous weather or water events and associated risks under paragraph (4).

(5) SUPPORT PLAN.—The Program shall develop a plan for the purpose of carrying out its duties under subsection (3). Such plan shall be periodically updated and informed by internal and external research and the results of the evaluation of communications regarding hazardous weather or water events and associated risks under paragraph (4).

(6) METHODS.—In carrying out this section, the Program shall develop and implement recommendations to:

(A) be based on the best and most recent understanding from social, behavioral, economic, risk, and communications science research;

(B) be validated by social, behavioral, risk, and communications science, taking into account the importance of methods that support reproduction and replication of scientific studies, use of rigorous statistical analyses, and, as applicable, data analysis supported by artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies.

(C) account for the needs of various demographics, vulnerable populations, and geographic regions;

(D) account for the differences between various types of hazardous weather or water events;

(E) correspond to the needs of Federal, State, and local government partners and media partners; and

(F) account for necessary changes in the infrastructure, technology, and protocols for developing and disseminating watches and warnings.

(7) COORDINATION.—In carrying out this section, the Program shall coordinate with:

(A) Federal partners, including National Laboratories, cooperative institutes, and regional integrated sciences and assessments programs.

(B) State and local government partners.

(C) Tribal governments.

(D) Institutions of higher education or a consortia thereof.

(E) Media partners.

(8) TIMELINESS AND CONSISTENCY.—The Program shall develop and implement guidance for ensuring timely and consistent communications across public facing platforms that disseminate information related to hazardous weather or water events.

(9) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—Section 1(b) of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 is amended by amending
the item relating to section 406 to read as follows:


Section 406 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–25; 131 Stat. 109), as amended by section 2 of the further act, as added by adding at the end the following new subsection:

(‘‘(d) HAZARD COMMUNICATION RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT.—
‘‘(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall maintain, as appropriate, a program to—
‘‘(A) modernize the development and communication of risk-based, statistically reliable, probabilistic hazard information, with the goal of informing appropriate responses to hazardous weather or water events;
‘‘(B) improve the fundamental social, behavioral, economic, risk, and communication science relating to communications, including by means of collecting voluntary data, regarding hazardous weather or water events.
‘‘(2) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the program under paragraph (1), the Under Secretary shall coordinate and communicate with States, Tribal governments, localities, and emergency managers regarding research priorities and results.

SEC. 403. HAZARD COMMUNICATION RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT.

Section 403 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–25; 131 Stat. 109), as amended by section 1 of the further act, as added by adding at the end the following new subsection:

(‘‘(e) HURRICANE, CLIMATE, AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES.—As part of the program carried out under subsection (d), the Under Secretary shall carry out research and development activities to improve how the public receives, interprets, responds to, and values hurricane forecasts and warnings. In conducting such activities, the Under Secretary shall—
‘‘(1) conduct a comprehensive review of what is known about how the public receives, interprets, responds to, and makes decisions regarding hurricane forecasts and warnings;
‘‘(2) how such hurricane forecasts and warnings generated by decision tools and products are used by emergency managers, governments, and other users to benefit the public and vulnerable groups;
‘‘(3) how past experiences with hurricanes impacts decision making;
‘‘(4) how such hurricane forecasts and warnings vary across demographic groups, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable populations;
‘‘(5) language barriers; and
‘‘(6) conduct risk assessments for pre-, during-, and post-storm periods in regions and communities with significant elderly populations, including retirement communities.

SEC. 404. NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS IMPROVEMENT.

(a) IMPROVEMENT OF NWS INSTANT MESSAGING SERVICES.—The Director of the National Weather Service shall improve the instant messaging service commonly referred to as ‘‘NWSChat’’.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The communications solution implemented under this section shall—

(1) be hosted on the public cloud;

(2) satisfy requirements set forth by the Director to ensure such solution—

(A) is easy to use for the majority of users; and

(3) is similar to systems already in commercial use.

(c) FUNDING.—From amounts made available in the Operations, Research, and Facilities, the Director of the National Weather Service shall allocate up to $3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2027 to carry out this section.

SEC. 405. NOAA WEATHER RADIO MODERNIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall—

(1) enhance the ability to amplify Non-Weather Radio Emergency Messages via NOAA Weather Radio as necessary; and

(2) acquire additional transmitters as required to expand coverage to rural and underserved communities, such as the National Park System, and National Recreation Areas.

(b) MODERNIZATION INITIATIVE.—To the maximum extent practical, expand coverage of the NOAA Weather Radio to ensure its capabilities and coverage remain valuable to the public. In carrying out this section, the Under Secretary shall—

(1) upgrade telecommunications infrastructure of NOAA Weather Radio to accelerate the transition of broadcasts to internet protocol-based communications over non-copper media;

(2) accelerate software upgrades to the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System for all relevant locations, to implement partial county notifications and alerts;

(3) consult with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, to improve access, and usability of NOAA Weather Radio data and feeds;

(4) develop options, including satellite backup capability and commercial provider partnerships, for NOAA Weather Radio continuity in the event of Weather Forecast Office outages;

(5) research and develop alternative options, including microwave capabilities, to transmit NOAA Weather Radio signals to transmitters that are remote or do not have internet protocol capability; and

(6) transition critical applications to the Integrated Dissemination Program, or the relevant program successors.

(c) PRIORITIZATION.—In carrying out subsection (b), the Under Secretary shall prioritize practices, capabilities, and technologies recommended in accordance with the assessment required under subsection (d) to maximize accessibility, particularly in remote and underserved areas of the United States.

(d) ASSESSMENT FOR MANAGEMENT AND DISSEMINATION.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary shall complete an assessment of the selection, coordination, and development of products and services needed to implement the provisions of this section.
access to NOAA Weather Radio. In conducting such assessment, the Under Secretary shall take into consideration and provide recommendations regarding the following:

(1) The need for continuous, adequate, and operational real-time broadcasts of the NOAA Weather Radio in both urban and rural areas.

(2) Solicited inputs from relevant stakeholders on the compatibility of NOAA Weather Radio with third party platforms that provide online services, such as websites and mobile device applications, or deliver NOAA Weather Radio access.

(3) Current management systems that promote consistent, efficient, and compatible access to NOAA Weather Radio.

(4) The ability of NOAA to aggregate real time broadcast feeds at one or more central locations.

(5) Effective interagency coordination.

(6) The potential effects of an electromagnetic pulse or geomagnetic disturbance on NOAA Weather Radio.

(7) Any other function the Under Secretary determines necessary.

SEC. 406. POST-STORM SURVEYS AND ASSESSMENTS.

(a) In general.—The Under Secretary shall conduct one or more post-storm surveys and assessments following every hazardous weather or water event determined by the Under Secretary to be of sufficient societal importance to warrant a post-event survey and assessment.

(b) Coordination.—The Under Secretary shall (i) Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments, private entities, and relevant institutions of higher education (or a consortia thereof) conducting post-storm surveys and assessments under this section to optimize data collection, sharing, integration, archiving, and access, as appropriate for research needs.

(c) Data availability.—The Under Secretary shall make the appropriate data obtained from each post-storm survey and assessment conducted under this section available to the public as soon as practicable after conducting each such survey and assessment.

(d) Improvement.—In carrying out this section, the Under Secretary shall—

(1) examine the role of uncrewed aerial and marine systems in data collection during post-storm surveys and assessments conducted under this section;

(2) identify gaps in post-storm surveys and assessments conducted under this section; and

(3) to the maximum extent practicable, increase the number of post-storm community impact studies, particularly among underserved, observed, underserved, or highly vulnerable populations, including—

(A) surveying individual responses;

(B) conducting review of the accuracy of prior risk evaluations; and

(C) determining the efficacy of prior mitigation activity.

(e) gathering survivability statistics; and

(f) as appropriate, integrate community-based, social, behavioral, risk, communication, and other information into existing post-storm surveys and assessments, including relating to efficacy of forecast and warning information, barriers to access, and measures taken.

(g) Support for employees.—The Under Secretary shall provide training, resources, and access to professional counseling to support the mental health and well-being of employees conducting post-storm surveys and assessments under this section.

(h) Exemption.—Subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, shall not apply to the collection of information during the conduct of a survey or assessment authorized under subsection (a).

SEC. 407. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OF DISSEMINATION FOR HAZARDOUS WEATHER OR WATER EVENTS.

(a) In general.—In Georgia or waters than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report that examines the information dissemination practices of the National Weather Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, specifically regarding the system for timely public notification via alerts and updates regarding hazardous weather or water events.

(b) Elements.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An analysis of the information technology infrastructure of the National Weather Service, including software and hardware capabilities and limitations, including an examination of server and data storage methods, broadband, data management, and data sharing.

(2) An identification of secondary and tertiary fail-safes for the public distribution to the public of notifications via alerts and updates regarding hazardous weather or water events.

(3) A process analysis to determine the source and extent to which public notifications via alerts and updates regarding hazardous weather or water events have been delayed and an identification of possible improvements or corrective measures to address latency in the notification process.

(4) An assessment of collaboration with other Federal offices, States, or private entities could reduce delays in notifications to the public.

(5) A description of actions being undertaken to better identify critical steps in public notification via alerts and updates for hazardous weather or water events that may be vulnerable to disruption or failure in the event of communication, technologic, or computational failure.

(6) The geographical differences in availability and effectiveness of rural systems, including an estimated number of rural counties impacted by unreliable or unavailable accurate and reliable data systems and barriers to obtain or upgrade such systems.

SEC. 408. DATA COLLECTION MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION.

(a) Data collection.—The Under Secretary may collect social, behavioral, and economic data, including Federal, communication and related public response to hazardous weather or water events. Where appropriate, the Under Secretary shall encourage the use of secondary data, purchase data, or partner with the private sector.

(b) Data management.—The Under Secretary shall create a central repository system for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for social, behavioral, and economic data related to the community impacts of hazardous weather or water events, including data developed or received pursuant to this title.

(c) Protection of data.—The Under Secretary shall ensure that all data collected and managed by the Administration is done so in accordance with all legal, regulatory, and contractual obligations and in accordance with chapter 31 of title 44, United States Code, and the Federal Evidence-Based Policy Making Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–186).

(d) Digital watermarking.—The Under Secretary shall develop methods to reduce the likelihood of unauthorized tampering with online public notifications of hazardous weather or water events, such as developing digital watermarks.

(e) Policies and procedures.—The Under Secretary shall establish policies and procedures for the collection, archiving, and stewardship of data on community response, including the response of affected or vulnerable populations, to hazardous weather or water events.

TITLE V—IMPROVING WEATHER INFORMATION FOR AGRICULTURE AND WATER MANAGEMENT

SEC. 501. WEATHER AND CLIMATE INFORMATION FOR AGRICULTURE AND WATER MANAGEMENT.

Section 1762 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (15 U.S.C. 8521) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

"(b) Subseasonal to seasonal forecasting pilot projects.—

"(1) Establishment.—The Under Secretary shall establish no fewer than two pilot projects, in accordance with paragraph (2), within the U.S. Weather Research Program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to support improved subseasonal to seasonal precipitation forecasts for the following:

"(A) Water management in the western United States.

"(B) Agriculture in the central United States.

"(2) Objectives.—In carrying out this subsection, the Under Secretary shall ensure the following:

"(A) A pilot project under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) addresses key science challenges to improving forecasts and developing related products for water management in the western United States, including the following:

"(i) Improving operational model resolution, both horizontal and vertical, to resolve issues associated with mountainous terrain, such as intensity of precipitation and relative fraction of rain versus snow precipitation.

"(ii) Improving fidelity in the operational modeling of the atmospheric boundary layer in mountainous regions.

"(iii) Resolving challenges in predicting water vapor atmospheric moisture tracks, including periods of blocked versus unblocked flow over the eastern North Pacific Ocean and western United States.

"(iv) Utilizing output from the Atmospheric Rivers Forecast Improvement Program as authorized in section 204 of the Weather Act Reauthorization Act of 2023 to produce operational tools and services.

"(v) Improving the quality and temporal and spatial resolution of observations and accurate operational modeling of air-sea interactions, and the influence of oceans on subseasonal and seasonal forecasting.

"(B) A pilot project under subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) addresses key science challenges to improving forecasts and developing related products for agriculture in the central United States, including the following:

"(i) Improving the quality and temporal and spatial resolution of observations and accurate operational modeling of the land surface and hydrologic cycle, including soil moisture and flash drought processes.

"(ii) Improving fidelity in the operational modeling of warm season precipitation processes.

"(iii) Understanding and predicting large-scale upper-level dynamical flow anomalies that occur in spring and summer."
“(3) ACTIVITIES.—A pilot project under this subsection shall include activities that carry out the following:

(A) Best implement recommendations of the National Support Weather Service’s 2020 Report, entitled ‘Subseasonal and Seasonal Forecasting Innovation: Plans for the Twenty-First Century’;

(B) Achieve measurable objectives for operational forecast improvement.

(C) Engage with, and leverage the resources of, institutions of higher education (as such term is defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)), or a consortium thereof, and entities within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in existence as of the date of the enactment of this subsection, including Regional Climate Centers and the National Centers for Environmental Information.

(D) Are carried out in coordination with the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and the Directorate of the National Weather Service.

(4) SUNSET.—The authority under this subsection shall terminate on the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this section.

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

SEC. 502. NATIONAL INTEGRATED DROUGHT INFORMATION SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3 of the National Integrated Drought Information System Act of 2006 (15 U.S.C. 331d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ‘‘and’’ and

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period

(2) in subsection (c)—

(C) in paragraph (6)—

(i) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

‘‘(4) in partnership with the National Mesonet Program (in this section referred to as the ‘Program’), the Under Secretary shall establish terms to ensure that such individuals and entities to operate, manage, and maintain the National Mesonet Program (in this section referred to as the ‘Program’), in safe, efficient, and orderly manners.

(ii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph—

‘‘(5) The Program shall carry out the following activities:

(i) Improve environmental observations used by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Weather Service to support baseline forecasts, including warnings that protect the Nation’s citizens, businesses, military, and government agencies, and enable such individuals and entities to operate in safe, effective, and efficient manners.

(ii) When demonstrably cost effective and meeting or exceeding agency data quality standards, leverage existing networks of environmental monitoring stations in underrepresented or remote areas of the country where it is financially feasible for one entity to operate such stations without such assistance.

(iii) In providing financial assistance under this subsection, the Under Secretary may provide technical assistance, project implementation support, or a consortia thereof, and academic entities seeking financial assistance under this subsection shall enter into an agreement with the Under Secretary to provide data to the Program, subject to verification by the Program of the relative operational value and evaluation of the cost of such data, for use in weather prediction, severe weather warnings, and emergency response.

(iv) The Program shall carry out the following activities:

(A) Best implement recommendations of the National Support Weather Service’s 2020 Report, entitled ‘Subseasonal and Seasonal Forecasting Innovation: Plans for the Twenty-First Century’;

(B) Achieve measurable objectives for operational forecast improvement.

(C) Engage with, and leverage the resources of, institutions of higher education (as such term is defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)), or a consortium thereof, and entities within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in existence as of the date of the enactment of this subsection, including Regional Climate Centers and the National Centers for Environmental Information.

(D) Are carried out in coordination with the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and the Directorate of the National Weather Service.

(E) SUNSET.—The authority under this subsection shall terminate on the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this section.

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

SEC. 503. NATIONAL MESONET PROGRAM.

(a) PROGRAM.—The Under Secretary shall maintain the National Mesonet Program (in this section referred to as the ‘Program’).

(b) ELEMENTS.—The Program shall carry out the following activities:

(1) Improve environmental observations used by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Weather Service to support baseline forecasts, including warnings that protect the Nation’s citizens, businesses, military, and government agencies, and enable such individuals and entities to operate in safe, effective, and efficient manners.

(2) When demonstrably cost effective and meeting or exceeding agency data quality standards, leverage existing networks of environmental monitoring stations, in situ sensor networks and satellite networks of environmental monitoring stations in underrepresented or remote areas of the country where it is financially feasible for one entity to operate such stations without such assistance.

(3) TERMS.—In providing financial assistance under this subsection, the Under Secretary shall establish terms to ensure that each State, Tribal, private, or academic entity that receives financial assistance under this subsection shall enter into an agreement with the Under Secretary to provide data to the Program, subject to verification by the Program of the relative operational value and evaluation of the cost of such data, for use in weather prediction, severe weather warnings, and emergency response.

(4) Assistance and Other Support.—The Under Secretary may provide technical assistance, project implementation support, or a consortia thereof, and academic entities seeking financial assistance under this subsection shall enter into an agreement with the Under Secretary to provide data to the Program, subject to verification by the Program of the relative operational value and evaluation of the cost of such data, for use in weather prediction, severe weather warnings, and emergency response.

(i) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph—

(1) Improve environmental observations used by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Weather Service to support baseline forecasts, including warnings that protect the Nation’s citizens, businesses, military, and government agencies, and enable such individuals and entities to operate in safe, effective, and efficient manners.

(ii) When demonstrably cost effective and meeting or exceeding agency data quality standards, leverage existing networks of environmental monitoring stations, in situ sensor networks and satellite networks of environmental monitoring stations, situ sensor networks and satellite constellations to participate in the Program.

(iii) Use incremental boundary-layer data to improve numerical weather prediction performance, including regarding seasonal to seasonal timescales.

(iv) Provide technical and administrative infrastructure needed to facilitate rapid integration and sustained use of new and emerging networks of environmental monitoring stations.

(v) In support of the Program, the Under Secretary shall prioritize providing assistance under paragraph (1) to at least one entity in an underrepresented or remote area.

(vi) by adding at the end the following new paragraph—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall ensure the Program has an active advisory
committee of subject matter experts to make recommendations to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on the identification, implementation, procurement, and tracking of data funded to supplement the Program and, recommend improvements, expansions, and acquisitions of available data. The Under Secretary may designate the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s advisory committees, subcommittees, or working group, including, if appropriate, the Science Advisory Board of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to carry out this subsection.

(2) ACADEmIC EXPERTISE.—The advisory committee established in subsection (1), in consultation with the Program, shall include expertise from one or more institutions of higher education (as such term is defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) to assist the advisory committee to identify, evaluate, and recommend partnership relationships, regional or subregional relevants, and collaborative methodologies that would expand the number of participants and volume of data in the Program.

(e) REGULAR REPORTING.—The Under Secretary shall, on a regular basis, provide briefings, not less than twice annually, to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on all Program activities. Such briefings shall include information relating to the following:

(1) Efforts to implement the activities described in subsection (b).

(2) Any financial or technical assistance provided pursuant to subsection (c).

(3) Efforts to address recommendations received from the advisory committee under subsection (d).

(4) The potential need and associated benefits of a coastal and ocean mesonet, or other water observations and Research Act of 2020 (42 U.S.C. 13871) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A)—

(i) in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting "as a component of the National Centers for Environmental Prediction after "center";"

(ii) in clause (i), by striking "and" after the semicolon;

(iii) in clause (ii), by striking the period and inserting "and"; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following new clause:

"(iii) to provide service backup capabilities and additional mission support services for River Forecast Centers;"; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(P) Serving as the primary center for collaboration and coordination of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s water resources and operational act (1), and existing Federal centers and networks, including the Department of Agriculture, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, the United States Geological Survey, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.");

(2) by striking subsection (b) and redesignating subsections (c) through (e) as subsections (b) through (d), respectively; and

(3) by amending subsection (c), as so redesignated, to read as follows:

"(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated $46,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028 to carry out this section.".

SEC. 506. SATELLITE TRANSFERS REPORT.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce shall submit to the Committee on Science and Transportation of the Senate on the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report describing the Department of Commerce’s authority to sell, gift, license, or otherwise transfer any portion of the weather satellite systems operated by the Department of Commerce to any other Federal department or agency. The report shall also include the following:

(1) A description of the process for decommissioning a Department of Commerce operational weather satellite, any existing agreements related to transfers of weather satellites, whether decommissioned or not, and any reimbursable agreements related to the transfer of physical property or the operation of Department of Commerce weather satellites on behalf of any other Federal department or agency.

(2) A summary of any Department of Commerce activities with respect to the decommissioning of any existing or future weather satellite systems to any other Federal department or agency.

SEC. 507. PRECIPITATION FORECAST IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VI of the Weather Research and Forecast Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8501 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesigning section 603 as section 604; and

(b) by inserting after section 602 the following new section:

"SEC. 603. PRECIPITATION FORECAST IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in collaboration with the United States weather industry, other Federal agencies, and academic institutions, shall maintain a program to improve precipitation forecasting across timescales.

(b) GOAL.—The goal of the program under subsection (a) shall be to accurately, reliably, and timely precipitation forecasts across timescales through the development and application of a fully coupled Earth system prediction model in order to reduce the loss of life or property related to precipitation extremes, with a focus on the following:

"(1) Improving the understanding and prediction of precipitation extremes from a variety of weather systems, including atmospheric rivers.

"(2) Evaluating and incorporating, as appropriate, innovative observations into operational monitoring and forecast systems to improve precipitation forecasts.

"(3) Improving Earth system model predictions of precipitation extremes from atmospheric rivers, tropical cyclones, summer thunderstorms, winter storms, and other phenomena, in coordination with relevant programs.

"(4) Enhancing research transition to operations through testbeds, including the evaluation of physical and social science, technology, and other research to develop products and services for implementation and use by relevant stakeholders.

"(5) Incorporating social, behavioral, and economic sciences best practices into operational watch and warning products that help drive public safety and damage mitigation decisions in coordination with the programs established in accordance with this Act.

"(6) Ensuring data and metadata management processes are in place to support data access and archive for long term research and operational applications.

(c) ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall support research-to-operations work, including relating to the following:

"(1) Implementing key strategies and following priorities and objectives outlined by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s ‘Precipitation Prediction Grand Challenge Strategy’.

"(2) Improving the physical science, operational modeling and tools, and technology related to better forecasting precipitation extremes across timescales.

"(3) Improving the social, behavioral, risk, communication, and technology related to vulnerabilities, risk communication, and delivery of information critical for reducing the loss of life or property related to extreme precipitation.

"(4) Conducting the research necessary to develop and deploy probabilistic weather forecast guidance technology relating to precipitation extremes in real-time.

"(5) Enhancing the operational capacity of the National Weather Service to deliver decisions and support for increasing precipitation extremes.

"(6) Expanding computational resources to improve precipitation modeling.

"(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s budget shall not be less frequently than annually, submit to Congress a proposed budget

"(2) by inserting after section 602 the following new section:

"SEC. 603. PRECIPITATION FORECAST IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in collaboration with the United States weather industry, other Federal agencies, and academic institutions, shall maintain a program to improve precipitation forecasting across timescales.

(b) GOAL.—The goal of the program under subsection (a) shall be to accurately, reliably, and timely precipitation forecasts across timescales through the development and application of a fully coupled Earth system prediction model in order to reduce the loss of life or property related to precipitation extremes, with a focus on the following:

"(1) Improving the understanding and prediction of precipitation extremes from a variety of weather systems, including atmospheric rivers.

"(2) Evaluating and incorporating, as appropriate, innovative observations into operational monitoring and forecast systems to improve precipitation forecasts.

"(3) Improving Earth system model predictions of precipitation extremes from atmospheric rivers, tropical cyclones, summer thunderstorms, winter storms, and other phenomena, in coordination with relevant programs.

"(4) Enhancing research transition to operations through testbeds, including the evaluation of physical and social science, technology, and other research to develop products and services for implementation and use by relevant stakeholders.

"(5) Incorporating social, behavioral, and economic sciences best practices into operational watch and warning products that help drive public safety and damage mitigation decisions in coordination with the programs established in accordance with this Act.

"(6) Ensuring data and metadata management processes are in place to support data access and archive for long term research and operational applications.

"(c) ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall support research-to-operations work, including relating to the following:

"(1) Implementing key strategies and following priorities and objectives outlined by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s ‘Precipitation Prediction Grand Challenge Strategy’.

"(2) Improving the physical science, operational modeling and tools, and technology related to better forecasting precipitation extremes across timescales.

"(3) Improving the social, behavioral, risk, communication, and technology related to vulnerabilities, risk communication, and delivery of information critical for reducing the loss of life or property related to extreme precipitation.

"(4) Conducting the research necessary to develop and deploy probabilistic weather forecast guidance technology relating to precipitation extremes in real-time.

"(5) Enhancing the operational capacity of the National Weather Service to deliver decisions and support for increasing precipitation extremes.

"(6) Expanding computational resources to improve precipitation modeling.

"(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s budget shall not be less frequently than annually, submit to Congress a proposed budget
corresponding with carrying out this section.'".

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 is amended by striking the item relating to section 603 and inserting the following new items:

"Sec. 605. Precipitation forecast improvement program.

"Sec. 604. Definitions."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma, Mr. LUCAS and the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania, Ms. LEE each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 6093, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6093, the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Reauthorization Act of 2023, simply known as the Weather Act Reauthorization Act.

In 2017, I was proud to lead the first comprehensive weather authorization in 25 years that resulted in the original Weather Act being signed into law. The bill I have introduced today, the Weather Act Reauthorization Act, builds on previous accomplishments and makes further advancements in weather forecasting and prediction of high-impact weather events. It will undoubtedly save the lives of citizens across our country.

In the simplest of terms: the Weather Act Reauthorization Act gives Americans better forecasts.

What that means and how it is accomplished through this bill is so much more than what meets the eye.

This bill improves the hurricane forecast accuracy and the tornado warning lead time that started under the Weather Act through the continuation of successful research programs. It also supports cutting-edge forecasting by establishing new research and development programs related to the next generation of radar, atmospheric rivers, coastal flooding, storm surges, aviation weather, and seasonal research and forecasting.

The Weather Act Reauthorization Act increases NOAA’s access to critical forecasting data by expanding its authority to contract with the private sector to acquire commercial weather data and to use the Commercial Data Program to lead this work. Again, building on what we started in 2017, NOAA will have more flexibility to purchase high-quality data from trusted and verified industry partners instead of building out expensive observation systems and satellite networks.

The Weather Act Reauthorization Act also ensures all this research and progress doesn’t result in overly complex products the public can’t understand. This bill strengthens the emergency preparedness of every community by improving the communication of weather and water events to the public. This ensures all Americans understand watches, warnings, emergency information, and exactly how to respond.

This bill also provides farmers and ranchers with better tools and services for agriculture and water management, including improvements in seasonal and seasonal research and forecasting. As perhaps the most weather-dependent sector in our country, the agriculture industry needs accurate forecasts for efficient crop planting and timely harvest cycles because at the end of the day, this is what feeds and clothes our country.

Finally, the Weather Act Reauthorization Act authorizes the continuation of key public tools, including the National Integrated Drought Information System, the National Mesonet Program, and the National Coordinated Soil Moisture Monitoring Network. NOAA is, after all, a taxpayer-funded agency; therefore, it should continue to invest in these tools that benefit the taxpayers.

It is clear this bill is not a one-trick pony and will accomplish many things, so it should come as no surprise to hear the widespread support we have received. Mr. Speaker, 60 Republican and Democrat cosponsors and 29 sponsors on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my partner in this effort, Ranking Member ZOE LORgren, who has been essential in continuing the bipartisan successes of the Science Committee in this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6093.

Sadly, this year is expected to set yet another record for global temperatures according to the World Meteorological Organization.

Last year, the U.S. experienced 28 separate extreme weather and climate disasters costing more than $1 billion each, surpassing the previous record set in 2020.

Climate change is causing an increase in the frequency and intensity of severe storms. Just 2 weeks ago, Pittsburgh was inundated by a severe storm that flooded many parts of the area. Daily rainfall records for the Pittsburgh area were shattered, and there were numerous road closures and water rescues across Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, which I represent.

The science is clear. The need to act cannot be ignored. As we adapt to this unfortunate new norm of severe weather, our forecasting capabilities and preparedness must substantially improve.

Specifically, this bill modifies and extends key weather research and forecasting programs for precipitation, atmospheric rivers, and coastal flooding, including storm surges. Additionally, the bill authorizes NOAA to expand its partnership with private industry in gathering more data while solidifying its own role as the driver of the enterprise and leverages the use of artificial intelligence to meet its mission.

Necessary improvements in data assimilation will be made so that our weather models continue to be the gold standard. While the improvement of all severe weather-related research programs is necessary, the communication of the information is also a key element to an effective forecast.

Under-observed, underserved, and highly vulnerable communities are disproportionately affected by severe weather and climate events. To better serve these communities, we must determine how to best communicate important weather and climate information. Understanding how the public receives, interprets, responds to, and values severe weather information is necessary to produce better forecasts and warnings. This bill aims to accomplish this by expanding NOAA’s social, behavioral, and economic science research program to simplify and improve the communication of hazardous weather.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member LORgren for their diligent work and cooperation.
Ms. BICE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Weather Act Reauthorization Act.

Over the weekend, we saw the terrible effects that weather can have on our communities and States. Throughout the heartland, there were more than 50 confirmed tornadoes, which left many injured and, sadly, took the lives of four Oklahomans. This is why the Weather Act Reauthorization Act is so important.

We must ensure that Americans have the resources they need when critical weather events strike. This includes having accurate weather forecasting and other necessary resources to protect life and property.

I was pleased to see that my legislation, the NOAA Weather Radio Modernization Act, the National Mesonet Authorization Act, and the WING Act were included in this package.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio Modernization Act will help save lives by updating our emergency alert system. It paves the way for future development and provides fail-safe options so that the national weather radio is never down for an extended period and that outages will be less frequent.

Over the weekend, there were issues with receiving and transmitting alerts from the national weather radio. My bill will help address the aging infrastructure in these systems and prevent outages like these from occurring in the future.

The National Mesonet Authorization Act will work to increase the overall coverage and accuracy of the National Mesonet Program, which provides reliable, real-time data and observations for weather prediction, severe weather warnings, and emergency response.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman Lucas for his leadership on this legislation and for his focus on protecting Oklahomans. I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DelBene).

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the reauthorization of the Weather Act. Since its passage in 2017, the Weather Act has been the driving force behind our precise hurricane and tornado forecasting.

This reauthorization will build upon that research by updating existing projects and adding new project programs focused on coastal flooding, storm surge, and improving weather radar. I am also proud that included in this package is my bipartisan bill, the Fixing Gaps in Hurricane Preparedness Act, co-led by my colleague from Florida, Congressman Daniel Webster.

Congressman Webster and I know that we need to do more to keep our people and most at-risk communities safe during extreme weather events that put lives and infrastructure at risk. However, we are not alone. We face a problem that we don’t have enough water. It is that we don’t retain enough of it. We don’t have enough storage, we don’t have enough capacity, and we don’t plan appropriately based on the data available.

The L.A. Times recently reported that nearly 95 percent of the water from the atmospheric rivers this last year flowed back into the ocean. That is trillions of gallons of free water that could have been stored for dry seasons. It is clear that Sacramento isn’t going to build more storage anytime soon, so we need to be investing in infrastructure we already have and improve the efficiency of our reservoirs.

That is why my bill increases research into what is called Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations. If we can give water managers a heads-up that these storms are coming, they can prevent it or capture the water, helping us fight off droughts when the dry seasons come.

We got lucky this last time; we got so much water that even California’s terrible water policies weren’t enough to keep us in a prolonged drought. We can’t keep relying on luck, and we can’t wait around for Sacramento to get its act together. If there was a zombie apocalypse in Sacramento, Mr. Speaker, even the zombies would die because there aren’t enough brains in our State’s capital right now when it comes to water policies, and this goes a long way in helping them. We need improved prediction of atmospheric rivers moving forward, and that is what this bill does.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

Ms. DelBene. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Weather Act Reauthorization Act.

For the past 3 years, the National Landslide Preparedness Act has been providing communities with the tools and resources that they need to reduce the potential devastation of landslides.

Washington State knows this pain too well. A decade ago, the single deadliest landslide in U.S. history destroyed a community between Oso and Darrington and took 43 lives in mere minutes. I knew in the aftermath of that that we have to do more to prevent future natural disasters from becoming national tragedies.

The landslide law I championed is doing exactly that. The programs established by the law are increasing preparedness and improving mapping data so communities understand where vulnerabilities exist. We cannot let these programs expire when they are just getting up and running.
The landslide law passed this Chamber without opposition in 2020 because every State in this country has some form of landslide risk. Each year, landslides kill between 20 and 50 people and cause over $3 billion in damage.

With a changing climate and more unpredictable conditions, landslides risks are only going to grow more frequent, more dangerous, and more costly. I urge my colleagues to support the Weather Act Reauthorization Act, which includes my legislation that extends the Office of Geology and Landslides.

I also thank Congresswomen SCHERRER and GLEUSEN KAMP PERRY along with Senators CANTWELL and MUKEW on their support in reauthorizing the landslide law.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BAIRD) to speak on the bill.

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding and for all the work that we did in the committee to include the Precipitation Forecasting for Agriculture Act in the Weather Act’s reauthorization.

The Precipitation Forecasting for Agriculture Act is a simple piece of legislation. This bill simply directs the United States Weather Service Research Program to study seasonal precipitation forecasts for agriculture.

Hoosier farmers rely on accurate forecasts to determine whether or not their farms will have rain needed for their crops. This bill supports the basic need through a collaboration between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and our universities to create measurable objectives in forecasting improvements.

This study will address the scientific challenges to improving precipitation forecasting by enacting the National Weather Service’s recommendations for subseasonal and seasonal forecasting innovation in the 21st century. These recommendations will enable the Indiana State Climate Office at Purdue University to produce operational models for land surfaces, soil moisture, and flash drought processes.

Our farmers need the most accurate data available to guarantee a successful harvest. That is why I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JACKSON).

Mr. JACKSON. Mr. Speaker, the week after I was elected to Congress, a group of meteorologists from my district got in touch with me, and they taught me something I didn’t know, which is that my district, which is the Charlotte area, is in the largest weather radar gap in the country.

Our nearest NEXRAD radar is roughly 100 miles away, which makes it very difficult to have accurate forecasts for especially high-altitude storms and fast-moving tornadoes. So at the request of these meteorologists, our office got to work on a piece of legislation to address this. I am very grateful that it has been included in this bill. It would address this by asking NOAA to have a plan to implement the next generation of weather radar and specifically to prioritize districts, like mine, that currently exist in these blind spots, in the Nation’s weather radar gaps.

This legislation isn’t going to just help solve this problem, but it is going to identify a number of these spots across the country and prioritize those to make sure that we have accurate forecasts across the country.

I am very proud of this inclusion, and I ask all of my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. McCORMICK) to speak on the bill.

Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6093, the Weather Act Reauthorization Act of 2023. The Weather Act Reauthorization Act is sensible legislation that will protect the most vulnerable and America’s National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration forecasting capabilities and elevate the U.S. Weather Enterprise, greatly benefiting communities across the country.

As a former helicopter pilot in the Marine Corps, I know firsthand the consideration you must give to the weather before taking to the skies. Fog, wind, rain, thunderstorms, ice, and snow are all routine weather occurrences that can impact commercial and recreational flights, as well as ground crew operations and maintenance tasks.

Additionally, I think every Member of Congress here and many of our constituents have experienced some type of flight delay or turbulence in the last 6 months, as weather volatility is a consistent threat to travel plans.

That is why I introduced H.R. 3915, the Aviation Weather Improvement Act, which has been included in this larger legislative package.

This bill will improve all aspects of aviation weather forecasting and prediction by authorizing the National Weather Service to acquire readily available commercial data and partner with the U.S. weather enterprise to deploy critical atmospheric sensors.

In addition to authorizing this public-private partnership on weather data, H.R. 3915 also has an explicit focus on improving turbulence forecasting and modeling.

The Aviation Weather Improvement Act codifies the inclusion of turbulence events or phenomena in the operation forecasting winds, turbulence, and the Aviation Weather Center. This will ensure that recreational and commercial pilots have a definitive and accurate source for turbulence information that can inform route-specific flight planning.

Put simply, this bill will lower the over 50,000 accidents per year that encounter severe turbulence, as well as make a dent in the 30 percent of annual delays caused by weather.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman LUCAS, Ranking Member LOFgren, and my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee for supporting the efforts of all the Members who contributed to this important Weather Act Reauthorization Act.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. KEAN) to speak on the bill.

Mr. KEAN of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6093, the Weather Act Reauthorization Act, introduced by Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member LOFgren. I thank the chairman and ranking member for including my bill, H.R. 4969, the Protecting Coasts and Cities from Severe Weather Act, in the overall package.

With the Weather Act Reauthorization Act and my legislation, we are modernizing critical research programs to address weather observation gaps in the United States, which will improve our ability to protect lives and property from disasters and allow NOAA to continue developing cutting-edge research and development.

As we have seen from the first comprehensive Weather Act, investing in advanced weather research and forecasting technologies is crucial for mitigating the risks posed by extreme weather events.

By expanding NOAA’s authority to acquire commercial weather data, we are not only improving the efficiency of weather data acquisition but also fostering innovation in the private sector.

These measures underscore our commitment to protecting the safety and well-being of the people of New Jersey, ensuring that they have the information and resources needed to withstand and recover from weather-related disasters.

This bill establishes new programs to improve forecasting models for weather phenomena like atmospheric rivers and coastal flooding, directly benefitting the residents of New Jersey’s coastal areas. This will lead to more reliable forecasts and better emergency preparedness measures for the people back home in New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, the Weather Act Reauthorization Act is about empowering individuals and communities with the tools they need to mitigate the risks of severe weather events. I encourage my colleagues to support this impactful legislation.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. FEENSTRA) to speak on the bill.

Mr. FEENSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman LUCAS for yielding.

This past Friday, horrible tornadoes struck parts of my district in south-west Iowa. Minden, Iowa, a community of approximately 600, felt the worst of these storms. Roughly 180 homes and businesses were either devastated or destroyed, and a community member, sadly, passed away.
Even in our grief, Iowans are resilient. These tornadoes are a tragic reminder that we need to use every tool available to keep our communities safe.

I am glad that two of my bills are part of this package. My bills help ensure that our weather radar can better detect serious storms, especially low-lying tornadoes, and the National Weather Service can disseminate information more quickly.

These reforms will save lives, keep Iowans informed and deliver accurate and timely updates during storms. When it comes to severe weather, seconds can make the difference between life and death. That is why I urge my colleagues to support this legislation so that we can protect our families and our communities.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oklahoma has 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. OBERNOLTE) to speak on the bill.

Mr. OBERNOLTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the reauthorization of the Weather Act.

This bill includes, in section 115, my legislation in the Weather Act which will be codified in the United States that will, absent reauthorization, expire at the end of this year.

It is a little-known fact that landslides cause over a billion dollars in property damage every year in the United States, as well as costing countless lives. This is particularly true in my district in southern California.

My district has experienced substantial wildfire damage in the last several years, and last August, we experienced the first tropical storm in 83 years in California. This resulted in the liquefaction of the soil beneath the burn scars in the San Bernardino Mountains. The resulting landslides erased an entire community. Houses were uprooted and displaced, and many residents were trapped and had to be lifted by helicopter to safety.

Mr. Speaker, the National Landslide Hazards Reduction Program is a critical tool in identifying hazards that exist with landslides and improving coordination with local emergency responders and agencies to make sure that those hazards are addressed.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman Lucas and my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology, and the Natural Resources Committees for including my legislation in the Weather Act Reauthorization Act, and I urge its adoption.

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the Democratic staff who were the driving force behind this bill: Kristi Parrott, Noah Hunt, and Dahlia Sokolov. I thank them for their work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 6093, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting the Weather Act Reauthorization Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6093, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. LUCAS. 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 found in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting the Weather Act Reauthorization Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE DATA SHARING ACT

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7032) to amend the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 to provide the Congressional Budget Office with necessary authorities to expedite the sharing of data from executive branch agencies, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7032
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 “Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act”.

SEC. 2. REQUESTS BY CBO OF INFORMATION FROM EXECUTIVE AGENCIES.

(a) In General.—In general, the Director of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 601(d)) is amended—

(1) by striking “The Director is authorized” and inserting “(1) The Director is authorized”;

(2) by striking “(other than material the disclosure of which would be a violation of law)” and inserting “(with or without written agreement) provided that the Director maintains the level of confidentiality required by law of the department, agency, establishment, or regulatory agency or commission from which it is obtained in accordance with section 208(e)”;

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Congressional Budget Office shall submit, to the chairs of the Committees on the Budget of the House of Representatives and the Senate, a report listing any request for information pursuant to a written agreement under section 201(d) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 601(d)), as amended by subsection (a) of this Act, made to any department, agency, or establishment of the executive branch of Government or any regulatory agency or commission of the Government and any challenges faced accessing information under such section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YAKYM) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

General Leave

Mr. YAKYM. 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 found in this bill.

As Congress, there is one thing we can all agree on: The current budgetary process is not working for the American people.

Congress has adopted a budget resolution by its statutorily required April 15 deadline only four times in the last four decades.

We have to find ways to address this brokenness so we can serve and steward the American people’s hard-earned tax dollars. A key part of this is process reform.

To me, process is a set of incentives that drive behavior, and we must change the current behavior that is failing this country especially our children and grandchildren.

Right now, the CBO encounters ongoing challenges in obtaining necessary data from executive branch agencies in a timely manner without restrictions. Congress’s recent interaction with the Social Security Administration reveal a systemic issue that extends beyond a single agency. The process of renewing
data agreements, which are vital for the CBO’s analyses, has been met with significant delays.

For example, a particular Social Security agreement with the Social Security Administration, critical for ongoing access to essential data, required over a year of negotiations before it was finalized and renewed. This consumed significant resources and time and deprived Congress of valuable information.

It is clear that the current framework is broken. There are many interpretations of various legislative mandates that bring inefficiencies and obstacles to data access. These challenges impact how quickly CBO can provide vital information to Congress and hinder Members’ ability to make fully informed decisions regarding the budgetary impact of proposed legislation.

Our bill will put an end to this troubling dynamic. The Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act would ensure the CBO has the tools it needs to deliver for us, their customer, timely and accurate information. It assists CBO in providing Congress with cost estimates for legislation and other fiscal reports that are critical for bringing accountability and transparency.

We streamline the CBO’s ability to obtain necessary data, enabling timely completion of its work. We also strengthen and clarify the CBO’s ability to request and receive data from executive branch agencies.

This doesn’t threaten the confidentiality of sensitive information. Rather, the CBO would be required to maintain confidentiality in a way similar to the executive branch agency that is providing it. This bill also ensures that future laws will not limit or modify this enhanced authority unless explicitly stated.

Finally, the bill provides increased transparency by requiring the CBO to report to the House and Senate Budget Committees on the requests it makes to agencies and any challenges encountered in retrieving necessary information.

I am proud to support this measure that will give CBO some of the tools it needs to provide timely, accurate, and complete information to Congress.

This legislation is smart, bipartisan, and a step in the right direction to improving the way that we budget Americans’ hard-earned tax dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today as the author of H.R. 7032, the Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act.

Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, almost to the day, Congress passed the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, which created the modern Congressional budget process as well as the Senate and House Budget Committees, and finally, the Congressional Budget Office.

With 270 dedicated, nonpartisan staff led by Director Dr. Phillip Swagel, CBO is critical to our work on behalf of the American people. CBO issues hundreds of cost estimates on proposed legislation annually, provides technical assistance in crafting policies, and keeps the public informed about the costs and impacts of legislation, as well as the overall fiscal health of our Nation.

The Budget Committee has direct oversight of CBO, and as the ranking member, helping CBO to do a better job of serving our institution is one of my top priorities.

Just a few months ago, the CBO director testified before our committee on the issues that CBO faces when requesting data from executive branch agencies.

In many cases, even when agencies want to cooperate with the CBO, they sometimes have concerns about their legal authority to provide data that creates delays.

In just one example that Dr. Swagel gave, CBO faced delays receiving data from FEMA regarding important analyses on flood insurance because FEMA was unsure of their legal authority to provide the data that was requested.

In cases like this, CBO is often forced to rely on less detailed, publicly available information in order to complete their reports on time.

My bill would address this by clarifying CBO’s authority to request data from executive agencies and granting CBO better and timely information so CBO can provide this analysis to Congress.

It accomplishes that while maintaining that CBO protects data to the same standards as the Federal agency providing it.

The security of sensitive data is important to agencies, CBO, and Congress. This bill ensures that CBO will continue to follow the procedures of the providing agency when it comes to protecting that data.

Mr. Speaker, as you heard just a few moments ago, this bill is a commonsense solution to an issue that has plagued CBO both through Republican and Democratic administrations, and I am proud that it had unanimous bipartisan support in the Budget Committee.

I thank the lead cosponsor of this legislation, Chairman JODeY ARRINGTON, who has been a crucial partner in advancing this bill.

I thank my friend as well from the South Bend, Indiana, area who has spoken so positively about this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago after the enactment of the Budget Act, Congress clearly still has work to do when it comes to improving our budget and appropriations processes, ensuring we deliver for the American people on time. This bill is the first step to improving our budget process.

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 7032, the Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act, led by Ranking Member BOYLE and Chairman ARRINGTON.

When we in Congress make decisions on legislation and programs, we often look to CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, for their estimates on how it will affect our economy and our Federal budget.

With Federal debt reaching new heights every hour, it is of the utmost importance that the fine people at CBO have access to all the data they need when doing their analysis.

All this bill does is to clarify and strengthen CBO’s access to executive branch data, and that is extremely important.

The vital data we need when making decisions regarding the future of our country is the data that we need in order to make these types of decisions, and that is why the CBO needs access to that data, and in turn, we get access to that data.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan piece of legislation.

Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the Congressional Budget Office on how this bill would clarify and strengthen the agency’s general authority for accessing data from executive branch agencies, as well as a letter from the Bipartisan Policy Center in support of this bill.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE, Washington, DC, April 12, 2024.

Hon. JODeY ARRINGTON, Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRENDA F. BOYLE, Ranking Member, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Re H.R. 7032, Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ARRINGTON AND RANKING MEMBER BOYLE: You have asked how enactment of H.R. 7032, the Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act, would improve CBO’s access to data. The bill would amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to clarify and strengthen the agency’s general authority for accessing data from executive branch agencies.

The Congressional Budget Act provides CBO with general authority to access data from a variety of sources. CBO works collaboratively with the executive branch to obtain data through formal and informal means. CBO also accesses data by using specific authority and by collaborating with other agencies.

CBO currently has more than 20 active data agreements with federal agencies. However, the shifting legal and regulatory frameworks at federal agencies can delay,
weaken, or block access to information. The time necessary to negotiate and renew agreements can be unpredictable and is widely variable, taking from a couple of weeks to more than a year.

H.R. 7032 would amend section 201(d) of the Congressional Budget Act, which governs CBO's access to executive branch data, by striking a statutory balance that governs CBO's access to certain data. It also hampers access to data by requiring CBO to enter into additional discussions with agencies, thus impairing the timeliness of CBO's work.

Enacting the bill would remove the caveat and, instead, provide CBO access to executive branch data unless access is specifically disallowed by a future law. H.R. 7032 also includes a reference to section 203(e) of the Congressional Budget Act to highlight CBO's obligation to protect the restricted information it receives.

Better and more timely access to data enhances the precision of CBO's work, and it gives the Congress better—and more timely—information to make informed decisions on behalf of the people who sent us here.

I urge all of my colleagues to support the CBO Data Sharing Act, and I once again thank Director Swagel and all the dedicated staff at CBO for their hard work.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I am ready to close, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I ask to include in the RECORD letters in statement of support from various organizations and individuals as part of H.R. 7032.

These include from the Congressional Budget Office, several former directors of the Congressional Budget Office, including: Dan Crippen, Doug Elmendorf, and Doug Holtz-Eakin; Sandy Davis who served as the Congressional Budget Office's Associate Director for Legislative Affairs from 2003-2015, and the Economic Policy Innovation Center. I will include the Bipartisan Policy Center, the Cato Institute, the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, and the National Taxpayers Union Foundation.

I applaud the House Budget Committee for its leadership, and I am happy to access data from federal agencies. I urge the House to pass the bill in time for the Senate to act expeditiously as well.

Having served as Director, I can report first-hand that agencies collect data valuable to CBO analysis of legislation and important issues to the Congress. Unfortunately, many congressional agencies are reluctant to share the data for any number of reasons, including: privacy; enabling statutes; and, the inherent power of “owning” the data (often unspoken).

The bill the House plans to consider will help Congress and agencies to overcome any legislative restrictions that might impose concern about the legality of transferring data. Other concerns can be mitigated using an MOU.

Privacy has often been the reason given for not sharing data. Various de-identification techniques can protect privacy. I have often told that I could identify Bill Gates tax return without any identifying information . . . of course, with more taxpayers at his level, it would be more difficult now. Nonetheless, it is possible to eliminate entirely a few cells that would be identifiable without severe masking of all data, degrading the statistical properties of the information.

With the help of Chairman Moynihan, CBO gained access to IRS data, but under all the same laws and rules of the IRS itself . . . including go-to-jail provisions for leaking. Some analysts at CBO were initially chrarnig at the new exposure, but subsequently understood the security measures we needed to take to successfully comply. This legislation would do the same for all agencies.

The Census Bureau often claimed that its charter made any census data available only to the Census Bureau . . . to help improve its data collection. I once encouraged the House Appropriations Committee to allow CBO access to Census Bureau data, which they did, only to have the Bureau launch a large and successful campaign against it. The Bureau claimed leaks by encouraging people from returning the census survey when, at least at that point, the only agency to leak data was the Bureau itself. This would make it clear that Bureau is empirical and legal for agencies to allow CBO to use data collected by the government.

No matter what the reason, nor how good the motives, withholding data from CBO deprives the Congress of better estimates and analysis. This legislation will make it more straightforward and less ambiguous, without jeopardizing existing laws like at CBO, along with other fine qualities, are not a leaky lot . . . as shown by their history.
the timely, rigorous, fact-based analysis on which the Congress depends. Sincerely,

DOUGLAS W. ELMENDORF, Professor of Public Policy.

AMERICAN ACTION FORUM,
April 15, 2024.

Hon. JOEY ARRINGTON,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRENDAN BOYLE,
Ranking Member, Committee on the Budget,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ARRINGTON AND RANKING MEMBER BOYLE: I am writing to support passage of the original Budget Office Data Sharing Act. I served as director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) from 2003 through 2005. In my opinion, H.R. 7032 would improve CBO’s access, and especially the timeliness of access, to executive agencies’ data essential to fulfilling its mission.

At present, CBO receives data under the authority provided by the Congressional Budget Act. These are largely cooperative arrangements, at times augmented by formal datasharing agreements. While this process has generally worked well, it would be useful to clarify and strengthen CBO’s access to agencies’ data.

As noted in CBO’s letter to you:

H.R. 7032 would amend section 201(d) of the Congressional Budget Act, which governs CBO’s ability to receive the branch data, by striking a parenthetical statement in that section, “(other than material the disclosure of which would be a violation of law).” That condition is unnecessary when another statute more specifically governs CBO’s access to certain data. It also can hamper access to data by requiring CBO to enter into additional datasharing agreements with agencies, thus impairing the timeliness of CBO’s work.

Enacting the bill would remove the caveat and, instead, provide CBO access to executive branch data unless that access is specifically disallowed by a future law. H.R. 7032 also includes a reference to section 203(e) of the Congressional Budget Act to highlight CBO’s obligation to protect the restricted information it receives.

This relatively modest clarification of CBO’s authority to request and receive data will strengthen CBO’s ability to provide Congress with timely cost estimates, more detailed reports, and other information supporting Congress’ deliberations.

I cordially support the successful vote in the Budget Committee and hope to see H.R. 7032 enacted into law. Sincerely,

DOUGLAS HOLTZ-EAKIN,
President.

[From Sandy Davis, Associate Director for Legislative Affairs, Congressional Budget Office (2003–2015), Apr. 12, 2024]

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR H.R. 7032—THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE DATA SHARING ACT

It is my pleasure to submit this statement supporting the adoption of H.R. 7032, the Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act. I worked at the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) for the final years, the last dozen or so serving as CBO’s principal liaison to Congress. In that capacity, I witnessed the periodic struggles CBO analysts faced in their efforts to access timely data and the information from Executive Branch agencies to prepare cost estimates and other critical budgetary analyses for Congress. H.R. 7032 would amend section 201(d) of the original Budget Act of 1974 giving CBO access to Executive Branch data and would clarify and enhance CBO’s statutory authority to acquire such data to carry out its duties under the Budget Act in support of the Budget Committees and the broader Congressional budget process.

It is also important to note that the House Budget Committee reported H.R. 7032 by a unanimous vote. In my view, that vote strongly suggests that the Committee views this measure as a buttress for Congress institutional capacity to protect its power of the purse under the Constitution. That is reminiscent of the strong bipartisan support that led to the enactment of the Congressional Budget Act and other institutional reforms in the late 1970s, designed to reassert Congress’ constitutional prerogatives. As we approach the 50th anniversary of the enactment of that landmark measure, H.R. 7032 represents an amendment of and enhancement to that critical law.

ECONOMIC POLICY INNOVATION CENTER,
April 25, 2024.

Hon. JOEY ARRINGTON,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRENDAN BOYLE,
Ranking Member, Committee on the Budget,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DeAR CHAIRMAN ARRINGTON AND RANKING MEMBER BOYLE: Congress relies on the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to serve as its non-partisan offspring to assure accurate cost estimates and budgetary and economic projections require high-quality and up-to-date data inputs.

The CBO was established to provide information to lawmakers without being solely reliant on the Executive Branch’s analysis of legislative proposals. The CBO fulfills its mission to assure the executive Branch agencies that administer the laws will often have access to records and statistics which are vital to understanding the fiscal and economic impacts of programs and policy proposals. That is why the Congressional Budget Act authorized the Director of the CBO to “to secure information, data, estimates, and statistics directly from the various departments, agencies, and establishments of the executive branch of Government and the regulatory agencies and commissions of the Government.”

Unfortunately, the CBO has reported difficulties obtaining data from agencies. H.R. 7032, the Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act, would improve CBO’s ability to access data from the Executive Branch while requiring CBO to maintain “the level of confidentiality required by law” to protect any sensitive information.

Access to accurate and timely information is important for lawmakers to do their work for the American people and will applaud your bipartisan efforts in this regard.

Sincerely,

BRITTAN MAGN, Executive Vice President, Economic Policy Innovation Center (EPIC).

WILLIAM W. BRACH, D. PHIL.,
Senior Fellow in Economics, Economic Policy Innovation Center (EPIC).

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I also include in the RECORD letters and statements of support from various organizations and individuals as part of H.R. 7032. These include statements of support from the National Taxpayers Union, the CATO Institute, and the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

ROMINA BOCCA, CATO

Strengthen budget data sharing. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) plays a critical role in informing Congress about the fiscal state of the nation as well as in providing forward-looking guidance for how policy changes will affect the budgetary picture. At times, CBO has encountered difficulties accessing necessary data from other government agencies which complicates the process of preparing budgetary data inputs. The Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act (H.R. 7032) empowers CBO to get the data it needs to prepare the job access to needed information. Improving fiscal reporting should be a non-partisan priority and it’s encouraging to see that this is the case for H.R. 7032, which was reported out of the House Budget Committee with unanimous support.

COMMITTEE FOR A RESPONSIBLE FEDERAL BUDGET

Maya MacGuineas, president of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, said, “The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) needs timely data to provide information to lawmakers as they make decisions affecting our country’s fiscal path. The Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act with the American Rescue Plan Act (H.R. 7032) provides a framework to ensure CBO can obtain data in a timely manner.”

The bipartisan CBO Data Sharing Act would improve CBO’s important work by streamlining its access to needed information. In turn, CBO can provide lawmakers and taxpayers with more accurate and timely cost estimates of legislative proposals.

DAVID BRAMAN,
Senior Fellow in Economic Policy Innovation Center (EPIC).

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, again, I express my sincere gratitude to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BOYLE), my friend and fellow Notre Dame graduate, and the ranking member of the Budget Committee for his bipartisan work and his partnership on the CBO Data Sharing Act.

It is a testament to the spirit of bipartisanship that we have on the House Budget Committee, I, again, thank our budget chair, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON) for his work and his commitment to this bill.

I also extend my deep appreciation to my fellow members of the Budget Committee for their work in support of this
legislation, as well as the Budget Committee staff, both on the Republican and Democratic side. It is critical that the Congressional Budget Office has access to the data needed to support the budget process and ensure that we are the best stewards of Americans’ hard earned tax dollars.

The CBO plays a meaningful role in the legislative process by determining the fiscal impact of important potential policy decisions that we undertake here in this House.

Too often, the CBO struggles to obtain the necessary data from executive branch agencies in a timely manner. As was mentioned earlier, this has ripple effects on its ability to deliver prompt budgetary analysis to Congress.

As we all know, this, in turn, delays the Congress in making fully informed decisions regarding the budgetary impact of legislation.

H.R. 7032 removes this hurdle and helps streamline the budget process. This bipartisan legislation will grant the CBO the authority to request and receive key data from executive branch agencies, ensuring it is able to fulfill its mission as laid out in the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

While expanding access, however, this bill also recognizes the importance of protecting data privacy and ensures that the CBO continues to be subject to congressional oversight.

Given the critical nature of the CBO’s work, we can’t allow them to continue to operate in a broken budgetary system.

This bipartisan legislation supports strengthening the CBO while allowing us as lawmakers to make the most informed and forward-thinking decisions possible.

I am grateful to everyone who played a part in moving this bill, and I commend the bipartisan members of the Budget Committee who voted unanimously for this bill during committee markup.

I am proud to express my strong support for the CBO Data Sharing Act. I look forward to voting in favor of this piece of legislation. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YAKCIA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill. H.R. 7032.

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.

REVISING EXISTING PROCEDURES ON REPORTING VIA TECHNOLOGY ACT

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 474) to amend title 18, United States Code, to strengthen reporting to the CyberTipline related to online sexual exploitation of children, to modernize liabilities for such reports, to preserve the contents of such reports for 1 year, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 474

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 “Revising Existing Procedures On Reporting via Technology Act”.

SEC. 2. LIMITED LIABILITY MODERNIZATION.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—Section 2258B of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking ‘‘providers or domain name registrars’’ and inserting ‘‘the reporting, storage, and handling of certain visual depictions of apparent child pornography to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children’’;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting ‘‘or charge’’ after ‘‘a claim’’;

and

(B) in paragraph (2)(C), by striking ‘‘this section’’;

and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

(d) LIMITED LIABILITY FOR NCMEC-CONTRACTED VENDORS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a civil claim or criminal charge may not be brought in any Federal or State court against a vendor contractually retained and designated by NCMEC to support the duties of NCMEC under section 408(b)(1)(K) of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (34 U.S.C. 11290(b)(1)(K)).

(2) INTENTIONAL, RECKLESS, OR OTHER MISCONDUCT.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to a claim or charge if the vendor—

(A) engaged in—

(i) intentional misconduct; or

(ii) negligent conduct; or

(iii) any activity which constitutes a violation of section 2251; or

(iv) a representative of the estate of the individual, arising from a report to the NCMEC CyberTipline by an individual depicted in the child pornography as a minor, or a representative of such individual, including a copy of the child pornography.

(3) VENDOR CYBERSECURITY REQUIREMENTS.—With respect to any visual depiction provided pursuant to the duties of NCMEC under section 408(b)(1)(K) of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (34 U.S.C. 11290(b)(1)(K)) that is stored or transferred by a vendor contractually retained and designated by NCMEC to support such duties of NCMEC, a vendor shall—

(A) secure such visual depiction in a manner that is consistent with the most recent version of the Cybersecurity Framework developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, or any successor thereof;

(B) minimize the number of employees that may be able to obtain access to such visual depiction;

(C) employ end-to-end encryption for data storage and transfer functions, or an equivalent technological standard;

(D) undergo an independent annual cybersecurity audit to determine whether such visual depiction is secured as required under subparagraph (C); and

(E) promptly address all issues identified by an audit described in subparagraph (D).

(e) LIMITED LIABILITY FOR REPORTING APPARENT CHILD PORNOGRAPHY BY AN INDIVIDUAL DEPICTED IN THE CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AS A MINOR, OR A REPRESENTATIVE OF SUCH INDIVIDUAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a civil claim or criminal charge may not be brought in any Federal or State court against an individual depicted in child pornography as a minor, or a representative of such individual, arising from a report to the NCMEC CyberTipline by the individual, or the representative of such individual, of information that relates to the child pornography in which the individual is depicted as a minor, including a copy of the child pornography.

(2) INTENTIONAL, RECKLESS, OR OTHER MISCONDUCT.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to a claim or charge if the individual, or the representative of such individual—

(A) engaged in—

(i) intentional misconduct;

(ii) negligent conduct; or

(iii) any activity which constitutes a violation of section 2251; or

(B) acted, or failed to act—

(i) with actual malice; or

(ii) with reckless disregard to a substantial risk of causing injury without legal justification.

(f) MINIMIZING ACCESS.—With respect to any child pornography reported to the NCMEC CyberTipline by an individual depicted in the child pornography as a minor, or a representative of such individual, NCMEC shall minimize access to the child pornography and ensure the appropriate deletion of the child pornography, as set forth in section 2250D.

(g) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘representative’, with respect to an individual depicted in child pornography—

(A) means—

(i) the parent or legal guardian of the individual, if the individual is under 18 years of age;

(ii) the legal guardian or other person appointed by a court to represent the individual;

(iii) a legal representative retained by the individual;

(iv) a representative of the estate of the individual;

or

(v) a person who is a mandated reporter under section 226a(a)(1) of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (34 U.S.C. 23951(a)(1)); and

(B) does not include a person who engaged in any activity which constitutes a violation of section 2251.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to a civil claim or criminal charge that is filed on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) TABLE OF SECTIONS AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 110 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 2258B and inserting the following:

2258B. Limited liability for the reporting, storage, and handling of certain visual depictions of apparent child pornography to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.

SEC. 3. PRESERVATION OF REPORTS TO CYBERTIPLINE RELATED TO ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN.

Section 2258B(d) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ‘‘90 days’’ and inserting ‘‘1 year’’; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

(E) EXTENSION OF PRESERVATION.—A provider of a report to the CyberTipline under

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Subsection (a)(1) may voluntarily preserve the contents provided in the report (including any compelled content described in paragraph (2)) for longer than 1 year after the submission of the report in order to the purpose of reducing the proliferation of online child sexual exploitation or preventing the online sexual exploitation of children.

"6695OBSESSION.--Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this paragraph, a provider of a report to the CyberTipline under subsection (a)(1) shall preserve materials under this subsection in a manner that is consistent with the most recent version of the Cybersecurity Framework developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, or any successor thereto."

SEC. 4. STRENGTHENING OF DUTY TO REPORT ACTIVITIES RELATED TO ONLINE EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—Section 2258A of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)(A), by inserting "child pornography," after "child pornography;"

(2) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking "$150,000" and inserting "$500,000 in the case of a provider with less than 100,000 monthly active users or $600,000 in the case of a provider with less than 100,000,000 monthly active users;" and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking "$300,000" and inserting "$1,000,000 in the case of a provider with less than 100,000,000 monthly active users or $500,000 in the case of a provider with less than 100,000,000 monthly active users.

(b) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children may issue guidelines, as appropriate, to providers required or permitted to take actions described in section 2258A(a)(1)(B) of title 18, United States Code, on the relevant identifiers for content that may indicate sex trafficking of children, as described in section 1591 of that title, or enticement, as described in section 2422(b) of that title.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the directions of the gentleman from Florida (Ms. LEE) and the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. DEAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida, Ms. GENEVRA LEE.

Ms. LEE of Florida. 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 S. 474, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the bill we are here to discuss today is the Revising Existing Procedures on Reporting via Technology Act, or REPORT Act.

This is a strong bipartisan bill that provides additional tools to investigate and to sanitize, the purveyors of child sex abuse material, or CSAM.

The exploitation of children through CSAM remains a serious problem both within the United States and abroad. We have heard extensive testimony about these issues in our two victims' focused hearings in the Subcommittee on Crime and Federal Government Surveillance of the Judiciary Committee, one in September and one earlier this month.

Reports of CSAM continue to grow exponentially, with 3,000 reports in 1998 growing to more than 1 million in 2014 and 36.2 million in 2023.

We have been in Federal law that prevent the National Center For Missing and Exploited Children, or NCMEC, from preserving reports of CSAM, which hinders law enforcement from holding these predators accountable.

This will allow law enforcement agencies the much-needed time to conduct comprehensive investigations and strengthen the legal framework against online predators.

This bill will strengthen existing law that requires providers to report to law enforcement as soon as reasonably possible after obtaining information about CSAM.

Currently, many providers maintain an adequate reporting system. However, the REPORT Act would enable this cooperation and encourage much greater reporting to the CYBERTipline, operated by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, or NCMEC.

This legislation would also modify the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act and create new categories of providers.

Advancements in technology, from generative AI to social networking platforms, clearly benefit society. Technology has brought us cutting-edge medical and medical breakthroughs, the ability to keep in touch with loved ones far away, and opportunities for budding entrepreneurs and artists who leverage technology to reach their audiences without costly barriers to entry.

However, there is also a dark side. Law enforcement experts and victims' advocates agree: Advancements in technology have led to an explosion of images depicting child sexual abuse available and distributed online.

Simply put, the legislation is crucial. It is supported by law enforcement, advocacy groups, and tech companies alike. It is bipartisan, it is common sense, and it will save lives.

I urge all my colleagues to pass the REPORT Act and support this important step to protect children.

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

Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 474, the REPORT Act. I am pleased to cosponsor the House version of this legislation with my colleague and friend from Florida, I thank Representative LEE for her leadership on this bill. The REPORT Act would strengthen the ongoing collaboration between law enforcement and technology providers to combat sexual exploitation of children.

The exploitation of children through the proliferation of child sex abuse material, frequently referred to as CSAM, can be stopped only with cooperation across many different sectors of American society, from law enforcement to victims' groups to local leaders and technology providers.

The REPORT Act would enable this cooperation and encourage much greater reporting to the CYBERTipline, operated by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, or NCMEC.

This legislation would also modify how photos and videos of child sex abuse are stored by providers, would change the way reporting is done for report platforms, and would give law enforcement more time to investigate these cases. By making updates to the law, the REPORT Act will help law enforcement evolve with the threat, as consumption of child sexual abuse content permeates new technology spaces.

Advancements in technology, from generative AI to social networking platforms, clearly benefit society. Technology has brought us cutting-edge medical and medical breakthroughs, the ability to keep in touch with loved ones far away, and opportunities for budding entrepreneurs and artists who leverage technology to reach their audiences without costly barriers to entry.

However, there is also a dark side. Law enforcement experts and victims' advocates agree: Advancements in technology have led to an explosion of images depicting child sexual abuse available and distributed online.

Demand for new and more egregious photos and videos drives the market for this material, resulting in the continued grotesque abuse and exploitation of children.

With their comprehensive efforts, the Internet Crimes Against Children, or ICAC, task forces, which represent more than 5,400 local, State, and Federal law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies, are making progress in identifying and rescuing victims of child sex abuse material.

However, the growth of the problem continues to outpace the resources
available to identify and locate vic-
tims, especially since law enforcement, 
prosecutors, the tech industry, and 
other organization must continually 
contend with the emergence of new 
technologies, like AI, which further 
complicates their efforts.

Understanding the process for reporting child 
sexual abuse material today, electronic 
service providers, or companies that 
offer a platform through which users 
can communicate, are required to re-
port instances of CSAM to the 
CyberTipline. After a tip is reported, the 
company works with NCMEC to 
share relevant information. NCMEC re-
views the incoming reports and then 
refers them out to the appropriate law 
forcement agency, typically a re-

gional ICAC task force.

To date, NCMEC reports that the 
CyberTipline has received more than 92 
million reports since it began in 1998, 
the majority of them from electronic 
communication service providers.

NCMEC’s Child Victim Identification 
Program has reviewed more than 331 
million images and videos. That is 
more than 25 million images each year. 
That is grotesque. While most children 
reflected in the images remain un-
known, more than 19,300 victims have 
been identified.

I commend the successes of NCMEC 
and other law enforcement agencies in 
identifying and rescuing victims, but 
we cannot be satisfied while so many 
CSAM victims remain unidentified.

That is why the REPORT Act is an im-
portant first step to increasing the ef-
fectiveness of CSAM reports and better 
protecting victims from child sexual 
abuse.

The Senate passed this bill by unani-
mous consent, with the support of law 
 enforcement groups, the National Cen-
ter For Missing and Exploited Chil-
dren, or NCMEC, and technology pro-
viders. With passage of the bill today, 
the next stop will be President Biden’s 
desk.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative 
LEE for her extraordinary leadership to 
protect all of our children.

In conclusion, the REPORT Act 
takes an important step toward com-
bating the proliferation of child sexual 
abuse material online and protecting 
victims from future abuse. I thank 
Representative LEE for her leadership in 
introducing the House version of 
this bill. I am proud to cosponsor it 
with other members of the House Admin-
isters for sponsoring this legislation. This 
is about our children.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to 
support the bill, and I yield back the 
balance of my time.

Ms. LEE of Florida, Mr. Speaker, I 
thank Representative DEAN. It was a 
privilege to cosponsor this important 
legislation with her.

I urge my colleagues to support this 
important bill, and I yield back the 
balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The 
question is on the motion offered by 
the gentleman from Florida (Ms.

VETERANS EDUCATION TRANSPARENCY AND TRAINING ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to 
suspend the rules and pass the bill 
(H.R. 3738) to amend title 38, United 
States Code, to establish in the Depart-
ment of Veterans Affairs the Veterans 
Economic Opportunity and Transition 
Administration, and for other pur-
poses, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. 
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3738

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Repre-
sentatives of the United States of America in 
Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. 

This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Admin-

ISTRATION.

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF VETERANS ECO-
NOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSITION 
ADMINISTRATION.

(a) VETERANS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND 
TRANSITION ADMINISTRATION.—There is in the 
Department of Veterans Affairs a Veterans 
Economic Opportunity and Transition Ad-

ministration. The primary function of the 
Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transi-
tion Administration is the administration of 
the programs of the Department that provide 
assistance related to economic opportunity 
to veterans and their dependents and sur-

vivors.

(b) UNDER SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC OP-
PORTUNITY AND TRANSITION ADMINISTRATION. 

Sec. 8001. Organization of Administration. 

8002. Function of Administration. 

8003. Annual report to Congress.

8001. Organization of Administration

(a) VETERANS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND 
TRANSITION ADMINISTRATION.—There is in the 
Department of Veterans Affairs a Veterans 
Economic Opportunity and Transition Ad-

ministration. The primary function of the 
Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transi-
tion Administration is the administration of 
the programs of the Department that provide 
assistance related to economic opportunity 
to veterans and their dependents and sur-

vivors.

(b) UNDER SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC OPPOR-
TUNITY AND TRANSITION.—The Veterans 
Economic Opportunity and Transition Ad-

ministration is the head of, and is directly 
responsible to the Secretary for the opera-
tions of the Administration.

8002. Functions of Administration

The Veterans Economic Opportunity and 
Transition Administration is responsible for 
the administration of the following programs 
of the Department:

(1) Vocational rehabilitation and 
employment programs.

(2) Educational assistance programs.

(3) Veterans’ housing loan and related 
programs.

(4) The Transition Assistance Program 
under section 1144 of title 10.

(5) Any other program in the Department 
that the Secretary determines appropriate.

8003. Annual report to Congress

The Secretary shall include in the annual 
report to the Congress required by section 
529 of this title a report on the programs ad-

ministered by the Under Secretary for 
Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transi-
tion. Each such report shall include the follow-
ing with respect to each such program during 
the fiscal year covered by that report:

(1) The number of claims received.

(2) The number of claims decided.

(3) The average processing time for a 
claim.

(4) The number of successful outcomes 
as determined by the Secretary.

(5) The number of full-time equivalent 
employees.

(6) The amounts expended for information 
technology.

80. Veterans Economic Opportunity 
and Transition Administration ... 8001".

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Chapter 80 of title 38, 
United States Code, as added by subsection 
(a), shall take effect on October 1, 2025.

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES.—For fiscal years 2025 and 2026, the total number of full-
time equivalent employees authorized for 
the Veterans Benefits Administration and 
the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transi-
tion Administration, as established under 
chapter 80 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall not ex-
ceed more than:

(1) 34,228 in fiscal year 2025; and

(2) 35,417 in fiscal year 2026.

(d) LABOR RIGHTS.—Any labor rights, inclu-
sion in the bargaining unit, and collective 
bargaining agreement that affects an em-
ployee of the Department of Veterans Affairs 
who is transferred to the Veterans Economic 
Opportunity and Transition Administration, 
as established under chapter 80 of title 38, 
United States Code, as added by subsection 
(a), shall apply in the same manner to such 
employee after such transfer.

SEC. 3. UNDER SECRETARY FOR VETERANS ECO-
NOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSI-
TION.

(a) UNDER SECRETARY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 3 of title 38, 
United States Code, is amended by inserting 
section 8003 after section 8002.

(b) R ESPONSIBILITIES.—The Under Sec-

retary for Veterans Economic Opportunity 
and Transition occurs

similar content and scope.

(c) VACANCIES.—(1) Whenever a vacancy 
in the position of Under Secretary for Veterans 
Economic Opportunity and Transition occurs 
or is anticipated, the Secretary shall estab-
lish a commission to recommend individuals 
to the President for appointment to the posi-

tion.

(2) A commission established under this 
subsection shall be composed of the follow-
ing members appointed by the Secretary:
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"(A) Three persons representing education and training, vocational rehabilitation, employment, real estate, mortgage finance and related industries, and survivor benefits activities of the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration.

"(B) Two persons representing veterans served by the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration.

"(C) Two persons who have experience in the management of private sector benefits programs of similar content and scope to the economic opportunity and transition programs of the Department.

"(D) The Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

"(E) The chairman of the Veterans’ Advisory Committee on Education formed under section 3692 of this title.

"(F) One person who has held the position of Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition, if the Secretary determines that it is desirable for such person to be a member of the commission.

"(3) A commission established under this subsection shall recommend at least three individuals for appointment to the position of Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition. The commission shall submit all recommendations to the Secretary. The Secretary shall forward the recommendations to the President and the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives with any comments the Secretary considers appropriate. Thereafter, the President may request the commission to recommend additional individuals for appointment.

"(4) The Assistant Secretary or Deputy Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs who performs functions of the Secretary relative to grants shall serve as the executive secretary of a commission established under this subsection:

(a) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 306 the following new item:

"306A. Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Title 38, United States Code, is further amended—

(1) in section 306(c)(2), by striking subparagraphs (A) and (E) and redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), and (F), as subparagaphs (A) through (D), respectively;

(2) in section 317(d)(2), by inserting after "Under Secretary for Benefits," the following: "the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition, if the Secretary determines that it is desirable for such person to be a member of the commission;"

(3) in section 318(d)(2), by inserting after "Under Secretary for Benefits," the following: "the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition;"

(4) in section 516(e)(2)(G), by striking "Health and the Under Secretary for Benefits" and inserting "Health, the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition;"

(5) in section 541(a)(2)(B), by striking "Health and the Under Secretary for Benefits" and inserting "Health, the Under Secretary for Benefits, the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition;"

(6) in section 542(a)(2)(B)(ii), by striking "Health and the Under Secretary for Benefits" and inserting "Health, the Under Secretary for Benefits, and the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition;"

(7) in section 546(a)(2)(B)(vi), by striking "Health and the Under Secretary for Benefits" and inserting "Health, the Under Secretary for Benefits, and the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition;"

for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition;"

for section 709(c)(2)(A), by inserting after "Under Secretary for Benefits," the following: "the Under Secretary for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition;"

in section 770(a), by inserting after "assistance" the following: "; other than assistance required for Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition;" and

(10) in section 7703, by striking paragraphs (2) and (3) and redesignating paragraphs (4) and (5) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 306A of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 2, until the Secretary submits to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the progress toward establishing the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, as established under section 8001 of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 2, until the Secretary submits to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report that—

(1) the transition of the provision of services to such Administration will not negatively affect the provision of such services to veterans; and

(2) such services are ready to be transferred.

(d) DEADLINE FOR CERTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives the certification that—

(1) the reason why the certification was not made by such date; and

(2) the estimated date when the certification will be made.

SEC. 5. MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN HOUSING LOAN FEES.

The loan fee table in section 3729(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "November 15, 2031" each place it appears and inserting "December 27, 2031":

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3738, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of Mr. H. R. 3738, as amended, offered by my friend and colleague from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP).

H.R. 3738, as amended, would establish a new administration called the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

For years, the Veterans Benefits Administration has been overburdened and overwhelmed with bureaucracy and red tape. Right now, VBA simply has too many important duties to fulfill on behalf of veterans and is pulled in too many directions.

Even with the PACT Act giving record funding to reduce backlogs and increase veteran benefits, this commission will see positive performance from this part of the VA. Dr. Wenstrup’s bill, as amended, would increase accountability and provide additional needed manpower for veterans and certain programs.

For years, we have let the VA use their own judgment on how to handle these programs. VBA is making too many decisions without notifying veterans; putting new, burdensome requirements on schools; and creating new programs that will cost billions of taxpayer dollars.

Changes are frequently made to the program with little input from Congress or stakeholders and with little recourse for schools or veterans. While the Biden administration has been especially guilty of this, it must stop, regardless of who is in the White House.

This bill on the floor today is just the beginning of our efforts to improve the delivery of benefits to veterans and their families.

I thank the VFW, SVA, DAV, and the American Legion for their support of this bill. I also thank my friend, Dr. Wenstrup, for continuing to be an advocate for this bill before he retires from Congress. I also thank my colleagues across the aisle for cosponsoring and supporting the legislation through the committee process.

The legacy of this bill will make a difference for veterans and their families. Programs will match the important legacy of Dr. Wenstrup’s steadfast support of veterans and servicemembers as a U.S. Army veteran.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3738, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 3738, as amended, a bill that would establish a new administration at the Department of Veterans Affairs. We have passed similar versions of this bill in the last several Congresses, and I thank Dr. Wenstrup for his continued work on this, as well
By aligning transition, education, and employment programs in a fourth administration within the VA, this act will modernize the Department and ensure that these opportunity-focused programs get the high priority they deserve and the oversight they need to better serve our veterans.

I thank Representative LEVYN for leading this legislation with me now for the third time. We have many Senators supporting us, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation to help improve the way veterans receive VA services, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by Mr. TAKANO. As a retired member of the U.S. Army Reserve and Iraq war veteran, I know how important it is to help our warfighters succeed in their transition to civilian life.

Far too often, people think unjustly that veterans return from war defeated and post-military careers. Our veterans return from war defeated to civilian life.

We should care about their military and post-military careers. Our veterans enter the military to the day they have a plan from the day that they leave service as we do during it.

Announcement by the Speaker pro tempore

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The motion to pass the bill, as amended, is before the House. Pursuant to the motion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The motion to pass the bill, as amended, is before the House. Pursuant to the motion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.
to his wife, Beatrice, and their children, Donald III, Jack, and Yvonne.

Like his father before him—Congressman Donald Payne, Sr., who I served with and who was also a great man—Donald Jr. was a dedicated public servant, tirelessly and tenaciously worked to improve the lives of New Jersey families, especially the poor.

He was a kind and compassionate lawmaker who cared deeply for the people of his district, our State, the country, those in need, and especially the silent Americans.

As a diabet, he fought to lower the cost of insulin. He wrote the House-passed Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening Act and the Amputation Reduction and Compassion Act to provide full coverage for PAD to help reduce amputations.

His TEST for Lead Act was designed to protect children from lead-contaminated drinking water in schools, and he wrote the DHS Interoperable Communications Act that became law in July 2015.

As chairman and then ranking member of the House Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee, Donald helped lead the charge to improve the nation’s transportation infrastructure, played a key role in securing the Gateway project, and was a powerful ally of Amtrak.

Donald Payne served two terms on the Newark City Council, including as president, and beginning in 2005, three terms as an Essex County freeholder, president, and beginning in 2015, the Newark City Council, including as president.

Through his work, from voting, always struggling with health issues, and he affectionately called me “Uncle Frank.”

He used his time here to improve the lives and health of New Jerseyans and Americans with so many things that Chris Smith mentioned, but Don was always struggling with health issues from the day that he came here. I am not sure that many of you knew that, but it never stopped him from his work, from voting.

So many times in the past year we had very close votes and he would always show up if there was any way possible. I remember him doing Special Orders. He had the record for the most Special Orders for several years.

If you look over there in seat number one where Democrats would sit if they wanted to line up for Special Orders, you see the flowers and the mourning cloak. He was always the first one to come down.

I think a lot of you maybe didn’t realize how uncomfortable he was when he was sick, but he always took the time to ask how you were doing. If I would go up to him and say, Donald, how are you feeling today? He would say, fine and just move on. Then he would say, how are you doing, Frank? How do you feel? How is the family?

He just made you feel like he was your friend, and it didn’t matter whether you were Democrat or Republican or where you were from.

I will join Mr. Smith in mentioning his wife, Beatrice, and his children. He had triplets. I think many of you know Donald III, Jack, and Yvonne. We want to honor his legacy and his service to our State and our country. I will say in closing to Don, Uncle Frank says goodbye, but he certainly will not be forgotten by any of us.

Mr. Smith of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask everyone to join us in a moment of silent prayer for our deceased colleague.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN REMEMBRANCE OF CONGRESSMAN DONALD PAYNE, JR.

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

Mr. Smith of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise, along with my colleagues, to convey our deepest sorrow on the passing of our good friend, six-term New Jersey Congressman, Donald Payne, Jr. of the 10th Congressional District.

We are grateful for his public service, and offer our prayers and condolences

### PRIVACY ENHANCING TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH ACT

The SPEAKER. 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. 3755) to support research on privacy enhancing technologies and promote responsible data use, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk then read the title of the bill. The SPEAKER. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. Lucas) 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 354, nays 36, not voting 38, as follows:

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H. RES. 1172

Resolved, That the House has heard with profound sorrow the death of the Honorable Donald M. Payne, Jr., a Representative from the State of New Jersey.

Resolved, That the Clerk communicate these resolutions to the Senate and transmit a copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

Resolved, That when the House adjourns today, it adjourn as a further mark of respect to the memory of the deceased.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING LIMITS OF U.S. Customs Waters Act

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1137, I call up the bill (H.R. 529) to extend the customs waters of the United States from 12 nautical miles to 24 nautical miles from the baselines of the United States, consistent with Presidential Proclamation 7219, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk reads the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1137, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means, printed in the bill, is adopted and the bill, as amended, is read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H. R. 529

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 “Extending Limits of U.S. Customs Waters Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF CUSTOMS WATERS. (a) Tariff Act of 1930... (Section 401(c) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1401(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking “means, in the case” and inserting the following: “means—

(1) in the case;”

(2) by striking “of the coast of the United States” and inserting “from the baselines of the United States, determined in accordance with international law,”;

(3) by striking “and, in the case” and inserting “from the baselines of the United States, determined in accordance with international law,”;

(4) by striking “the waters within four leagues of the coast of the United States,” and inserting the following: “the waters within four leagues of the coast of the United States, determined in accordance with international law,”;

(5) by striking “the territorial sea of the United States, to” and inserting “the contiguous zone of the United States, to the limits permitted by international law in accordance with Presidential Proclamation 5926 of December 27, 1988; and

(6) by striking “and” and “in the case” and inserting “and”;

(7) by striking “the territories within the limits of the United States” and inserting “the contiguous zone of the United States”;

(8) by striking “of the United States” and inserting “of the contiguous zone of the United States”;

(9) by striking “the limits permitted by international law in accordance with Presidential Proclamation 5926 of September 2, 1988;”;

(10) by striking “and the limits permitted by international law in accordance with” and inserting “in accordance with Presidential Proclamation 5926 of September 2, 1988;”;

(b) Anti-Smuggling Act. — Section 401(c) of the Anti-Smuggling Act (19 U.S.C. 1706(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking “means, in the case” and inserting the following: “means—

(1) in the case;”

(2) by striking “of the coast of the United States” and inserting “from the baselines of the United States, determined in accordance with international law,”;

(3) by striking “and, in the case” and inserting “from the baselines of the United States, determined in accordance with international law,”;

(4) by striking “the waters within four leagues of the coast of the United States,” and inserting the following: “the waters within four leagues of the coast of the United States, determined in accordance with international law,”;

(5) by striking “the territorial sea of the United States, to” and inserting “the contiguous zone of the United States, to the limits permitted by international law in accordance with Presidential Proclamation 5926 of December 27, 1988; and

EXPRESSIONING THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk reads the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1172

Resolved, That the House has heard with profound sorrow the death of the Honorable Donald M. Payne, Jr., a Representative from the State of New Jersey.
This bill makes it easier to stop illegal drugs from reaching our border and entering our communities. This bill also makes it easier for us to end the abuses of human trafficking.

It is not just drugs that are smuggled into the United States. Illegals are also being trafficked, and oftentimes by sea. By expanding the area in which they can operate, CBP agents will have more flexibility to capture and arrest criminals smuggling drugs and people into our country. This is why, for approval in the Ways and Means Committee last year because it is a commonsense approach to stopping international crime rings from breaking our laws and harming our communities. It is a change Customs and Border Patrol has asked us for and of which the Biden White House has previously supported. Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Extending Limits of U.S. Customs Waters Act, introduced by my good friend Representative MILLI SMITH. This bill would double the current distance that Customs and Border Patrol can enforce U.S. laws from 12 to 24 nautical miles off the coast of the United States. Congress should pass this legislation to protect America's national security and economic interests.

CBP is responsible for enforcing America's trade laws. With this expanded area of operations, the agency can better protect intellectual property, flight illegal dumping of products, and ensure America is paid the customs revenues we are owed.

Other law enforcement agencies, like the Coast Guard, already operate at the 24-nautical-mile-limit. CBP must be empowered fully to carry out its responsibilities, protect our national security, and enforce our trade laws.

Currently, CBP must rely on Presidential proclamations for legal authority to pursue or board vessels more than 12 nautical miles off our coast. In some cases, courts have created uncertainty regarding the validity of this authority. Congress can use its legislative power to give the agency more certainty and the ability to operate more effectively in the future.

Making this change will also help keep American families safer. International crime rings smuggle drugs through our sea and airports. In fiscal year 2022, the Air and Marine Operations division of CBP captured hundreds of thousands of pounds of illegal drugs, including over 200,000 pounds of cocaine and over 300,000 pounds of fentanyl. More than 80 percent of those drugs were seized on the water.

Now, beyond stopping illegal narcotics, AMO has the authority to intercept vessels that are smuggling people on the sea which, unfortunately, as we have seen in the past, one of the most dangerous ways to enter into any country. AMO does its best and has a duty to prevent the loss of life and discouraging this deadly form of migration by rescuing those trapped aboard dangerous vessels.

Many of the vessels used to smuggle people these days are often not built for the waters they are on, nor are they equipped for the long journey or bouts of bad weather. The U.S. Coast Guard reports that just about every vessel they encounter is constructed haphazardly with improvised materials and with absolutely no concern for the people on board.

Mr. Speaker, smugglers often overload their vessels to maximize profits, which risks capsizing and the loss of life. When AMO encounters migrants on suspicious vessels, these operations often turn into rescues, with many on board being sick, severely dehydrated, injured, or even overboard in the water.

Fortunately, AMO doesn't just stop vessels. AMO personnel are trained and equipped to care for the people on board and rescue those who are overboard. Many AMO personnel are trained as emergency medical technicians, EMTs, and all of the agents are trained first responders. Moreover, AMO vessels are equipped with specialized equipment and first aid kits and ladders to help rescue people from the water.

Mr. Speaker, by increasing the customs waters from 12 nautical miles to 24, we are giving AMO more opportunity to rescue people, to save lives, to respond to suspected vehicles, and, yes, even set up interdictions farther away from shore and safely away from law-abiding boaters.

The expansion of the area that AMO operates in will help them better do their job to stop vessels that are trafficking drugs and humans and protect the people that are on board those vessels. That is why I support this legislation that passed unanimously out of the Ways and Means Committee back in November.

I encourage all of my colleagues to do the same because by supporting this legislation, we would not only help support the mission of AMO to stop illegal narcotics and human trafficking, but we would be helping secure our Nation's borders. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, in closing, as you have heard, this legislation has full bipartisan support of the Ways and Means Committee and beyond, and support from CBP's Air and Marine Operations.

It is critical that we give AMO the authorities it needs to effectively combat transnational criminal organizations. Extending customs waters to 24 nautical miles would allow AMO to exercise its law enforcement authority and both protect human life and our communities by helping AMO secure our borders.
Mr. Speaker. I once again encourage my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to clear the way.

Mr. Speaker. This bill helps give Customs and Border Protection the certainty to know that they can enforce U.S. trade laws without fear of their authority being challenged in court.

Allowing our Customs agents the authority to go out 24 miles off the coast is consistent with what both Republican and Democratic Presidents have supported. This bill helps CBP protect the livelihoods of American workers. When foreigners cheat our U.S. trade system and avoid paying the rightful duties they owe, it is American workers and small businesses that suffer.

Improved trade enforcement not only helps our economy, but it will also help save American lives. Too many families know the pain of losing a loved one from a drug like fentanyl that should have never come into our country.

Customs and Border Protection needs the certainty and operational flexibility to catch smugglers before their deadly drugs reach our shore. We need to end the current inconsistency by which Congress has fully authorized the Coast Guard to pursue all board suspicious vessels up to 24 miles off of our coast but has not done the same for CBP.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote “yes” on this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the bill.

The question was taken, and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

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 additional motions to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3722) to require a pilot program on activities under the pre-separation transition process of members of the Armed Forces for a reduction in suicide among veterans, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill as follows:

H.R. 3722

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 “Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act.”


(a) TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Section 1142(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by inserting “(11),” before “(11)” and “(12),” and “(13),” and (14); and

(2) by striking paragraph (11) and inserting the following:

“(11) Information concerning mental health, including—

(A) the availability of mental health services furnished by the Secretary concerned, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or a non-profit entity;

(B) the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, anxiety disorders, chronic pain, sleep disorders, suicidal ideation, or other mental health conditions associated with service in the armed forces;

(C) the risk of suicide, including signs, symptoms, and risk factors (including adverse childhood experiences, depression, bipolar disorder, homelessness, unemployment, and relational stressors); and

(D) the availability of treatment options and resources to address substance abuse, including alcohol, prescription drug, and opioid abuse;

(E) the potential effects of the loss of community and support systems experienced by a member separating from the armed forces;

(F) isolation from family, friends, or society; and

(G) the potential stressors associated with separation from the armed forces.

(b) SOLID START PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—Section 623(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (G) and (H) as subparagraphs (1) and (2), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (F) the following new subparagraphs:

“(G) assisting eligible veterans who elect to enroll in the system of patient enrollment under section 1706(a) of this title;

(H) educating veterans about mental health and counseling services available through the Veterans Health Administration; and

(I) report.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the information and materials developed pursuant to the amendments made by this Act.

(ii) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘appropriate congressional committees’ means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. KIGGANS) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

There was no objection.

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3722, the Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act.

I commend the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUNN) for introducing this legislation and for his leadership on this important issue.

H.R. 3722 seeks to improve the Transition Assistance Program run by the Department of Defense and the Solid Start program run by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Both programs provide critical assistance to the over 200,000 warfighters who transition to civilian life each year.

Every departing servicemember is required to complete the TAP program before leaving the service. The program provides valuable information, education, and training on veteran benefits, financial planning, how to find a job and start a business, as well as mental health resources available to servicemembers and their families.

Departing military service can be a very stressful time for servicemembers and their families. Servicemembers often experience feelings of isolation and loss of community that can exacerbate other mental health conditions.

H.R. 3722 seeks to ensure that all departing servicemembers receive information on how to recognize and cope with these stressors, as well as help them identify risk factors for suicide.

On behalf of the Armed Services Committee, I look forward to working with the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUNN) as this bill moves forward to address some issues that may hinder its proper execution by the DOD.
It is important that we regularly review transition programs like TAP and Solid Start and make sure they are meeting the needs of our departing servicemembers and their families.

The men and women of our Armed Forces sacrifice tremendously when they defend our Nation. When that service is complete, the least we can do is ensure they have an opportunity for a healthy and successful civilian life. That is the goal of H.R. 3722.

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I join my colleague, Representative KIGGANS of Virginia, and rise in support of H.R. 3722, the Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act.

As a proud United States Air Force veteran and voice for over 46,000 veterans in North Carolina’s First Congressional District, I was proud to join my friend and colleague, Representative ZACH NUNN, in introducing this bipartisan bill last year ahead of Memorial Day weekend.

The suicide rate in our military ranks and among our veterans is unacceptable. We must not have servicemembers put themselves in harm’s way fighting for our country only to return home to their own lives.

By requiring the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to jointly pursue a 5-year pilot program, H.R. 3722 will help assess the feasibility of providing specified counseling and services as part of the Transition Assistance Program.

This bill will close the information gap and ensure veterans can access the services they need when and where they need them.

When Active-Duty personnel take off their uniforms and begin to transition to civilian life, we must ensure they have the mental health resources and support they need not only to survive but thrive.

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

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUNN).

Mr. NUNN of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the story of Adam Lambert, a proud marine from Adel, Iowa.

Adam brought joy and laughter to his mother, Jill, and his father, Dean. He was a protective brother to his sisters, McKenzie and Anna.

Adam put himself before his country, his friends, his family, and his service.

During boot camp, Adam met a fellow marine named Daniel Harvey from Rhode Island. Together, these two became friends and stayed connected through their deployments and return to civilian life.

At 22 years old, sadly, Daniel died by suicide just a year after he left the Marines, and tragically, as was noted, Adam followed him less than a month later.

Unfortunately, Adam and Daniel’s story all too often is becoming more common among our veterans. Veteran suicide is a casualty of war, one that demands immediate attention and action by this Congress.

The truth is that when our men and women in uniform leave the service, that transition to civilian life can be extremely difficult and often leaves servicemembers feeling very much left alone.

This is something I have witnessed firsthand as a 20-year combat veteran—as others have highlighted here from their military service—and as a squadron commander in the Air Force. You saw airmen struggle with the realities of life when they transitioned from service in defense of this Nation.

The pressure of employment, lack of fellowship, substance abuse, and finding a new purpose weigh on all of our veterans as they return to civilian life, and many of our brothers and sisters sadly do not make it.

We need to do more to ensure that veterans are aware of the resources available to them as they leave the Armed Forces.

In honor of Adam and Daniel, as well as countless other servicemembers, I introduced the Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act.

This bipartisan legislation led by veterans makes critical improvements to the Transition Assistance Program to provide servicemembers who are returning home with access to mental health resources, more frequent VA check-ins, and clear communication about available assistance programs as they navigate their return from the battlefield and before it is too late.

I thank all who have served our Nation for their service, and I strongly encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support and pass this critical legislation.

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative NUNN for bringing this bill forward, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS).

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chair KIGGANS for the opportunity to speak.

I stand before you today in support of H.R. 3722, the Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act, which is co-led by my colleague from Iowa, Representative Zach NUNN.

Our brave men and women in uniform have sacrificed immeasurably to defend our Nation and uphold our freedoms, and as a 24-year veteran, I know only too well that when they return home, many face significant challenges transitioning back to civilian life. Too often, these challenges lead to tragic outcomes, including the heartbreaking reality of veteran suicide.

This bipartisan bill presents an opportunity for us to take meaningful action to address this crisis. By implementing a model program to enhance the pre-separation transition process for our servicemembers, we can provide them with the necessary support and resources to navigate this challenging period successfully.

The proposed model outlined in this bill offers comprehensive education on the potential risks and challenges facing our transitioning servicemembers, including issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder, substance use disorders, and homelessness.

Additionally, it provides vital information on available resources and treatment options through the Department of Veterans Affairs and other organizations.

Furthermore, by offering individualized services such as assessments of eligibility for VA healthcare and counseling and coordination of healthcare based on individual needs, we can ensure that our veterans receive the support they deserve as they reintegrate back into civilian life.

This is not a partisan issue; it is a moral imperative. We must always stand for our military and honor our veterans. By supporting H.R. 3722, we renew our commitment to fulfilling this sacred duty.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Iowa, Representative NUNN, for introducing this legislation, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting this bill and taking decisive action to reduce veteran suicide rates and ensure that those who have served our country receive the support and care they need and deserve.

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield myself the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, as we conclude today on this vital legislation, I am compelled to emphasize the significance of the issue at hand.

According to the VA’s “2023 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report,” 6,392 veterans died by suicide in 2021—114 more than the previous year. This rate is more than that of the civilian adult population, underscoring a crisis that requires immediate and decisive action.

The stories of Corporal Adam Lambert and Lance Corporal Daniel J. Harvey, Jr., who both tragically lost their lives to suicide shortly after serving our country in Afghanistan, remind us that we must do more.

The enhancement of DOD and VA transition assistance programs in H.R. 3722 will ensure that every servicemember leaving the military is not only aware of but also able to access resources to address mental health conditions, substance use disorders, and...
other risk factors associated with suicide.

To honor the legacy of our fallen, we must recommit ourselves to our servicemembers and veterans, our real heroes.

Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support the legislation. Again, I thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUNN) for introducing this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

We wake up every day with a mission, and that is a great mission—to defend our great Nation. We are part of a team, and it gets us out of bed in the morning. There is no better, no higher calling than that.

The day that that stops and the day that you are not a part of that team, and you might not know what is next ahead in life, and there is a lot of transition with a lot unknown, it is hard. We have to do better for our servicemen and -women who are transitioning out.

We are so thankful for the service of the two young Marines that we spoke about today, but even one veteran suicide is too many.

I urge all of my colleagues here to support this bill. I look forward to supporting it myself, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mrs. KIGGANS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3722, 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.

**VETERANS EDUCATION TRANSPARENCY AND TRAINING ACT**

Mr. BOST, Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5914) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processes to approve programs of education for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5914

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 “Veterans Education Transparency and Training Act” or the “VETT Act.”

**SEC. 2. PROCESSES TO APPROVE PROGRAMS OF EDUCATION FOR PURPOSES OF THE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

(a) LIMITATION ON DISAPPROVAL OF PROGRAMS OF EDUCATION FOR FAILURE TO PROVIDE CERTAIN FORMS.—Section 3679(h)(5) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “this paragraph” and inserting “this subparagraph”;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “this paragraph” and inserting “this subparagraph”;

and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) if an educational institution cannot provide to an individual a form under paragraph (1) that contains all of the information required under subparagraph (A) of such paragraph, the educational institution shall provide to such individual, with the form under such paragraph, a notice—

“(i) that specifies what such information may be inaccurate or incomplete; and

“(ii) that includes, in place of the information that may be inaccurate or incomplete, the best estimate available on the date of such notice.”.

(b) PROHIBITION OF INFORMATION ABOUT TRAINING FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIALS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a website to serve as a central location for the publication of essential information pertaining to training that the Department of Veterans Affairs provides for school certifying officials and shall update such information on a regular basis.

**SEC. 3. MODIFICATION OF RULES FOR APPROVAL OF COMMERCIAL DRIVER EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR PURPOSES OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3680A(e) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (3) as subparagraphs (A) through (C), respectively;

(2) in the matter before subparagraph (A), as redesignated by paragraph (1), by inserting “(1)” before “The Secretary”;

(3) in paragraph (2) as redesignated by paragraph (1), by inserting “except as provided in paragraph (2),” before “the course”;

and

(4) by adding at the end the following new paragraph (2):

“(2)(A) Subject to this paragraph, a commercial driver education program is exempt from paragraph (1)(B) for a branch of an educational institution if the commercial driver education program offered at the branch by the educational institution—

“(i) is appropriately licensed; and

“(ii)(I) the branch is located in a State in which the same commercial driver education program is offered by the same educational institution at another branch of that educational institution in the same State that is approved for purposes of this chapter by a State approving agency or the Secretary when acting in the role of a State approving agency;

“(II)(a) the branch is located in a State in which the same commercial driver education program is not offered at another branch of the same educational institution in the same State; and

“(bb) the branch has been operating for a period of at least one year using the same curriculum as a commercial driver education program offered by the educational institution at another location that is approved for purposes of this chapter by a State approving agency or the Secretary when acting in the role of a State approving agency.

“(B) In order for a commercial driver education program of an educational institution offered at a branch described in paragraph (1)(B) to be exempt under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the educational institution shall submit to the Secretary each year that paragraph (1)(B) would have applied a report that demonstrates that the curriculum at the new branch is the same as the curriculum at the primary location.

“(C) No determination under clause (i) shall be submitted in accordance with such requirements as the Secretary shall establish in consultation with the State approving agencies.

The Secretary may establish an exemption under subparagraph (A) for any educational institution or branch of an educational institution as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(ii) In making any determination under clause (i), the Secretary may consult with the Secretary of Transportation on the performance of the provider of a commercial driver education program, including the status of the provider within the Training Provider Registry of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration when appropriate.

“(D) The Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a notification not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary grants an exemption under this paragraph. Such notification shall identify the educational institution and branch of such educational institution granted such exemption.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF REQUIREMENTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish requirements under section 3680A(e)(2)(B)(ii) of such title, as added by subsection (a).

(2) RULEMAKING.—In promulgating any rules to carry out paragraph (2) of section 3680A(e) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall consult with State approving agencies.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, by rule, provide that subsection (a) shall apply to commercial driver education programs on and after the day that is 30 days after the date on which the Secretary establishes the requirements under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may
As I mentioned, the legislation also improves student shopping sheets for enrollments at colleges and universities. This is a welcome improvement that ensures we won't waste time on paperwork that doesn't benefit students, student veterans in particular.

I thank Representative Van Orden for his work on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 5914, as amended, and urge my colleagues to do the same. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. Van Orden), the sponsor of this legislation. I appreciate the fine job he has done coming forward with this.

Mr. VAN ORDEN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to speak on behalf of my legislation, H.R. 5914, the VETT Act.

This legislation addresses unnecessary barriers that veterans face while trying to access educational benefits that they earned during their time of service and ensures a more effective transition to civilian life.

One important provision in the VETT Act addresses a burdensome administrative requirement by revising the current mandate for individualized shopping sheets. With the Department of Education's disastrous FAFSA rollout this year, many institutions cannot provide up-to-date, accurate financial aid information to many of our student veterans. Letting this failure result in a delayed delivery of education benefits for our veterans is entirely unacceptable.

My legislation resolves this burden by ensuring that the State approving agencies can only disapprove programs when schools fail to provide necessary information to the maximum extent possible.

This change offers the needed flexibility for institutions like police academies and truck driving schools, ensuring they can operate effectively while safeguarding veterans and their families.

These are two beleaguered industries that should be supported wholeheartedly by Congress and the American people at large.

I am also very thankful to see the inclusion of the provision from my colleague from North Carolina (Mr. Edwards) to give our veterans seeking opportunities in the transportation and trucking industry.

By eliminating unnecessary 2-year waits for GI benefits for commercial driving licenses, this provision opens up great-paying jobs to our veterans and aids in fulfilling necessary roles in the private sector.

We need to get our servicemembers transitioned from productive members of the military to productive members of civilian life.

This legislation dovetails perfectly with Mr. Nunn's H.R. 3722 because the 24-month window following separating from Active-Duty service is when our men and women commit suicide, and we will do anything as a body to prevent that.

I thank Ranking Member Takano and the chairman for your support in this, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote for it.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. Edwards) who has a portion of this bill as well.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. Van Orden of Wisconsin for his leadership on H.R. 5914, the Veterans Education Transparency and Training Act.

This bill makes much-needed improvements to veteran educational assistance programs, and it will expand job opportunities for the brave men and women who serve our great Nation.

I am similarly grateful to Mr. Van Orden for his collaboration and inclusiveness in leading the Vet Commercial Driver License Act of 2023, into the VETT Act.

The VICDL Act will increase veteran access to timely, quality commercial driver license training, increase the truck driver workforce pool, and reduce the strain on our Nation’s supply chain that is currently worsened by the severe truck driver shortage.

Across the United States, the trucking industry is facing more than a 78,000-driver shortage, which some estimate could reach 160,000 by 2030.

The shortage is exacerbated, in part, by burdensome red tape restricting veteran access to commercial driver license training using their GI Bill benefits.

Currently, roughly 8,400 commercial driving programs are approved for use by eligible veterans under the GI Bill, but a statutory 2-year rule prevents these training facilities from accepting GI benefits at secondary locations for 2 years.

This burdensome red tape has excluded many veterans from attending commercial driver license training facilities, and it has been proposed to remove this requirement so veterans could reach 160,000 by 2030.

This is an across-the-board victory for veterans and the nation and will reduce unnecessary roadblocks to veteran training and workforce opportunities.

I am grateful for its inclusion in the VETT Act, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5914.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 5914, as amended, the VETT Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.
Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, once again, I encourage Members to support this legislation and to help our veterans get the most out of their GI Bill benefits.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.
Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the coauthor of this legislation who serves on the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Oversight and Accountability Committee.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the Veterans’ Affairs Committee and Mr. Bost for their leadership and support in trying to fix a wrong.

Mr. BOST. I think, perfectly described the intent of this bill and what the problem is, and I think Mr. TAKANO did this fiduciary category are pensioners. That is wrong. No veteran and no family of a veteran should have to go through that once the determination has been made that fraud has occurred.

More than 50 percent of the people in this fiduciary category are pensioners. As Mr. TAKANO said, this is among the most vulnerable population of veterans, so they are easy to defraud, easy to exploit and take advantage of, and the government must stand by those men and women who served in uniform, served bravely, and deserve the best treatment from their government, not negligent treatment.

Today, this bill, H.R. 4016, the Veterans Fraud Reimbursement Act, grew out of actually an encounter I had with veterans, who were describing this very problem. We can’t solve every problem, but this one we can.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for making this a bipartisan effort. I hope that it will pass with no opposition and clear the Senate so that we can start making sure that our veterans are kept whole.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, once again, I ask my Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, on that I yield back the balance of my time.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST).

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

STUDENT VETERAN BENEFIT RESTORATION ACT

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1767) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide that educational assistance paid under Department of Veterans Affairs educational assistance programs to an individual who pursued a program or course of education that was terminated for certain reasons shall not be charged against the entitlement of the individual, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1767

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 “Student Veteran Benefit Restoration Act”.

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS THAT VIOLATE CERTAIN PROHIBITIONS ON ADVERTISING, SALES, AND ENROLLMENT PRACTICES.

(a) Restoration of Entitlement.—Section 3696 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(i) by redesignating subsections (i) through (n) as subsections (i) through (m), respectively; and

(ii) by inserting after subsection (h) the following new subsection (i):

“(i) Restoration of Entitlement.—Upon a final determination by the Under Secretary for Benefits under subsection (g), including the results of any appeal under subsection (k), that an educational institution or the owner of an educational institution violated subsection (a), (c), or (d), the Secretary may determine that any payment of educational assistance to an individual who used, or was entitied to use, entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 30, 31, 32, 33, or 35 of this title, or chapter 1606 or 1607 of title 10 suffered a loss due to the violation; and

(iii) subject to review under section 7104(a) of this title.

(b) Disapproval.—Section 3679 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section (c):

“(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, in the case of an educational institution that the Secretary determines is required to repay to the Secretary an amount under section 3696(b)(3) of this title and does not repay, the Secretary shall disapprove a course or program of education offered by the educational institution for purposes of informing such determination.

“(D) A determination made pursuant to subparagraph (C) shall be—

(i) made by the Under Secretary and may not be delegated; and

(ii) subject to review under section 7104(a) of this title.

(2) Disapproval.—Section 3679 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection (b):

“(b) Disapproval.—Section 3696 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection (c):

“(c) The Under Secretary shall establish a process for making a determination regarding the amount an educational institution or an owner of an educational institution is required to repay under subparagraph (A) in the case of a violation of subsection (a) or (c). Such process shall—

(i) clearly define factors to be used to determine the amount attributable to the violation, including the degree to which individual is enrolled in a program of education offered by the educational institution using entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 30, 31, 32, 33, 35 of this title or chapter 1606 or 1607 of title 10 suffered a loss due to the violation;

(ii) a requirement that the Under Secretary provide notice to the educational institution or the owner of the educational institution that the Under Secretary is in the process of making such a determination with respect to the educational institution or owner; and

(iii) a procedure under which the educational institution or owner may provide substantiation to the Under Secretary as to whether the educational institution or owner determines appropriate within a specified period of time outlined by the Secretary for purposes of informing such determination.

“(D) A determination made pursuant to subparagraph (C) shall be—

(i) made by the Under Secretary and may not be delegated; and

(ii) subject to review under section 7104(a) of this title.

(3) Restatement.—Paragraph (2) of subsection (k) of section 3696, as redesignated by subsection (a)(1), is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “that”;

(B) in subparagraph (B) of section 3696, as redesignated by subsection (a)(1), is amended—

(1) by striking “that”;

(2) by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (F) as subparagraph (G); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following new subparagraph (F):

“(F) The educational institution pays to the Secretary such amount.”

SEC. 3. MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN HOUSING EXEMPTIONS FOR SUBSIDY OF LOAN FEES.

The loan fee table in section 3726(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “November 15, 2031” each place it appears and inserting “November 29, 2031”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

Mention of a organization as a source of funding does not imply approval or agreement by the House of Representatives with the organization’s viewpoints or with any facts or conclusions to which the organization may have come.
may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1767, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1767, as amended, introduced by my friend and colleague Representative RAMIREZ from my home State of Illinois.

The bill on the floor today is the result of good, bipartisan work to improve the lives of veterans. I am pleased that Representative RAMIREZ was willing to work with me and make the changes that I believe were necessary to get this bill moving forward.

H.R. 1767, as amended, would restore the GI Bill benefits to student veterans who were harmed by misrepresentation or fraud of an educational institution.

The GI Bill is one of the very best benefits a veteran earns for their service. No veteran should be unable to use their benefits to receive an education because a fraudulent school stole their GI Bill. However, adequate due process to empower our government to make the changes that I believe were necessary to get this bill moving forward.

This Congress, we have seen the Biden White House weaponize the Department of Education and use student loans for political gain. Their decision to act without listening to Congress or the courts will cost American taxpayers billions of dollars. We cannot let the VA become another Department of Education, despite there being some people who would like to see that happen.

For this reason, H.R. 1767, as amended, would provide schools with a route for due process and appeal. Let me be clear: A school found guilty of fraud would still have to repay the entitled veteran, even with the due process provisions we have included in the bill.

This proposed solution would rely on VA to make decisions about schools participating in the GI Bill program rather than leaving the decision-making process to an entirely different agency.

I thank the broader veteran community for their support of this bill, as amended. I also thank my colleague Rep. EXUMA and the minority staff for helping us to get this bill into a good place.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 1767, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 1767, as amended, a bill that will help some veterans have their earned GI Bill benefits restored in cases of fraud.

The language before us is a narrower fix than our committee considered last summer, so while I will be supporting this bill, I want to send a message to some student veterans who, unfortunately, won’t be helped by this legislation today. We hear them. We will not stop working on a comprehensive fix for all veteran students impacted by fraudulent actors and ensure education is a fair system.

I thank Representative RAMIREZ for her tireless efforts on behalf of student veterans. From her first days in Congress, she has put student veterans first, and it is only right that she can lead the way in restoring benefits for our student veterans.

I thank Chairman Bost for working with us on this language to get it to a place where he can support it. I look forward to working with him and his staff on improving this bill in the Senate to ensure that no student veterans are left out.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. RAMIREZ), who is my very good read and a coauthor of this important piece of legislation. She also serves on the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee and the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee of the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee.

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge the passage of H.R. 1767, the Student Veteran Benefit Restoration Act.

When I came to Congress about 16 months ago, I made a commitment to represent single veterans as our country’s most vulnerable resource that would positively impact Illinois-03. During my first term, through our work on the Veterans’ Affairs Committee, I have made a priority to advocate for equity for our veterans and to ensure they have access to every single benefit and resource they have rightfully earned.

That work includes protecting them from bad actors seeking to exploit them.

It is why I am so proud that this bill, H.R. 1767, as amended, the Student Veteran Benefit Restoration Act, passed through committee with bipartisan support and has come to the floor today.

I thank Congressman MIKE LEVIN for being an original cosponsor with me. Also, I thank Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Bost, Ranking Member TAKANO, and the fantastic committee staff because we don’t acknowledge the work they do enough. I thank them for all of their hard work and leadership in moving this bill through committee.

I also thank Veterans Education Success and Student Veterans of America for leading the effort to protect our student veterans from actors seeking to exploit their benefits.

I thank the National Educational Association and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, HACU, for their support of my bill and the work they do on behalf of student veterans and all students.

I also want to take the time to express my gratitude to my staff and the rest of the committee staff for the countless hours that they have spent, the majority and minority, working on this bill. I thank them for their efforts.

I am grateful for Justin Vogt, who has been and continues to be instrumental to this work.

Access to quality education is one of the promises we have made to our veterans, and we have to deliver. The educational benefits provided by the GI Bill have been instrumental in helping veterans gain economic security and access to postsecondary education. Moreover, these benefits have helped ensure that student veterans are fully supported to transition back into civilian life.

This bill starts the long-overdue process of restoring the GI Bill benefits of student veterans who were defrauded by for-profit colleges and universities. This bill will help veterans like Army veteran Christopher Brown from Des Plaines, Illinois, who was promised a quality education that would be covered by his benefits, but ITT Tech instead used all of his benefits and left him with $95,000 of debt.

Because of this bill, thousands of veterans across the country will now have a pathway to be able to seek restoration.

I thank our ranking member, again, for his endless commitment, and I thank our chairman, as well.

I believe that today is the beginning of the journey of making sure that every single veteran is able to go to school and is able to have an opportunity to seek the education that they deserve.

Madam Speaker, yes, my bill was negotiated and amended, and I look forward to working together to ensure full access for veterans and students as we continue to do this work in the coming months and in the coming Congress and certainly making sure that this bill passes the Senate.

We have come a long way in the fight to protect our student veterans and passing H.R. 1767.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support its swift passage.
today, and I look forward to it becoming law.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, in closing, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 1767, as amended, the Student Veteran Benefit Restoration Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, once again, I encourage all of our Members to support this bill, as well as the other bills we have moved here tonight.

Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member and staff on both sides of the aisle for the work they have done, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Bost) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1767, as amended.

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. BOST. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the ayes 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.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 21 minutes p.m.), under its previous order and pursuant to House Resolution 172, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, April 30, 2024, at 10 a.m., as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Honorable DONALD M. PAYNE, Jr.

Thereupon (at 8 o'clock and 21 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, April 30, 2024, at 10 a.m., as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Honorable DONALD M. PAYNE, Jr.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker’s table and referred as follows:


EC–3946. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Social Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department’s Major final rule — Retirement Security Rule: Definition of an Investment Advice Fiduciary (RIN: 1210-AC02) received April 25, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

EC–3947. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department’s major final rule — Amendment to Prohibited Transaction Exemptions 2020-2 (Application No.: D-12057) (RIN: 1210-ZA32) received April 25, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

EC–3948. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department’s Major final rule — Amendment to Prohibited Transaction Exemption 75-1, 77-4, 80-3, 83-1, and 86-128 (Application No.: D-12095) (RIN: 1210-ZA34) received April 25, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

EC–3949. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Social Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department’s Major final rule — Amendment to Prohibited Transaction Exemption 84-24 (Application No.: D-12096) (RIN: 1210-ZA35) received April 25, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.


EC–3954. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Office of Medicare and Medicaid Programs, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department’s Major final rule — Medicaid Program; Ensuring Access to Medicaid Services for Individuals with HIV/AIDS (RIN: 0938-AC04) received April 17, 2024, 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.

EC–3955. A letter from the General Counsel, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department’s Major final rule — Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance (RIN: 0965-AA15) received April 25, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

EC–3956. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DVTDC 23-093 Certification of Proposed Issuance of an Export License Pursuant to Sec 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–3957. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DVTDC 23-098 Certification of Proposed Issuance of an Export License Pursuant to Sec 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–3958. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DVTDC 23-097 Certification of Proposed Issuance of an Export License Pursuant to Sec 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–3959. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DVTDC 23-096 Certification of Proposed Issuance of an Export License Pursuant to Sec 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–3960. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DVTDC 23-094 Certification of Proposed Issuance of an Export License Pursuant to Sec 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–3961. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Department Notification Number: DVTDC 23-098, pursuant to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–3962. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Department Notification Number: DVTDC 23-092, pursuant to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–3963. A letter from the Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Department Notification Number: DVTDC 23-097, pursuant to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.
Fluid Mineral Leases and Leasing Process (BLM—HQ—FRN—MO4050176289) (RIN: 1004-AE9B) received April 26, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A)); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.


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:

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. Supplemental report on H.R. 615. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture from prohibiting the use of lead ammunition or tackle on certain Federal land or water under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior, and the Secretary of Agriculture, and for other purposes (Rept. 118-203, Pt. 2). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ABBOTT: Committee on the Budget. H.R. 7032. A bill to amend the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 to provide the Congressional Budget Office with the necessary authorities to expedite the sharing of data from executive branch agencies, and for other purposes (Rept. 118-477). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. COMER: Committee on Oversight and Accountability. H.R. 7219. A bill to ensure that Federal agencies rely on the best reasonable scientific, technical, demographic, economic, and statistical information and evidence to develop, issue or inform the public of the nature and bases of Federal programs or activities, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118-475, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CULBERTSON: Committee on Oversight and Accountability. H.R. 7109. A bill to require a citizenship question on the decennial census, to require reporting on certain census statistics, and to modify apportionment of Representatives to be based on United States citizens instead of all persons, with amendments (Rept. 118-476). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mrs. FITZCHAB: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 1173. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 615) to prohibit the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture from prohibiting the use of lead ammunition or tackle on certain Federal land or water under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 761) to require the Secretary of the Interior to regulate commercial fishing and harvest of gray wolf from the list of endangered species and to reinstate the Mitigation Fund Act of 1993 to provide for security of tenure for use of mining claims for any purpose, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 614) to provide for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3397) to require the Director of the Bureau of Land Management to withdraw a rule of the Bureau of Land Management concerning national forest land and landscape health; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6285) to ratify and approve all authorizations, permits, verifications, extensions, and other legal opinions, incidental take statements, and any other approvals or orders issued pursuant to Federal law necessary for the establishment and administration of the Coastal Plain oil and gas leasing program, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6990) to provide for the consideration of additional data in determining the creditworthiness of an applicant, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 8142. A bill to require the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to conduct an assessment of the use of certain educational data in determining the creditworthiness of an applicant, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 8143. A bill to establish requirements relating to credit scores and educational credit scores, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BERGMAN (for himself and Mrs. DINGELL):

H.R. 8144. A bill to amend title III of the Public Health Service Act to include rural emergency hospitals in the definition of a covered entity for purposes of the 340B drug discount program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BURLISON:

H.R. 8145. A bill to require the Secretary of the Army to convey or lease certain land acquired for the Table Rock Lake project to owners of property located adjacent to such project, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. DESPOSito:

H.R. 8146. A bill to require a report by the Attorney General on the impact the border crisis is having on law enforcement at the Federal, State, local, and Tribal level; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DAVIDSON (for himself, Mr. HAGHMAN, Mr. GUTHMANN, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. O'KEEFE, Mr. POSHY, Mr. HERN, Mr. GOOD of Virginia, Mrs. FICHAB, Mr. FALLON, and Mr. ARMSTRONG):

H.R. 8147. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to conduct a study of the Office of Corporate Transparency Act; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. FEENSTRA (for himself and Mr. NUNN of Iowa):

H.R. 8148. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow for the furnishing of telehealth services to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. FERGUSON (for himself and Mr. NICKEL):

H.R. 8149. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, to clarify the tax treatment of digital asset rewards; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TONY GOME Z of Texas (for himself, Mr. CORREA, Mr. CICOMANI, Mr. CURRAR, Mr. LA CRUZ, and Mr. VINCIENTE GONZALEZ of Texas):

H.R. 8150. A bill to require the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to establish procedures for conducting maintenance projects at ports of entry at which customs repayment only services conduct certain enforcement and facilitation activities; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Mr. SARRE):

H.R. 8151. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand eligible practitioners to furnish telehealth services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. LAWLER (for himself, Mr. JACKSON of North Carolina, Mr. MCCORMICK, and Ms. CROCKET):

H.R. 8152. A bill to amend the Export Control Reform Act of 2018 to provide for control of remote access of items, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MOONEY (for himself, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. MILLER):

H.R. 8153. A bill to amend the Wall Street Transparency and Accountability Act of 2010 to provide covered banking institutions with additional exemptions relating to rate swaps, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. VAN ORDEN, and Mr. NEGA):

H.R. 8184. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend telehealth services for federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. NEWHOUSE (for himself, Mr. PULSCHER, Mr. ZOECHER, and Mr. WALTON):

H.R. 8155. A bill to direct the Secretary of Energy to develop fish and wildlife program funding alternatives to mitigate the cost to ratepayer funds; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.
By Mr. TONY GONZALEZ of Texas:
H.R. 8150. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To require the Secretary of the Army to acquire technology that uses acoustic sound to deter pinniped predators at such Dam, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8159. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the breaching of federally operated dams if such breach would result in the replacement of energy resources occupying additional acreage, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8160. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the breaching of federally operated dams if such breach would result in the replacement of energy resources occupying additional acreage, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8161. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the breaching of federally operated dams if such breach would result in the replacement of energy resources occupying additional acreage, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8162. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the breaching of federally operated dams if such breach would result in the replacement of energy resources occupying additional acreage, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8163. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the breaching of federally operated dams if such breach would result in the replacement of energy resources occupying additional acreage, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8164. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the breaching of federally operated dams if such breach would result in the replacement of energy resources occupying additional acreage, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8167. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8188. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from allowing certain dumping operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8189. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8190. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8191. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8192. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8193. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8194. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8195. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8196. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8197. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8198. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8199. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8200. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8201. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8202. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8203. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8204. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 8205. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To prohibit the Secretary of the Army from carrying out certain spillage operations on the Lower Snake River dams, and for other purposes.
CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX 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. JORDAN

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on the Judiciary in H.R. 6090, the Antisemitism Awareness Act of 2023, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. STAUBER

The amendment to be offered by myself, or my designee, to H.R. 6285, the Alaska’s Right to Produce Act of 2023, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.
Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in celebrating the 50th anniversary of Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels. For the last half-century, the program has been diligently serving the older adults of the community when they need it most. We thank Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels and its team members for its service to the Sixth District and are excited to see how the program keeps serving the community.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA MIGLIORE

HON. DEBBIE LESKO
OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Arizona’s 8th Congressional District and the State of Arizona’s 29th Legislative District, I would like to recognize Linda Migliore. Linda Migliore is the Chairwoman of the Republican Legislative District 29 which spans the Cities of Surprise, El Mirage, Youngtown, Litchfield Park, and Goodyear. The district also includes a West Valley fixture, Luke Air Force Base, where the sound of freedom is often heard flying the skies of Arizona.

As Chairwoman, Linda has worked tirelessly to ensure citizens are educated and engaged in the civic process. Her efforts to ensure Republicans are elected in the Phoenix West Valley have been critical to the success of Legislative District 29 and beyond.

I am thankful for Linda’s leadership and dedication to conservative principles. I sincerely appreciate her service to the legislative district and to the State of Arizona.

RECOGNIZING CHARLES KOMON

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN
OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Charles Komon for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Charles has overcome many challenges along his journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Charles, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Charles’s hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Charles Komon on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT BRETT GRAHAM

HON. PAT FALLON
OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Brett Graham of Denison, Texas, and present him with the Congressional Patriot Award. Brett has dedicated himself to serving and uplifting our community.

Brett is a 5th generation native of Grayson County. He graduated from Baylor University in 1990 with a Bachelor of Business Administration specializing in marketing and real estate. In the following year, he began his career as a real estate appraiser with the Jack Poe Company in Dallas. In 1993, Brett stepped up to serve as the Chief Executive Officer of Graham International, a family-owned franchised truck dealership. Graham International has several locations in North Texas and Oklahoma, and since 1965 they have continued to provide quality services for commercial truck drivers in our community. Brett has concurrently served as the CEO of Graham Truck Centers since 2000.

Throughout his extensive career, Brett has been an active member of our community and advocate for a prosperous business environment. In the late 1990s, he joined the board of the Sherman Chamber of Commerce and worked with the Texas Association of Business in numerous leadership positions. For his outstanding work, the Baylor Institute for Family Business has recognized his company as the 2013 Texas Family Business of the Year. In 2016, Governor Greg Abbott appointed Brett to serve on the board of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles for his expertise in the automobile industry. In his free time, he volunteers with the Texas Republican Party to help elect constitutional conservatives in local and state elections. I am proud to recognize Brett today for his important contributions to our community and support for strong family values.

It is an honor to bestow Brett with the Patriot Award for his exceptional service to the people of North Texas.
RECOGNIZING MAGAIRA HOWARD

HON. BRITTANY PETTerson

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 29, 2024

Ms. PETTerson, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Magaira Howard for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Magaira has overcome many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Magaira, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Magaira’s hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of her students’ journey.

It is my honor to congratulate Magaira Howard on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT TOM WATT

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sheriff Tom Watt of Denison, Texas, and present him with the Congressional Patriot Award. Tom currently serves as the chief law enforcement officer for Grayson County, and he has dedicated himself to serving and protecting our community.

Tom was born at Selfridge Air Force Base in Harrison Township, Michigan. He began his lengthy law enforcement career in 1979 as a Corrections Officer for the United States Army’s 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas. In 1981, Tom began serving as a civilian patrol officer for the Sherman Police Department. For his outstanding public service and excellence, he was selected to serve as Sherman’s Chief of Police in 2004, a position he held for nearly nine years. Tom briefly retired in 2013, but was drawn back to public service when then-Sheriff Keith Gary asked him to become his Chief Deputy, which Tom gladly accepted.

Recognizing Tom Watt of Grayson County, Texas, for his service and dedication to the community, the people of Grayson County, and the people of North Texas.
Operational Response Command in Salt Lake City, UT, which was the USAFR’s all-hazard response command. He also served as Commanding General—80th Training Command (OPCON CON TRADOC), Acting Deputy Commanding General—CRBN, 335th Signal Command, and Commanding General of the 415th CRBN Brigade, where he was dual-hatted as the Task Force Operations Commander, JTF–51, ARNORTH for the C2CRE–A homeland response mission. Lieutenant General Roper was deployed to Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Shield and to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He also served as the Chair of the Grayson County College Foundation’s Board’s Finance Committee for six years, where he helped support prospective students in our community with scholarships. Since 2019, George has been a Precinct Chair for the Grayson County Republican Party and helps local candidates raise funds and win elections. In his free time, he enjoys ranching, traveling, and taking care of his dog. George and Barbara are longtime contributors to St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital, St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Sherman, and the Grayson County College Foundation. I am proud to recognize George’s important contributions to our community and his continued efforts to support those in need.

It is my honor to bestow George with the Patriot Award for his exceptional service to our Nation and the people of North Texas.

HONORING FIRST LIEUTENANT DALE HAVER

HON. THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.
OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. KEAN of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service and sacrifice of First Lieutenant Dale Haver in the Vietnam War.

Lt. Haver grew up in Whitehouse Station, NJ, now part of New Jersey’s Seventh District. An accomplished student athlete, he was a leader on many sports teams at Hunterdon Central High School. After leaving New Jersey, Lt. Haver attended the University of Montana and became a firefighter. He joined the U.S. Forest Service in Missoula, Montana, as a smokejumper, parachuting into remote woodlands to fight wildfires. He routinely undertook the most challenging assignments, impressing all with his dedication and talent.

In 1968, Lt. Haver was deployed to Vietnam with the U.S. Army as a helicopter pilot, where he flew more than 25 missions over hostile territory in under six months of service. On April 9, 1969, Lt. Haver was piloting a rescue operation when his aircraft experienced a technical malfunction and crash-landed. Lt. Haver stayed with the wreckage, assisting his flight crew in escaping despite having suffered 3rd degree burns. Sadly, he passed away from his injuries two days later. For his remarkable courage and selflessness, Lt. Haver was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal, and the Air Medal, to add to the Air Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and Vietnam Campaign Ribbon he had earned prior to his death.

Furthermore, he was awarded the National Order of Vietnam, Fifth Class by the Republic of Vietnam.
Lt. Haver’s service for his country both domestically and abroad deserves commendation. I am proud to recognize his bravery and patriotism today and am glad that his legacy lives on in the Seventh District of New Jersey.

RECOGNIZING CADENCE DONOVAN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024
Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Cadence Donovan for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Cadence has overcome many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Cadence, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Cadence’s hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Cadence Donovan on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT DEBBIE FLANDERS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024
Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Debbie Flanders of Sherman, Texas, and present her with the Congressional Patriot Award.

Debbie was born in Mountain City, Tennessee and graduated from Tennessee Technological University in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness. During her time in college she was active in the Young Republicans Club and worked for former US Senator Lamar Alexander’s 1978 gubernatorial campaign. After graduation, Debbie married the love of her life, John, and they moved to Texas five years later. Together, they raised three wonderful children. Debbie began her career as a caseworker at Texoma Community Center and worked for the Pottsboro Press, a local community newsletter.

In the mid-1990s, Debbie began working closely with the Grayson County Republican Party, and she served asPrecinct Chair and Secretary for over a decade. She was one of the founding members of the Grayson County Young Republicans, where she helped educate and empower students in our community to be active in the political process. For her outstanding work and efforts, the GCRP has presented Debbie with the prestigious Eisenhower Award and the Chairman’s Award. In 2014, she received the Texas Federation of Republican Women Tribute to Women Award. Currently, Debbie serves as the Vice President and Campaign Chair for the Grayson County Republican Women PAC. She is a devoted woman of faith and regularly attends the Central Christian Church in Sherman, where she was the Children’s Church Director and a volunteer at the food pantry. I am proud to recognize Debbie today for her important contributions to our community.

It is an honor to bestow Debbie with the Patriot Award for her exceptional service to our Nation and the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF RIDGELAND, MISSISSIPPI, ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 125TH ANNIVERSARY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024
Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of Ridgeland in Madison County, Mississippi, on the occasion of its 125th anniversary in 2024.

The land that is now Ridgeland was once only a footpath along the Natchez Trace for the local Choctaw Indians. Over time, the footpath became a common road for travel and commerce. Turner Brashears, an early settler in Mississippi, opened a stand nearby in 1804 after seeing the potential of the area for business. In 1811, Silas Dinsmore opened the Choctaw Agency in the area. Though small and seemingly insignificant at the time, in 1812 Andrew Jackson camped with his army at Brashears Stand returning from New Orleans.

By 1829, Madison County, named after former President James Madison, was established in Mississippi. The growth in the area was recognized and in 1832 William J. Austin was granted land along the Natchez Trace. In 1853, Austin sold the land to James Burroughs from North Carolina. By 1865, the area was called Yellowley’s Crossing by the Illinois Central Railroad, which operated there. This changed the old footpath forever.

The local community began to swell with people and the locals started calling the area Jessamine. The old Brashears Stand was destroyed by a fire in 1896 and Yellowley sold his land to the Highland Colony Company owned by Gorton W. Nichols and Edwards M. Treadle. In 1899, the village was incorporated as Ridgeland.

Since its incorporation in 1899, Ridgeland has been a center for trade and travel and offers a vibrant life for its residents. Through many decades of forward-thinking leadership, including that of longtime mayor Gene McGee, Ridgeland has continued to prosper. In 1999, Ridgeland celebrated 100 years and here, in 2024, I am proud to offer these remarks in honor of her 125th anniversary.

Ridgeland has done much through the years to contribute to the betterment of society and I am proud to represent Ridgeland, Mississippi, in the United States Congress.

HONORING THE CARYVILLE Cares PROJECT
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024
Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Violet Kehl for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

The Caryville Cares PlayGround is an inclusive playground, where children of all different ability levels would have the opportunity to play together. Inclusive playgrounds like this are the start of healthy friendships that can last a lifetime and are places where children of all levels of ability are able to experience the joy of outdoor play.

The playground was designed with seven main principles in mind to be fair; be free; be included; be smart; be safe; be active; and be comfortable. The seven principles guided every step of the planning, construction, and implementation for this project.

The groups that initiated this project spearheaded fundraising, applied for grants, and solicited donations and support from the Caryville community. Their efforts included dinners, auctions, roadblocks, and even a local “Dancing with the Stars”-styled event. They successfully raised more than a half million dollars in both cash and in-kind donations. After two years of hard work by the team, the playground was fully funded. On April 26, 2024, the gates to the Caryville Cares PlayGround opened for the first time. Every child in the community will finally have a place to play, thanks to the dedication of the Caryville Cares organizing committee and the incredible generosity of the local community.

It is my pleasure to recognize the community team that took on this important and worthwhile undertaking. The group includes Mr. Brandon Johnson, who served as its president, along with fellow members Mrs. Cheyenne Allen, Mrs. Taylor Franke, Mr. Landyn Ford, Mr. Joe Goins, Mr. Blake Gray, Mrs. Tara Lee Gillespie, Mrs. Kristin Long, Mr. Joshua McDowell, Mrs. Autumn Longmire, Mrs. Ali Dower Miracle, Mrs. Ashley Whitel, Mrs. Bridy Nelson, Mr. Micah Nelson, Mrs. Sara Padgett, Mr. Patrick Pebley, Mrs. Kaylee Queener, Mrs. Raewyn Snodderly, Mrs. Elizabeth Tamer, Mrs. Emily Tamer, Mrs. Kat Winter Vincent, Mrs. Ally Winter, Mr. Kevin Winter, and Mrs. Saarah Young.

RECOGNIZING VIOLET KEHL
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024
Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Violet Kehl for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

The Caryville Cares PlayGround is an inclusive playground, where children of all different ability levels would have the opportunity to play together. Inclusive playgrounds like this are the start of healthy friendships that can last a lifetime and are places where children of all levels of ability are able to experience the joy of outdoor play.

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It is my pleasure to recognize the community team that took on this important and worthwhile undertaking. The group includes Mr. Brandon Johnson, who served as its president, along with fellow members Mrs. Cheyenne Allen, Mrs. Taylor Franke, Mr. Landyn Ford, Mr. Joe Goins, Mr. Blake Gray, Mrs. Tara Lee Gillespie, Mrs. Kristin Long, Mr. Joshua McDowell, Mrs. Autumn Longmire, Mrs. Ali Dower Miracle, Mrs. Ashley Whitel, Mrs. Bridy Nelson, Mr. Micah Nelson, Mrs. Sara Padgett, Mr. Patrick Pebley, Mrs. Kaylee Queener, Mrs. Raewyn Snodderly, Mrs. Elizabeth Tamer, Mrs. Emily Tamer, Mrs. Kat Winter Vincent, Mrs. Ally Winter, Mr. Kevin Winter, and Mrs. Saarah Young.

RECOGNIZING VIOLET KEHL
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024
Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Violet Kehl for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.
Violet has overcome many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Violet, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Violet’s hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Violet Kehl on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT LOU HOLTZ

HON. PAT FALCON
OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. FALCON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Coach Lou Holtz of Orlando, Florida, and present him with the Congressional Patriot Award. Coach Holtz is a legendary American who is regarded as one of the greatest football coaches of all time.

Coach Holtz is a native of East Liverpool, Ohio. He attended Kent State University and was a member of Kent State’s football team and ROTC program. After graduating in 1959 with a history degree, Coach Holtz commissioned as a Field Artillery Officer in the U.S. Army Reserves. In the following year, he began his extensive coaching career while attending graduate school at the University of Iowa. Over the next several decades, Coach Holtz served as the head football coach for numerous colleges, universities, and professional teams nationwide. Most notably, he led Notre Dame’s Fighting Irish to record-breaking, back-to-back victories in the 1988 national championship.

For his outstanding accomplishments, Coach Holtz was granted the Golden Plate award by the American Academy of Achievement and received honorary doctorates from many academic institutions. He was also inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame, the Arkansas Spots Hall of Fame, the Cotton Bowl Hall of Fame, and the Upper Ohio Valley Hall of Fame.

After he retired from football, Coach Holtz became a sports broadcaster and established the Holtz Charitable Foundation to provide scholarships for students to attend trade schools. Moreover, he published several books to inspire young adults to develop winning game plans for life. In 2020, President Donald Trump awarded Coach Holtz the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his important contributions to our nation. I am proud to recognize Coach Holtz’s spectacular legacy. The lasting impact he made on our community will be felt for many years to come.

It is an honor to bestow Coach Holtz with the Patriot Award for his exceptional service to our Nation. May God Bless him.

IN RECOGNITION OF CECILY HAHN FOR THREE AND A HALF YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE

HON. SUZAN K. DELBENE
OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 29, 2024

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Cecily Hahn for three and a half years of invaluable service to my office and my constituents in Washington’s 1st Congressional District.

Cecily joined my office in January 2021, and as a former resident of the 1st Congressional District, she brought a much-needed and valuable perspective on the issues that matter the most to our communities. She worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to support and address the unique challenges experienced by the exclave community of Point Roberts and other communities along our Northern Border. Through her persistence, the House passed legislation to add Mount Vernon as a federal court location in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington.

Cecily has also been a fearless champion of advancing strong privacy legislation, and has elevated the profile of the XR Caucus within the House of Representatives. In addition to her advancement of my legislative priorities, Cecily has served as a wonderful mentor to others on my staff and helped them grow and advance in their own careers.

Cecily brought a great work ethic, strong Washingtonian spirit, and exemplary legal knowledge to the role. Over her tenure, we have learned about all things Taylor Swift and F1, and her impact on our office will be long lived. She built lasting relationships with my team and those who had the pleasure of getting to know her. Cecily has been an amazing staffer and a wonderful friend to all in the office, and we will all sorely miss her.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Cecily Hahn and wishing her the best in all of her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING MADISON GRAY-CONKLING

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN
OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 29, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Madison Gray-Conkling for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Madison has overcome many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Madison, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Madison’s hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Madison Gray-Conkling on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT KATHY PUCKETT

HON. PAT FALCON
OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. FALCON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Kathryn “Kathy” Puckett of Howe, Texas, and present her with the Congressional Patriot Award. Kathy has dedicated herself to serving and uplifting our community.

Shortly after graduating from high school in 1970, Kathy married her high school sweetheart, Logan. Together, they moved to Tehran, Iran, where Logan worked in the oilfield industry and Kathy taught conversational English at the University of Tehran. After a decade of traveling and living in fifteen countries around the world, Kathy and Logan returned home to start a family.

Since then, she has been actively involved with numerous community and political organizations in North Texas. Kathy helped organize food drives, provide voter registration assistance, and elect local candidates. She also taught financial literacy courses and volunteered with her church’s youth department to raise awareness of the issue of homelessness.

Kathy previously served as the President of the Grayson County Republican Women and is the current District Director for the Texas Federation of Republican Women in SD30. In her free time, she enjoys quilting, yoga, traveling, and spending time with her grandchildren. I am proud to recognize Kathy today for her outstanding efforts to support those in need. I am confident she will continue to make a positive impact in our community for many years to come.

It is an honor to bestow Kathy with the Patriot Award for her exceptional service to the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING PROFESSOR BARRY BARISH FOR RECEIVING THE NATIONAL MEDAL OF SCIENCE

HON. MARK TAKANO
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Professor Barry Barish of University of California, Riverside, for receiving the National Medal of Science from President Biden in honor of his great achievements and invaluable contributions to the field of particle physics.

The citation for his award reads “For exemplary service to science, including groundbreaking research on sub-atomic particles. His leadership of the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory led to the first detection of gravitational waves from merging black holes, confirming a key part of Einstein’s Theory of Relativity. He has broadened our understanding of the universe and our nation’s sense of wonder and discovery.” In addition, Professor Barish was awarded the 2017 Nobel Prize in physics in recognition of his leadership in the discovery of gravitational waves—first predicted by Einstein a
century earlier. Professor Barish is currently faculty at University of California, Riverside, in the Department of Physics and Astronomy where he was instrumental in recruiting and developing a new group of faculty focused on the broad field of experimental cosmology.

These young faculty are conducting cutting-edge research exploring the universe using gravitational waves, searching for dark matter, using the smallest known particles to probe the origin of matter in the universe, and studying the earliest light leftover from the big bang to understand how the universe formed. This group now plays leading roles in international experiments exploring this groundbreaking science and is developing novel instruments that will lead the way for future scientific endeavors for years to come. This research group is also training the next generation of scientists and engineers.

The skills that students learn will prepare them to be future leaders in research and industry alike, becoming experts in emerging technologies like semiconductors and quantum sensors, and they will be prepared to grow these vital industries.

I commend Professor Barish for his remarkable achievements in science and teaching and his work training the next generation of scientists at University of California, Riverside. May their work continue to illuminate the mysteries of the universe and inspire us all to reach for the stars.

RECOGNIZING TENLY FENTON
HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN
OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tenly Fenton for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Tenly has overcome many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Tenly, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Tenly's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Tenly Fenton on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

CELEBRATING FOUNDER'S DAY OF THE RUSH CREEK YACHT CLUB
HON. PAT FALLON
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the founding of the Rush Creek Yacht Club of Heath, Texas.

In 1989, a group of visionary entrepreneurs from White Rock Lake conceived the idea of forming a yacht club to bring together sailing enthusiasts across North Texas. This club would be located on the shores of the newly built Lake Ray Hubbard and classified as a nonprofit organization owned by its members. After a steering committee was formed, the board members obtained state approval, including tax-exempt and nonprofit status. The members initially settled on naming it the “Dalлас Olympic Yacht Club”, but it was changed to the “Rush Creek Yacht Club” shortly after. Since its establishment, the Rush Creek Yacht Club has devoted itself to building a family-oriented boating club to serve sailors of all ages and experience levels. On top of providing year-round recreation, the Rush Creek Yacht Club continues to stress the importance of family-oriented boating clubs for years to come. I have requested the United States flag to be flown over our Nation’s Capitol in recognition of this historic occasion. I wish them continued success and fair winds for many years to come.

HONORING THE WORK OF DR. TIM RYAN
HON. MARCUS J. MOLINARO
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I celebrate today the distinguished career of Dr. Tim Ryan, who will soon graduate from his role as President to Chancellor of the Culinary Institute of America (CIA). As he embarks on his retirement, Dr. Ryan will continue to serve as an advisor to the institution.

Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Dr. Ryan’s journey is one of passion, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. His early affiliation with the CIA as a student set the stage for what would become a lifelong relationship with the institution. For over four decades, Dr. Ryan’s visionary leadership has spurred remarkable growth and international acclaim for the CIA. He has held various executive roles before his historic appointment as President in 2001, becoming the first alumnus to lead the college. Under his presidency, the CIA has become a global educational powerhouse. Today, the CIA boasts a diverse array of associate, bachelor’s, and master’s degree programs across campuses in New York, California, Texas, and Singapore. These institutions have become epicenters of gastronomic education, nurturing future chefs, sommeliers, and hospitality leaders.

Dr. Ryan’s vision has firmly established the CIA as the preeminent culinary college in the world. Dr. Ryan’s influence extends beyond the boundaries of education. His role in the U.S. Department of State’s Diplomatic Culinary Partnership underscores his commitment to leveraging food as a means of fostering international relations and cultural exchange. His accolades, including the Presidential Medal from the World Association of Chefs Societies and induction into the James Beard Foundation’s Who’s Who of Food & Beverage in America, demonstrate his impact on the global food landscape.

Celebrated as one of the 50 Greatest Pittsburghers of All Time, Dr. Ryan’s philosophy is simple yet profound: “100 percent of the world eats food”. This universal truth drives his mission to educate and inspire the next generation of culinary leaders, ensuring that the CIA remains at the forefront of the world’s gastronomic scene. Dr. Ryan’s contributions to the CIA, the food industry, and the broader community in the Hudson Valley of New York are immeasurable. His contributions have not only shaped the CIA but have also enriched the world’s culinary heritage, making him a true pioneer of American cuisine.

Mr. Speaker, I have known Dr. Ryan personally for many years. As an educator and culinarian, he has impacted over 30,000 individuals who have graduated from the CIA during his tenure as the president of the Culinary Institute of America. Dr. Ryan has an unwavering commitment to transforming the food industry and bettering the nation and world through education, practice, and scholarship. It is with great admiration and respect that we commend Dr. Tim Ryan for his extraordinary achievements and enduring legacy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in recognizing the distinguished career and lasting impact of Dr. Tim Ryan, a leader who has left an indelible mark on American gastronomy, education, and the culinary arts. His legacy is not only reflected in the culinary professionals he has mentored, but also in his embodiment of excellence.

TRIBUTE TO LORI BANGO
HON. DEBBIE LESKO
OF ARIZONA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Arizona’s 8th Congressional District and the State of Arizona’s 28th Legislative District, I would like to recognize Lori Bango. Lori Bango is the Chairwoman of the Republican Legislative District 28 which spans portions of Peoria and North Phoenix and includes the unincorporated areas of Sun City and Sun City West, representing a population of over 228,000.

As Chairwoman, Lori has worked tirelessly to educate, train, and inspire the next generation of citizens through civic engagement. Her efforts to ensure Republicans are elected in the Phoenix West Valley have been instrumental to the success of Legislative District 28 and beyond.

I am thankful for Lori’s leadership and dedication to conservative principles. I sincerely appreciate her service to the legislative district and to the State of Arizona.

RECOGNIZING QUINN JOHNSON
HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN
OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Quinn Johnson for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Quinn has overcome many challenges along his journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Quinn, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This
award is a testament to Quinn's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Quinn Johnson on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT HOWARD HANSON

HON. PAT FALLON OF TEXAS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Hanson Howard of Granger, Indiana, and present him with the Congressional Patriot Award for a lifetime of service to our Nation.

Col. Hanson was born on June 28, 1940, in Slayton, Minnesota. He spent most of his childhood on a family farm and had a desire to serve and defend his country. In 1963, Col. Hanson commissioned into the United States Air Force and served as a pilot with the 615th Tactical Fighter Squadron and the 522nd Tactical Fighter Squadron. During the Vietnam War, he flew 315 combat missions in the F-100 Super Sabre fighter jet. Prior to retiring from military service in 1992, Col. Hanson served as the Commander of the Air Force ROTC Detachment 225 at the University of Notre Dame. He remained at Notre Dame until 2005, when he served as the Assistant Vice President and Director of the Office of Research.

Currently, Col. Hanson works part-time at the Warren Golf Course at Notre Dame. He is married to his wife Nancy, and together, they raised two children and have many more grandchildren. In his free time, Col. Hanson participates in community service projects for Kiwanis International and volunteers as a Court Appointed Special Advocate to support children in need. He also enjoys playing golf and walking his German Shorthair puppy. I am proud to recognize Col. Hanson today for his important contributions to our community.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF LAWRENCE "LARRY" AMENDOLA

HON. ROSA L DELAURO OF CONNECTICUT IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Monday, April 29, 2024

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I use today to pay tribute to the life and legacy of an outstanding member of the New Haven community and my dear friend, Lawrence Amendola. Larry was an extraordinary man who dedicated a lifetime of service to the City of New Haven, particularly the Wooster Square neighborhood we both called home.

Born and raised in New Haven, Connecticut, Larry enlisted in the United States Army after graduating from high school. Stationed in Germany for the majority of his military service, he was honorably discharged before returning to New Haven to begin his career. Larry spent his professional life as a civil servant, beginning his City employment at the CETA Program and later working for the Department of Parks and Recreation, retiring at the age of 75.

Larry also served as President of AFSCME Local 3144 Management Union, one of City’s largest unions, for over 20 years. It was in this role that he had the most impact—where he fought on behalf of hundreds of city employees, negotiating contracts that ensured good wages and health benefits as well as pension and retirement security. Larry understood better than most the benefits of the union and he worked tirelessly on behalf of those he represented.

While Larry dedicated his professional life to the City of New Haven, he also dedicated much of his time and energy to the community as well. He served as Vice-President and President of the Saint Andrew the Apostle Society—one of the Italian American social organizations whose goal is to preserve and celebrate our shared Italian heritage. Larry served in these roles for more than 30 years and volunteered countless hours at the Society’s annual festival. His work in the community was recognized when he was awarded the Steve Vuolo Award.

I am fortunate in that I knew Larry for most of my life. He was a close family friend, having worked with both of my parents over the years. I had the opportunity to work with Larry early in my career. I was working with the Community Action Institute—at the Skill Center on Cedar Street—and Larry and I partnered to organize additional city employees. He was not only a friend, but a great mentor. I learned a lot from him and was always grateful for his support and friendship throughout my own career.

Lawrence “Larry” Amendola was a remarkable member of our community. His passing leaves a hole in our community that will not easily be filled. I extend my deepest sympathies to his companion of nearly 20 years, Flora D’Elsi, as well as his many cherished nieces, nephews, and friends. His passion, advocacy, and commitment to service will long serve as an example to which we should all strive.

HONORING JAMES COLLINS TAYLOR, VETERAN OF THE GHOST ARMY, FOR RECEIVING THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

HON. WARREN DAVIDSON OF OHIO IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Speaker, on February 1, 2022, the President signed into law S. 1404, which awarded a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops and the 3133rd Signal Service Company, known as the Ghost Army. The Congressional Gold Medal is the oldest and highest civilian award in the United States. I rise today to honor Sergeant Major James Collins Taylor II for his contributions, sacrifices, and patriotism while serving in the Ghost Army during World War II. Due to the unit’s sworn secrecy, their service and contributions went unnoticed for far too long.

Sergeant Major James Collins Taylor II was born in Mission, Texas, on November 13th, 1915. Mr. Taylor joined the Civilian Conservation Corps. After the outbreak of World War II, he was assigned to the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops. This specialized unit comprised only 1,100 brave Americans and often served near the front lines.

Mr. Taylor helped conduct numerous deceptive campaigns with the Ghost Army throughout Europe. During his service, he received a Certificate of Merit and was promoted to Sergeant Major of the Army—the highest rank possible for an enlisted soldier. While the Ghost Army’s work was secret, its impact was substantial. The Ghost Army performed 22 “deception missions” across the front lines of France, Belgium, and Germany. By simulating the movement of 30,000 service members, the Ghost Army fooled German forces and aided General Patton at several critical junctures in World War II.

It is my honor to recognize the service Sergeant Major James C. Taylor and the Ghost Army. Their dedication and service saved thousands of American lives. Although the Congressional Gold Medal reaches Mr. Taylor posthumously, he is survived by a grateful family and country.

RECOGNIZING JOSEPHINE KING

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN OF COLORADO IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Monday, April 29, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Josephine King for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Josephine has overcame many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Josephine, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them through the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Josephine’s hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Josephine King on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF EDDIE BROWN

HON. PAT FALLON OF TEXAS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Eddie Brown of Sherman, Texas for a lifetime of outstanding service to our community. Mr. Brown served as the President and CEO of the Sherman Chamber of Commerce until his retirement on March 15, 2022.

A native of Dallas, Mr. Brown attended East Texas State University in Commerce, Texas. After graduation, he began his lengthy career with the Coca-Cola Bottling Company. In
1986, Mr. Brown moved to Sherman with his family to become Cola-Cola’s Sales Center Manager, a position he held for over 24 years. During this time, Mr. Brown's long-time support of the Sherman business community, as well as his many years of community involvement, did not go unnoticed. After he briefly retired in 2010, the following year, he was elected President of the Sherman ISD Education Foundation. Moreover, Mr. Brown led efforts to connect Grayson College and the Texas Association of Business to ensure it received needed education funding. In his free time, he enjoys golfing, traveling, and the outdoors. I am proud of the work Mr. Brown has accomplished for our business and education community.

I have requested the United States flag to be flown over our Nation's Capitol to honor Mr. Brown’s lifetime of service to the people of North Texas. May God Bless him.

HONORING MR. ANTHONY DeWAYNE BAKER, SR.'S LIFE AND LEGACY

HON. MARC A. VEASY
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. VEASY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life and accomplishments of Mr. Anthony DeWayne Baker, Sr.—a pillar of our Dallas community.

Mr. Baker was a graduate of David W. Carter High School in Dallas, Texas before rising through the ranks of Airbus helicopters. Anthony then went back to school, graduating from Dallas Baptist University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Business in 2005. Anthony’s first job was employment at Walls Services delivering sheet rock and in 1991 his career in the aerospace industry began when he landed a job working in the Bond shop at Vought Aircraft, formerly known as LTV. However, after 3 years with his newfound skills he accepted a temporary position as a blade repairman at American Eurocopter (Airbus), and due to his hard work and determined mindset he was later offered a permanent position. Mr. Baker eventually capped off his illustrious career as Vice President for Customer Support at Airbus Helicopters, the first African-American to hold the position.

Throughout his lifetime he overcame many barriers both personally and professionally, while always looking for ways to help others. He was a man of faith who proudly served our community for many years in his capacity as a Deacon, a member of the Cedar Hill Volunteer Fire Brigade; he was the current President of Summit at Lake Ridge HOA; he served on the UTA Engineering Board of Advisors; a member of the Grand Prairie United Charities Board of Directors, and was involved in countless other charitable endeavors. My thoughts and prayers are with all those who knew and loved Anthony, particularly his wife, Stacie, and his two children, Anthony DeWayne Baker, Jr. and Avery Alexander Baker. May his memory last forever.

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REVITALIZATION AND SELF-GOVERNMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1977 TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS ACT OF 2024

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 Technical Corrections Act of 2024, which would address several retirement issues for current and former District of Columbia employees that resulted from the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 (Revitalization Act). The Revitalization Act transferred several categories of employees who were in the D.C. retirement system to the federal retirement system and the federal government took over paying for the pension benefits earned by teachers, police officers, firefighters, and judges before 1997. The Revitalization Act transferred several categories of employees, primarily related to D.C.’s criminal justice system, who participated in D.C.’s defined contribution plan from 1987 to 1997 to the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). However, these employees’ service from 1987 to 1997 was not counted for purposes of creditable service or annuity amount in FERS. In 2009, Congress passed legislation counting this service for creditable service, but not annuity amount. This bill would allow these employees to buy into the FERS and FERS Supplement Service for 1987 to 1997 by paying 1.3 percent of their base pay plus interest, essentially the employee contribution for this time, which would give them the full retirement benefit to which they should be entitled.

Second, this bill would address two benefit issues for employees in the teachers, police officers, and firefighters pension plans, whose pre-1997 benefits are funded by the federal government. In 2018, D.C. enacted a law to provide domestic partner benefits for the police and firefighters pension plans, which mirrored a law already enacted for teachers. However, these domestic partner benefits apply only to service accrued after 1997, since the federal government funds pre-1997 benefits. This bill would make the domestic partner benefits available for pre-1997 benefits, too.

Finally, in 2012, D.C. enacted the Equity in Survivor Benefits Amendment Act, which reduced from age 60 to 55 the age after which a surviving spouse may remarry without losing survivor benefits for those in the teachers, police, and firefighters pension plans. However, these survivor benefits apply only to service accrued after 1997, since the federal government funds pre-1997 benefits. This bill would bring those pre-1997 benefits in line with both the post-1997 benefits and the retirement benefits for federal employees in the Civil Service Retirement System or FERS and make an analogous change for D.C. judges, whose retirement benefits are funded by the federal government. In general, for federal retirees, 55 is the age after which a surviving spouse may remarry without losing survivor benefits. This bill is an important step to assist these workers in getting the retirement benefits they deserve. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING PASTOR GEORGE W. WADDLES, JR., FOR HIS DECADE OF SERVICE

HON. DEBBIE DINGLE
OF MICHIGAN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 29, 2024

Mrs. DINGLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pastor George W. Waddles, Jr., on the occasion of his 10 years of service to the Second Baptist Church of Ypsilanti, Michigan. He has been a servant of his congregation and community. Pastor Waddles received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Truman State University, a Master of Theology with a concentration in Pastoral Leadership from Dallas Theological Seminary, and a Master of Educational Administration from Texas A&M. In 1984, he was licensed to preach at the Ninth Street Baptist Church in Lawrence, Kansas and was also ordained at Zion Hill Missionary Baptist Church on December 1, 1995. After serving Sunset Missionary Baptist Church of Texarkana in Texas for over ten years, Pastor Waddles began his service as Pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Ypsilanti, Michigan, in March 2014. Under his leadership, the Second Baptist Church has become a pillar of Ypsilanti, and continues its important mission of serving the community.

Pastor Waddles has led by example and embodies the mission of the church: Connection, Commitment, and Community. During his decade of service, Pastor Waddles has been deeply involved with ministry teams to better serve his community, and the church continues to make a positive impact by promoting the Making Strides Cancer Walk, participating in the Ypsilanti 4th of July Parade, and collecting backpacks and school supplies to help students. Pastor Waddles has also been a lecturer and instructor in the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education and the Wolverine State Convention and Huron Valley District Association. He has served as Dean, and currently is the President of the Huron Valley District Congress of Christian Education. Across all these roles, Pastor Waddles has remained committed to serving his community and uplifting all those within it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Pastor Waddles for his decade of public service in Ypsilanti. His commitment to his faith, community, and mission is truly inspiring. I join Pastor Waddles’ family, friends, and congregation in extending my best wishes to him during this time, and I am sure he will continue to serve his community far into the future.
Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jordyn Goins for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Jordyn has overcome many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Jordyn, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Jordyn’s hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Jordyn Goins on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING FELLOW MISSISSIPPIAN AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE THOMAS JEFFERSON FOUNDATION—DANIEL P. JORDAN

Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and legacy of Mississippi native Dr. Daniel P. Jordan. Dr. Jordan served as the executive director and the President of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation in Charlottesville overseeing the historical process and interest of Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello.

As a native Mississippian, he was known for his “Magnolia Alerts” which would alert him to any vehicle with a Mississippi license plate. David would personally go to the visitor’s center and welcome his fellow Mississippians to Monticello.

He was known as “the most consequential president on the Mountaintop since Jefferson himself.” He worked hard to raise money for the Thomas Jefferson Foundation and to expand the research capabilities at Monticello. David made the history of Jefferson accessible to everyday Americans through expanding Monticello’s programing and growing their audience.

Dr. David Jordan was a frequent visitor to the Neshoba County Fair in Mississippi, even during his long tenure in Virginia. I am thankful for Dr. Jordan’s dedication to the scholarship of history, the years of research into Jefferson’s life, and his unwavering commitment to his Mississippi roots.

I will end with some of David’s words about President Jefferson. “We have 200 people trying to keep up with one man—one dead man, and we will never catch him.” If anyone got close to catching Jefferson, it was Dr. Daniel Jordan.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT BARBARA WOODROOF

HON. PAT FALLON

Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Barbara Woodroof of Gunter, Texas, and present her with the Congressional Patriot Award. Barbara has dedicated herself to serving and uplifting our community.

A native of Massachusetts, Barbara lived in the Bay State until 1978. She received a bachelor’s degree from St. Mary’s College in South Bend, Indiana, and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Duke University. After graduation, Barbara taught science in Massachusetts, Texas, and Okinawa, Japan for many years. She met her wonderful husband George while teaching at Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa, and they married in 1980. Afterwards, they moved to Texas, where Barbara served as the Director of Religious Education at St. Michaels’ Catholic Church in McKinney and the Holy Family Catholic Church in Van Alstyne. In this capacity, she taught confirmation class and worked as a Safe Environment Officer.

In 1997, Barbara became the Precinct Chair of the Grayson County Republican Party after working as an election judge and clerk. She was elected as the County Chair in 2017 and oversaw Grayson County’s election procedures and operations for five years. Additionally, Barbara served on the Grayson County College Foundation Board and helped raise money to provide students in our community with scholarships. For her outstanding work and efforts, the GCRP has presented Barbara with the Eisenhower Award and the Chairman’s Award. Currently, she volunteers for the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry at St. Michaels and helps raise money and support for local candidates. In her free time, she enjoys gardening, scrapbooking, and traveling. I am proud of the work Barbara has accomplished, and I am sure she will continue to make a positive impact on our community for many years to come.

It is an honor to bestow Barbara with the Patriot Award for her exceptional service to the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PA

HON. MIKE JOHNSON

Monday, April 29, 2024

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Congressman Dan Lipinski of Illinois as the recipient of the Congressional Patriot Award. Dan serves the people of Illinois’s Third Congressional District with distinction and has earned the respect of his colleagues in Congress.

Dan has been a strong advocate for our military veterans, and he has worked tirelessly to ensure that they receive the support they need and deserve. He has been a leader in the fight to improve veterans’ access to healthcare, education, and job opportunities.

Dan also has a strong record of fighting to protect the environment. He has been a leader in efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and invest in clean energy solutions. He understands that protecting our planet is not just good for the environment, but also for our economic future.

I am proud to recognize Dan as a true leader in Congress and as a champion for the people of Illinois’s Third Congressional District.

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to commend and honor the outstanding work of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, an organization that has long been a beacon of hope and a catalyst for social justice in our communities. Since its inception, Alpha Phi Alpha Inc. has stood firmly at the forefront of the fight for fairness and equity, tirelessly advocating for the rights and well-being of all people.

I also want to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of Alpha Phi Alpha, particularly its members who have made significant contributions to our communities through their commitment to social empowerment and activism. Their work serves as an inspiration to us all.

Together, these individuals and organizations embody the spirit of service and selflessness, working tirelessly to provide communities with the tools, knowledge, and support they need to amplify their voices and effect positive change. They remind us that true empowerment begins with collective action and a commitment to social justice. I wish all of them the best as they visit the Illinois State Capitol, located in Springfield, for their annual advocacy day.

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work and dedication of the workers at the Capitol, located in Springfield, for their annual advocacy day.

As a Member of Congress, I am dedicated to working to ensure that Congress and the people of Illinois have a voice in the political process. Together, we can make progress on the issues that matter most to our constituents.

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the workers at the Capitol, located in Springfield, for their annual advocacy day.

As a Member of Congress, I am dedicated to working to ensure that Congress and the people of Illinois have a voice in the political process. Together, we can make progress on the issues that matter most to our constituents.
federal government both strengthen protections for workers in the workplace and defend the rights of workers to organize and create strong unions. For this reason, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the PRO Act and will continue to work with my colleagues in Washington to push Congress to take up and pass pro-worker legislation.

As someone who got their start in the labor movement, I will never stop advocating on behalf of the working men and women who serve as the backbone of this country. On this Workers Memorial Day, I am proud to take this opportunity to honor them and the sacrifices they have made over the years to fight for their right to be treated with dignity.
Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action
The Senate was not in session and stands adjourned until 3 p.m. on Tuesday, April 30, 2024.

Committee Meetings
No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action
Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 22 public bills, H.R. 8142–8163; and 7 resolutions, H.J. Res. 132; and H. Res. 1172, 1174–1179, were introduced.

Additional Cosponsors:

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

- H.R. 7032, to amend the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 to provide the Congressional Budget Office with necessary authorities to expedite the sharing of data from executive branch agencies, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–474);

- H.R. 7219, to ensure that Federal agencies rely on the best reasonably available scientific, technical, demographic, economic, and statistical information and evidence to develop, issue or inform the public of the nature and bases of Federal agency rules and guidance, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–475, Part 1); Supplemental report on H.R. 615, to prohibit the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture from prohibiting the use of lead ammunition or tackle on certain Federal land or water under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2925) to amend the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 to provide for security of tenure for use of mining claims for ancillary activities, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3195) to rescind Public Land Order 7917, to reinstate mineral leases and permits in the Superior National Forest, to ensure timely review of Mine Plans of Operations, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 764) to require the Secretary of the Interior to reissue regulations removing the gray wolf from the list of endangered and threatened wildlife under the Endangered Species Act of 1973; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3397) to require the Director of the Bureau of Land Management to withdraw a rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to conservation and landscape health; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6285) to ratify and approve all authorizations, permits, verifications, extensions, biological opinions, incidental take statements, and any other approvals or orders issued pursuant to Federal law necessary for the establishment and administration of the Coastal Plain oil and gas leasing program, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6090) to provide for the consideration of a definition of antisemitism set forth by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance for the...
enforcement of Federal antidiscrimination laws concerning education programs or activities, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–477).

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Ezell to act as Speaker pro tempore for today.

Recess: The House recessed at 12:17 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m.

Recess: The House recessed at 2:02 p.m. and reconvened at 3:29 p.m.

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Investing in All of America Act: H.R. 5333, amended, to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to exclude from the limit on leverage certain amounts invested in smaller enterprises located in rural or low-income areas and small businesses in critical technology areas; Pages H2639–42

Agency Accountability Act of 2024: H.R. 7103, to amend the Small Business Act to require Federal agencies to testify and report on scores received under the scorecard program for evaluating Federal agency compliance with small business contracting goals, to testify for failure to meet Governmentwide contracting goals; Pages H2642–43

Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Reporting Act of 2024: H.R. 7985, to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to submit to Congress a report on the entrepreneurial challenges facing entrepreneurs with a disability; Pages H2643–45

Plain Language in Contracting Act: H.R. 7987, to require plain language and the inclusion of key words in covered notices that are clear, concise, and accessible to small business concerns; Pages H2645–46

Fire Weather Development Act: H.R. 4866, amended, to direct the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to establish a program to improve fire weather and fire environment forecasting, detection, and local collaboration, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 341 yea to 48 nays, Roll No. 153; Pages H2646–51, H2687–88

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: “To direct the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administrator to improve fire weather and fire environment forecasting, detection, and local collaboration, and for other purposes.”

Clean Energy Demonstration Transparency Act: H.R. 1069, amended, to amend the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to require reporting regarding clean energy demonstration projects; Pages H2651–52

Privacy Enhancing Technology Research Act: H.R. 4755, amended, to support research on privacy enhancing technologies and promote responsible data use, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 354 yea to 36 nays, Roll No. 154; Pages H2652–54

Congressional Budget Office Data Sharing Act: H.R. 7032, to amend the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 to provide the Congressional Budget Office with necessary authorities to expedite the sharing of data from executive branch agencies; Pages H2679–83

Revising Existing Procedures On Reporting via Technology Act: S. 474, to amend title 18, United States Code, to strengthen reporting to the CyberTipline related to online sexual exploitation of children, to modernize liabilities for such reports, to preserve the contents of such reports for 1 year; Pages H2683–85

Daniel J. Harvey, Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act: H.R. 3722, amended, to require a pilot program on activities under the pre-separation transition process of members of the Armed Forces for a reduction in suicide among veterans; and Pages H2691–93

Veterans Education Transparency and Training Act: H.R. 5914, amended, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processes to approve programs of education for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs; Pages H2693–95

Moment of Silence: The House observed a moment of silence in remembrance of the Honorable Donald M. Payne, Jr.

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow, April 30th.

Expressing the profound sorrow of the House of Representatives on the death of the Honorable Donald M. Payne, Jr.: The House agreed to H. Res. 1172, expressing the profound sorrow of the House of Representatives on the death of the Honorable Donald M. Payne, Jr.

Extending Limits of U.S. Customs Waters Act: The House considered H.R. 529, to extend the customs waters of the United States from 12 nautical miles to 24 nautical miles from the baselines of the United States, consistent with Presidential Proclamation 7219. Further consideration is expected to resume tomorrow, April 30th.

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee
on Ways and Means now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted.  

H. Res. 1137, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 7888), (H.R. 529), (H. Res. 1112), and (H. Res. 1117), was agreed to Friday, April 12th.

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

Carbon Sequestration Collaboration Act: H.R. 4824, amended, to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to require the Secretary of Energy to carry out terrestrial carbon sequestration research and development activities;

Abandoned Well Remediation Research and Development Act: H.R. 4877, amended, to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to direct the Secretary of Energy to carry out a research, development, and demonstration program with respect to abandoned wells;

Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Reauthorization Act: H.R. 6093, amended, to improve the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s weather research, support improvements in weather forecasting and prediction, expand commercial opportunities for the provision of weather data;

Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration Act: H.R. 3738, amended, to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration;

Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act: H.R. 4016, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the repayment by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of benefits misused by a fiduciary; and

Amending title 38, United States Code, to provide that educational assistance paid under Department of Veterans Affairs educational assistance programs to an individual who pursued a program or course of education that was suspended or terminated for certain reasons shall not be charged against the entitlement of the individual: H.R. 1767, amended, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide that educational assistance paid under Department of Veterans Affairs educational assistance programs to an individual who pursued a program or course of education that was suspended or terminated for certain reasons shall not be charged against the entitlement of the individual.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2687–88 and H2688–89.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 p.m. and adjourned at 8:21 p.m., pursuant to House Resolution 1172, as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Honorable Donald M. Payne, Jr.

Committee Meetings

WESTERN ECONOMIC SECURITY TODAY ACT OF 2024; ALASKA’S RIGHT TO PRODUCE ACT OF 2023; SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST RESTORATION ACT; MINING REGULATORY CLARITY ACT OF 2024; PROTECTING ACCESS FOR HUNTERS AND ANGLERS ACT OF 2023; TRUST THE SCIENCE ACT; ANTI-SEMITISM AWARENESS ACT OF 2023

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 3397, the “Western Economic Security Today Act of 2024”; H.R. 6285, the “Alaska’s Right to Produce Act of 2023”; H.R. 3195, the “Superior National Forest Restoration Act”; H.R. 2925, the “Mining Regulatory Clarity Act of 2024”; H.R. 615, the “Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act of 2023”; H.R. 764, the “Trust the Science Act”; and H.R. 6090, the “Antisemitism Awareness Act of 2023”. The Committee granted, by a record vote of 7–4, a rule providing for consideration of H.R. 615, the “Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act of 2023”; H.R. 2925, the “Mining Regulatory Clarity Act of 2024”; H.R. 3195, the “Superior National Forest Restoration Act”; H.R. 764, the “Trust the Science Act”; H.R. 3397, the “Western Economic Security Today Act of 2024”; H.R. 6285, the “Alaska’s Right to Produce Act of 2023”; and H.R. 6090, the “Antisemitism Awareness Act of 2023”. The rule provides for consideration of each bill, under closed rules. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of each bill. The rule provides that the respective amendments in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in each bill shall be considered as adopted and each bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in each bill, as amended. The rule provides one hour of general debate on each bill equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees. The rule
provides each bill one motion to recommit. The rule further provides for consideration of H.R. 764, the “Trust the Science Act”, under a closed rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule waives provisions one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees. The rule waives points of order against the amendment printed in part B of the bill, as amended. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule waives that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in the bill that an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118–32 shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against the amendment printed in part A of the Rules Committee report, shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule waives one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees. The rule waives consideration of H.R. 6090, the “Antisemitism Awareness Act of 2023”, under a closed rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule waives points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule waives provisions one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit. Testimony was heard from Chairman Westerman, and Representatives Ocasio-Cortez, Fry, Nadler, Graves of Louisiana, and Stauber.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 2024

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2025 for the Department of Education, 10 a.m., SD–138.

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2025 for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2:30 p.m., SD–138.

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Personnel, to hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense’s efforts to ensure servicemembers’ access to safe, high-quality pharmaceuticals, 2:30 p.m., SR–232A.

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy, to hold hearings to examine U.S. policy on Taiwan, 2:30 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology, and the Law, to hold hearings to examine the NO FAKEs Act, focusing on protecting Americans from unauthorized digital replicas, 2:30 p.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 3:30 p.m., SH–219.

United States Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control: to hold hearings to examine Chinese money laundering organizations, focusing on cleaning cartel cash, 2 p.m., SD–608.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on the Environmental Protection Agency, 10 a.m., 2008 Rayburn.
Subcommittee on Defense, budget hearing on the National Guard and Reserves Forces, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on the Department of Transportation, 10 a.m., 2358–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, hearing entitled “Member Day”, 10:30 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, 2 p.m., 2362–A Rayburn.


Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request”, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Readiness, hearing entitled “Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request for Military Readiness”, 3 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled “FY25 Budget Request for Nuclear Forces and Atomic Energy Defense Activities”, 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled “Legislative Proposals to Increase Medicaid Access and Improve Program Integrity”, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Innovation, Data, and Commerce, hearing entitled “Preserving Americans’ Access to AM Radio”, 10:30 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on House Administration, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 7592, a bill to replace the requirement for the Library of Congress to prepare hardbound versions of the Constitution Annotated and supplements with a requirement to instead prepare and publish digital versions online; H.R. 7593, the “Modernizing the Congressional Research Service’s Access to Data Act”; Committee Resolution 118–33, Resolution to Approve Allocation from the Paid House Committee Internship Program to Committees for 2024; and Committee Resolution 118–34, Resolution to Amend the Members’ Congressional Handbook (authorizing co-sponsored constituent service events and making other Handbook revisions), 10:15 a.m., 1310 Longworth.


Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled “Examining the Influence of Extreme Environmental Activist Groups in the Department of the Interior”, 10:15 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs, hearing on H.R. 2687, to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to exclude certain payments to aged, blind, or disabled Alaska Natives or descendants of Alaska Natives from being used to determine eligibility for certain programs, and for other purposes; and H.R. 7516, the “Purchased and Referred Care Improvement Act of 2024”, 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Accountability, Full Committee, hearing entitled “A Focus on Management: Oversight of the Office of Management and Budget”, 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health Care and Financial Services, hearing entitled “Health of the Commercial Real Estate Markets and Removing Regulatory Hurdles to Ensure Continued Strength”, 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, hearing entitled “An Overview of the Budget Proposal for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for Fiscal Year 2025”, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Under the Microscope: Examining FinCEN’s Implementation of the Corporate Transparency Act”, 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, hearing entitled “It’s Electric: A Review of Fleet Electrification Efforts”, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, hearing entitled “Review of Fiscal Year 2025 Maritime Transportation Budget Requests, Pt. 1: Maritime Administration and Federal Maritime Commission”, 2 p.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means, Full Committee, hearing entitled “President’s Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request and Treasury Green Book with Treasury Secretary Yellen”, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Defense Intelligence and Overhead Architecture, hearing entitled “FY 2025 General Defense Intelligence Program (GDIP) Budget Request”, 10 a.m., HVC–304. This hearing is closed.

Subcommittee on Central Intelligence Agency, hearing entitled “FY 2025 Central Intelligence Agency Budget Request”, 2 p.m., HVC–304. This hearing is closed.
Next Meeting of the SENATE
3 p.m., Tuesday, April 30

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Georgia N. Alexakis, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture thereon at 5:30 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
10 a.m., Tuesday, April 30

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Complete consideration of H.R. 529—Extending Limits of U.S. Customs Waters Act.

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