

Register, a daily publication of the Federal Government's activities including Presidential documents, proposed and final rules, and public notices.

In other words, the Federal Register provides official notice to the public and Congress that an executive branch document exists.

The Federal Register also provides the building blocks for the Code of Federal Regulations, which makes it easier for the American public to find and understand the Federal regulations governing our Nation.

In 1994, the Government Publishing Office began publishing the Federal Register online with modern search tools and downloadable content.

Congress has recently taken steps to make the Federal Register more efficient by passing the Federal Register Printing Savings Act in 2017. However, additional reforms are still needed to alleviate the Government Publishing Office of the 1935 law's requirement to print and distribute paper copies of the Federal Register every day.

H.R. 9592 allows the Government Publishing Office to stop wasting paper and money and instead publish the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations online.

The bill also streamlines the process for Federal agencies to transmit official documents to the National Archives, ensuring a more efficient process for making these important Federal documents public.

Lastly, the bill provides necessary safeguards so that backup physical copies are properly stored and alternate publication systems can be established in cases of a continuity of government national crisis.

Taken together, these reforms will bring the Federal Register into the 21st century and save taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense legislation. I thank my colleague Representative GERRY CONNOLLY for partnering with me to ensure these long overdue reforms get done, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 9592, the Federal Register Modernization Act. This bill represents a big step forward in streamlining how the Federal Government retains public records and communicates with the public.

The Federal Register Act of 1935 was designed to ensure government transparency by requiring publication of Federal laws, Presidential proclamations, agency rules, and public notices in the Federal Register.

Today, with the increasing use of digital devices to conduct government operations, an electronic edition of the Federal Register is published every single business day. The publication of hard copy agency document submissions to the Office of the Federal Register creates unnecessary redundancy and administrative burdens, and, as my

friend from Louisiana says, administrative burdens and environmental waste.

In 1936, the Office of the Federal Register published 2,620 pages in a year, just over 2,500 pages. By 2023 the Federal Register had expanded to more than 90,000 pages in a year. The volume of Federal documentation has grown exponentially over the last century, so the need for a more efficient and streamlined process is obvious.

This act would align with the current digital practices of Federal agencies and eliminate the need for multiple print submissions.

This bill allows for electronic only publication of the Federal Register except for two print copies maintained by the Office of the Federal Register. By maintaining and improving the digital format of the Federal Register, the office will operate more efficiently, ultimately benefiting not only Federal agencies and the environment but also the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I support this commonsense, bipartisan legislation. I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers at this time on this bill, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the 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 Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 9592, as amended.

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

VALUE OVER COST ACT OF 2024

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9596) to amend title 41, United States Code, and title 10, United States Code, to provide best value through the multiple award schedule program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 9596

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 "Value Over Cost Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. PROVIDING BEST VALUE THROUGH THE MULTIPLE AWARD SCHEDULE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 152(3)(B) of title 41, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(B) orders and contracts under those procedures result in—

“(i) the lowest overall cost alternative; or

“(ii) in the case that the Administrator of General Services determines that obtaining

best value (as described under section 15.101 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation) is necessary to promote the best interests of the Federal Government, obtaining the best value to meet the needs of the Federal Government.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3012(3)(B) of title 10, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(B) orders and contracts under those procedures result in—

“(i) the lowest overall cost alternative; or

“(ii) in the case that the Administrator of General Services determines that obtaining best value (as described under section 15.101 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation) is necessary to promote the best interests of the Federal Government, obtaining the best value to meet the needs of the United States.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material for this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 9596, the Value Over Cost Act.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DONALDS).

Mr. DONALDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Value Over Cost Act. This is a simple, commonsense piece of legislation that modernizes the antiquated Federal procurement process. Specifically, this bill provides the General Services Administration with additional contracting flexibility by allowing for the consideration of best value in addition to the lowest overall cost alternative.

Instead of just looking at the initial price tag, the Federal Government should be fiscally responsible and also consider the contractual value of products and services over time, if it is in the best interest of the Federal Government.

Ultimately, my bill increases contractual flexibility and contracting competition, provides clarity for acquisition stakeholders, maximizes the Federal Government's ability to procure modern technology, and helps the small business community by reducing regulatory burdens associated with Federal procurement.

In sum, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this commonsense piece of legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of H.R. 9596, the Value Over Cost Act. The GSA keeps a list of goods and services that

are available to Federal agencies for multiple GSA-approved vendors at different prices. This schedule is known as the Federal supply schedule. Agencies can order commercial goods and services listed on this schedule in different quantities at the prices stated on the schedule.

It provides a simplified process for agencies to acquire goods and services while also earning the volume discounts for the Federal Government as a whole.

Current law is ambiguous about whether the contracts and orders under the Federal supply schedule program must be the lowest price or the best value price. Best value contracts consider price but also things like the quality of the product and the expertise of the service provider.

The bill clarifies that both the lowest price and the best value are acceptable outcomes for contracts obtained under the scheduled program.

I commend Representative BYRON DONALDS and Representative GERRY CONNOLLY from Virginia for their work on the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers on this bill, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my House colleagues to support this 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 Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 9596.

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.

ELIMINATE USELESS REPORTS ACT OF 2024

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5301) to amend title 31, United States Code, to require agencies to include a list of outdated or duplicative reporting requirements in annual budget justifications, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5301

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 “Eliminate Useless Reports Act of 2024”.

SEC. 2. SUNSETS FOR AGENCY REPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1125 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d);

(2) by striking subsections (a) and (b) and inserting the following:

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) BUDGET JUSTIFICATION MATERIALS.—The term ‘budget justification materials’ has the meaning given the term in section 3(b)(2)

of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note; Public Law 109-282).

“(2) PLAN OR REPORT.—The term ‘plan or report’ means any plan or report submitted to Congress, any committee of Congress, or subcommittee thereof, by not less than 1 agency—

“(A) in accordance with Federal law; or

“(B) at the direction or request of a congressional report.

“(3) RECURRING PLAN OR REPORT.—The term ‘recurring plan or report’ means a plan or report submitted on a recurring basis.

“(4) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE.—The term ‘relevant congressional committee’—

“(A) means a congressional committee to which a recurring plan or report is required to be submitted; and

“(B) does not include any plan or report that is required to be submitted solely to the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives or the Senate.

“(b) AGENCY IDENTIFICATION OF UNNECESSARY REPORTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of each agency shall include in the budget justification materials of the agency the following:

“(A) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the following:

“(i) A list of each recurring plan or report submitted by the agency.

“(ii) An identification of whether the recurring plan or report listed in clause (i) was included in the most recent report issued by the Clerk of the House of Representatives concerning the reports that any agency is required by law or directed or requested by a committee report to make to Congress, any committee of Congress, or subcommittee thereof.

“(iii) If applicable, the unique alphanumeric identifier for the recurring plan or report as required by section 7243(b)(1)(C)(vii) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117-263).

“(iv) The identification of any recurring plan or report the head of the agency determines to be outdated or duplicative.

“(B) With respect to each recurring plan or report identified in subparagraph (A)(iv), the following:

“(i) A recommendation on whether to sunset, modify, consolidate, or reduce the frequency of the submission of the recurring plan or report.

“(ii) A citation to each provision of law or directive or request in a congressional report that requires or requests the submission of the recurring plan or report.

“(iii) A list of the relevant congressional committees for the recurring plan or report.

“(C) A justification explaining, with respect to each recommendation described in subparagraph (B)(i) relating to a recurring plan or report—

“(i) why the head of the agency made the recommendation, which may include an estimate of the resources expended by the agency to prepare and submit the recurring plan or report; and

“(ii) the understanding of the head of the agency of the purpose of the recurring plan or report.

“(2) AGENCY CONSULTATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In preparing the list required under paragraph (1)(A), if, in submitting a recurring plan or report, an agency is required to coordinate or consult with another agency or entity, the head of the agency submitting the recurring plan or report shall consult with the head of each agency or entity with whom consultation or coordination is required.

“(B) INCLUSION IN LIST.—If, after a consultation under subparagraph (A), the head

of each agency or entity consulted under that subparagraph agrees that a recurring plan or report is outdated or duplicative, the head of the agency required to submit the recurring plan or report shall—

“(i) include the recurring plan or report in the list described in paragraph (1)(A); and

“(ii) identify each agency or entity with which the head of the agency is required to coordinate or consult in submitting the recurring plan or report.

“(C) DISAGREEMENT.—If the head of any agency or entity consulted under subparagraph (A) does not agree that a recurring plan or report is outdated or duplicative, the head of the agency required to submit the recurring plan or report shall not include the recurring plan or report in the list described in paragraph (1)(A).

“(3) GOVERNMENT-WIDE OR MULTI-AGENCY PLAN AND REPORT SUBMISSIONS.—With respect to a recurring plan or report required to be submitted by not less than 2 agencies, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall—

“(A) determine whether the requirement to submit the recurring plan or report is outdated or duplicative; and

“(B) make recommendations to Congress accordingly.

“(4) PLAN AND REPORT SUBMISSIONS CONFORMITY TO THE ACCESS TO CONGRESSIONALLY MANDATED REPORTS ACT.—With respect to an agency recommendation, citation, or justification made under subparagraph (B) or (C) of paragraph (1) or a recommendation by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget under paragraph (3), the agency or Director, as applicable, shall also provide this information to the Director of the Government Publishing Office in conformity with the agency submission requirements under section 7244(a) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117-263; chapter 41 of title 44 note) in conformity with guidance issued by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget under section 7244(b) of such Act.

“(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION ON AGENCY REQUIREMENTS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to exempt the head of an agency from a requirement to submit a recurring plan or report.”; and

(3) in subsection (d), as so redesignated, by striking “in the budget of the United States Government, as provided by section 1105(a)(37)” and inserting “in the budget justification materials of each agency”.

(b) BUDGET CONTENTS.—Section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (39).

(c) CONFORMITY TO THE ACCESS TO CONGRESSIONALLY MANDATED REPORTS ACT.—

(1) AMENDMENT.—Subsections (a) and (b) of section 7244 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117-263; chapter 41 of title 44, United States Code, note), are amended to read as follows:

“(a) SUBMISSION OF ELECTRONIC COPIES OF REPORTS.—Not earlier than 30 days or later than 60 days after the date on which a congressionally mandated report is submitted to either House of Congress or to any committee of Congress or subcommittee thereof, the head of the Federal agency submitting the congressionally mandated report shall submit to the Director the information required under subparagraphs (A) through (D) of section 7243(b)(1) with respect to the congressionally mandated report. Notwithstanding section 7246, nothing in this subtitle shall relieve a Federal agency of any other requirement to publish the congressionally mandated report on the online portal of the Federal agency or otherwise submit the congressionally mandated report to