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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 3, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS E. PETRI to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair would now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Guide our minds, thoughts, and desires this day. By Your spirit, breathe into us a new spirit. Shape this Congress and our world according to Your design that we may fulfill Your will.

Bless the Members of this people's House. Give them attentive hearts and open minds, that through the diversity of ideas, they might sort out what is best for this Nation.

May their speech be deliberately free of all prejudice, that others might listen wholeheartedly. Grant that all dialogue be mutually respectful, surprising even the most jaded with the emergence of unity and justice.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done here be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HOLDING 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.

IRAN TARGETING AMERICA

(Mr. HOLDING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLDING. Madam Speaker, as the Obama administration continues to

cut deals with the regime in Iran, Iranian military leaders pulled no punches in letting us know that they are prepared to strike our homeland, our forces in the Middle East, and our ally Israel.

These military leaders are at the real center of power in Tehran, pulling the strings behind the scenes. They are also the people who this administration is trusting to end their nuclear weapons program even though they invested heavily in keeping that same program hidden from the world for years. Iranian commanders just this past weekend went as far as to talk about destroying America from within and how we will face devastating consequences if we exercise our military option.

Madam Speaker, their words are just another reminder of how this administration has misplaced their trust and how the current deal with Iran jeopardizes our national security.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 5 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

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of the rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS ALLOWABLE USE ACT

Mrs. BROOKS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1791) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to codify authority under existing grant guidance authorizing use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1791

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 "Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act".

SEC. 2. USE OF CERTAIN HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT FUNDS FOR ENHANCING MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS, MEDICAL SURGE CAPACITY, AND MASS PROPHYLAXIS CAPABILITIES.

Section 2008 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (13) as paragraphs (11) through (14), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

"(10) enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities, including the development and maintenance of an initial pharmaceutical stockpile, including medical kits, and diagnostics sufficient to protect first responders, their families, immediate victims, and vulnerable populations from a chemical or biological event;"; and

(2) in subsection (b)(3)(B), by striking "(a)(10)" and inserting "(a)(11)".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BROOKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BROOKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1791, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act, introduced by my colleague and the former chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, the honorable Congressman BILIRAKIS from Florida.

This bill amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make it clear that

grant funds under the State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security Initiative may be used to enhance medical preparedness and purchase medical countermeasures.

The Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications Subcommittee held a series of hearings in the 112th Congress on medical preparedness. The subcommittee heard about the importance of medical countermeasures from representatives of the emergency response community, and this bill is in response to those concerns.

In August, I held a field hearing in my district looking at central Indiana's ability to handle a mass casualty event. Like the witnesses who testified at the hearings held in the 112th Congress, these witnesses at the field hearing stressed the importance of building medical preparedness.

As a result of this bill, grant funds could be used for items such as pre-deployed medical kits for first responders and their families, caches of equipment, training and exercises, and planning activities. The grant guidance for these programs currently allows funds to be used for medical preparedness equipment and activities.

This bill codifies those activities to ensure that they will continue to be allowable, and it will not cost any additional money to do so. We have seen the benefits that grant funds, including those used for medical preparedness activities, have provided when it comes to response capabilities. This was clearly demonstrated in response to the Boston Marathon bombings.

We know that the threat of chemical or biological attack is real. In fact, my subcommittee will be holding a hearing next week to get an update on the bioterrorism threat and preparedness here in this country.

We must ensure that our first responders have the tools and capabilities they need if such an event should occur. This bill has the support of several first responder groups, including the International Association of Emergency Managers, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Emergency Services Coalition for Medical Preparedness. I will insert their letters of support into the RECORD.

H.R. 1791 was approved by the Committee on Homeland Security last year by a bipartisan voice vote. I am pleased that, during the markup, the committee approved an amendment offered by the ranking member of the subcommittee, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), to ensure that in addition to protecting first responders funds can also be used to protect vulnerable populations such as children.

I urge fellow Members to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

EMERGENCY SERVICES COALITION FOR MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS,

April 26, 2013.

Hon. GUS BILIRAKIS,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BILIRAKIS: The Emergency Services Coalition for Medical Preparedness is pleased to support the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act. The events of the last two weeks again demonstrate the need for immediate, at hand protections for our emergency services personnel and their families and households. The Congressionally-chartered WMD Commission has issued warnings for years about the continuing threat from biological weapons.

Emergency services professionals are uniquely expected to continue operating in hazardous conditions when others are sheltering. Whether responding to industrial fires, bombs placed in cities, or other situations with unknown secondary risks, the protections described in the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act will enable emergency services to more confidently carry out their tasks.

Pre-event medical caches have been provided for federal workers and hundreds of postal employees. Your bill addresses the lack of protection of the millions of local and state protectors who daily provide law enforcement, public works, emergency management, fire, rescue and emergency medical services.

The Coalition looks forward to working with you and your staff in passage of the Bill. Thank you for your leadership and continuing support for "protecting the protectors."

Sincerely,

TIM STEPHENS,
Advisor.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS,

Fairfax, VA, April 26, 2013.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, House Committee on Homeland Security, Washington, DC.

Hon. BENNIE THOMPSON,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Homeland Security, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL AND RANKING MEMBER THOMPSON: On behalf of the 12,000 chief fire and emergency officers of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), I urge you to support the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act. This bill addresses an important aspect of America's homeland security and emergency preparedness through improving the resiliency of emergency first responders by helping provide pre-event Medkits to first responders and their families.

Individual physician-based prescription efforts and federal planning have already provided protections for countless employees of the U.S. Postal Service and the federal government—first responders however have not been included in these pre-event protections. The Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act addresses this gap by allowing jurisdictions to use the Urban Areas Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding to improve their medical preparedness through the procurement of Medkits and other medical countermeasures.

In 2008, the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism issued their report in which the Commission identified a biological attack as the most likely threat to the United States. In the event of a biological attack, our nation's first responders will