aviation security programs and TSA regulations. We look forward to working with you on the passage of H.R. 1447.

Sincerely,

GREG PRINCIPATO,
President, Airports Council International—North America.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, the private sector is a vital partner in transportation security, and the ASAC ensures that industry has a seat at the table as the government works to make our homeland more secure.

I urge the adoption of this bipartisan bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1447, "Aviation Security Stakeholder Participation Act of 2011." Currently the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA's) Aviation Security Advisory Committee advises the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security on issues related to aviation security. This bill:

(1) authorizes the existence of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee,

(2) ensures key stakeholders with first knowledge of the security challenges our aviation system faces have a voice when TSA is considering implementing security policies and

(3) establishes specific working groups to address cargo, perimeter and general aviation.

I firmly believe that more can be done to protect and improve upon the security of our Nation's airways which is why I have consistently introduced legislation to improve our Nation's defense against security threats. The District I represent in Houston, Texas is home to two of the world's busiest airports, and the Johnson Space Center. Air transportation in the Houston metro area is about 30% above the national average and in Texas, the aviation industry employs nearly 200,000 people. We need to ensure that all cargo flight operations are secure, protect aircraft from laser attacks, and implement a threat-based security system.

Because of the necessity of H.R. 1447's implications, it already has the support of the U.S. Travel Association, Cargo Airline Association and the Airports Council International—North America. In addition it has received the unanimous support of the Committee on Homeland Security.

Mr. Speaker, these entities and the Homeland Security Committee recognize it is imperative to continue to ensure to strengthen the aviation industry's effort to make sure all travelers and cargo are safe traveling within and through the United States.

Enhanced security protects our economic interests: air cargo is over a $60 billion industry, and according to the International Air Transport Association, transports 35% of the value of goods traded globally. More importantly, implementing this bill will protect our citizens. Well trained employees and representatives are essential in recognizing suspicious activity and people that want to endanger our travelers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1447, 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. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

USE OF GRANT FUNDS FOR PROJECTS CONDUCTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A NATIONAL LABORATORY OR RESEARCH FACILITY

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5843) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to permit use of certain grant funds for training conducted in conjunction with a national laboratory or research facility.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5843

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

SECTION 1. USE OF GRANT FUNDS FOR PROJECTS CONDUCTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A NATIONAL LABORATORY OR RESEARCH FACILITY.

Section 2008(a)(2) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609(a)(2)) is amended by inserting ''training conducted in conjunction with a national laboratory or research facility and'' after ''including''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KING of New York. 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 gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, introduced by Mr. LUNGREN, is a simple statutory clarification that allows State and local governments and emergency management officials to use existing FEMA State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security Initiative funds to work with national labs where appropriate.

H.R. 5843 amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 by inserting a clarification into the ''allowable use'' section of the Homeland Security Grant Program section. Clarifying this ''allowable use'' under the grants program will allow these State and local first responders to leverage the expertise at national labs for research and training purposes.

This is a simple, solid, good government measure that will help maximize the use of limited Federal grant dollars. This bill will allow State and local officials to cut through FEMA red tape, which makes it harder for first responders to work with the Federal national labs and make the best decisions for their homeland security needs. This bill will eliminate hoops that State and locals have to go through to gain access to this expertise and training.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LUNGREN) for his work on this issue and so many others on the committee.

I urge passage of the bill. I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I'm perplexed that the House is considering H.R. 5843 today. I cannot understand why this bill is on the schedule. It was introduced just over a month ago and has not been vetted by the committee. Why are we giving expedited attention to a bill that has just two cosponsors, both of whom are Republican? Whatever the problem it purports to solve has not been the subject of so much as a Member-level briefing, let alone a hearing or a markup.

Section 208(a)(13) of the Homeland Security Act already allows the Department to approve the spending of grant funds on training by national labs. Without so much as a hearing where the committee can take testimony on this matter, it is hard to justify taking up precious House floor time on this bill, especially in a week where we must take urgent action on Pell Grants and highway funding. So instead, I choose to use this time to discuss the dwindling Federal support for homeland security activities, a far more timely concern for State, local, and tribal authorities than H.R. 5843.

In the wake of the September 11 attack, as a government, we committed to safeguarding our homeland by building and preserving preparedness capabilities. Yet since the beginning of the 112th Congress, that commitment seems to have dangerously wavered.

In just 2 short years, vital Homeland Security Grant Programs have been significantly cut, and, as a result, the level of preparedness fostered by the programs, such as the Urban Areas Security Initiative, Port Security Grant Program, Transit Security Grant Program, and the Metropolitan Medical Response System, have been undermined. Given that the authorizations for many of these targeted programs are expiring, a far better use of our time would be to reauthorize the Transit Security Grant Program or the Metropolitan Medical Response program.

Mr. Speaker, before I reserve my time, I would note for the record that there are two other much more plausible candidates for consideration by the full House that were introduced by the gentleman from California. One addressed the cybersecurity threat and was ordered reported in April. The other authorizes DHS's chemical facility security program and is pending on the Union Calendar.

Mr. Speaker, speaking of the Union Calendar, I would also note that this bill is receiving expedited consideration while four measures ordered reported by the Committee on Homeland Security remain on the Union Calendar without action.

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

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am proud, at this time, to yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. LUNGREN), who is chairman of the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies; and during his time on the committee has contributed as much as, if not more than, any other Member, and, in fact, returned to Congress for the purpose of doing all he could to enhance our homeland security.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I might say that this should not be a surprise bill to anybody. This is actually a part of the authorization bill that we already worked on. It has come about as a result of the fact of complaints from local jurisdictions that they were unable to utilize funds in a way that they thought was most effective.

This bill would simply permit recipients of certain FEMA grants to use this funding for training and exercises conducted in conjunction with a national lab or Federal research facility. There's no additional cost. The CBO report shows there's no additional cost. In other words, the bill expands the allowable use of FEMA grants and ensures that emergency managers, first responders, and local governments can use these grant dollars to leverage the expertise of our national labs and research facilities.

We have had plenty of hearings on the viability of our national labs and research facilities and the fact that we need to leverage more, in these tough budget times, their expertise to help us come up with solutions and prepare, among others, first responders to the challenges that we face in these times. With fewer grant dollars available, it's important that State and local governments be able to use them for the greatest public benefit.

As we all know, State and local governments everywhere are also operating under severe budget limitations, and increasing the allowable use of FEMA grants helps these cash-strapped governments to address their emergency needs. Using our existing national assets for training and research is another way to efficiently leverage the scientific expertise available at these facilities.

I just want to correct the record. This is not just cosponsored by two other Members, both of whom are Republicans. It is cosponsored by Representative STARK from California and Representative LUJÁN from New Mexico. In addition, on the Republican side, Mr. TURNER from New York, Mr. LONG from Missouri, Mr. MARINO from Pennsylvania, Mr. BILIRAKIS from Florida, and Mr. KING from New York.

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We have heard not only from entities in the State of California, but I believe also in New York and New Jersey about concerns that they were unable to use their grants in the most efficient way, and absent a clarification of statutory language, FEMA was not going to allow them to participate in this way.

Now, some would ask what examples might we have of how these funds might be used. I will just use my home State of California. The Naval Postgraduate School, which is a Federal entity in Monterey, provides unique training to State and local officials through its Center for Homeland Defense and Security. The Lawrence Livermore Laboratory is a government-owned, contract-operated facility managed through a contract between the Laboratory Board of Governors and DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration. These national labs can provide a myriad of research and technical support to programs that support State and local emergency responders, things such as risk analysis and security systems evaluation. And just another example, the Navy Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command in San Diego has substantial capability and interest in helping emergency responders with communications and nuclear detention.

So we are responding in as quick a fashion as we can to complaints that we've heard from local jurisdictions that they were unable to use their FEMA grants in the most effective way in leveraging, as I say, the expertise, the unique expertise of national labs and Federal research facilities. That is the purpose of this legislation. It is a very simple, a one-sentence clarification of the underlying statute. I would hope that we have unanimous support for this bill.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to close. I don't have any more speakers.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, Mr. KING had to leave, and I ask unanimous consent that I control the time of Representative KING.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from California will control the time.

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, we owe it to our Nation's first responders to ensure that they have the resources needed to perform their jobs and to get it right when we alter the allowable uses for those funds. Getting it right in this body requires deliberation and debate in the committee of jurisdiction.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the bill we are considering today failed to receive such deliberation or debate. Therefore, it is hard to say whether it is responsive to the needs of first responders. What I can say for a fact is reauthorizing key Homeland Security grant programs would bolster preparedness and be responsive to the needs of our first responders.

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

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, this is a simple bill responding to a simple problem. Actually, this bill undoes redtape that ought not to be there. It leverages the best assets of the Federal Government, working with our first responders in our local communities in ways that they asked us to try and deal with the problem. It's not a fancy bill. It is a simple bill. It is straightforward. And, therefore, I ask for a unanimous vote on this from my colleagues, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5843.

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. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

TRANSPORTATION WORKER IDENTIFICATION PROCESS REFORM ACT

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3173) to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to reform the process for the enrollment, activation, issuance, and renewal of a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) to require, in total, not more than one in-person visit to a designated enrollment center, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3173

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) United States workers employed at nearly 2,600 marine facilities and onboard nearly 13,000