

broad bipartisan support last Congress. I hope Members will once again express their support for the men and women who protect us every day by voting for this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 361, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act that was introduced by Congressman BILIRAKIS. Over the years, the Committee on Homeland Security has heard about the importance of medical countermeasures.

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. We owe it to our emergency response community, our first responders, to ensure that they have every tool necessary to be prepared for and combat the threats they face every day and may face in the future.

Over the years, we have seen that the investments in medical preparedness activities have provided positive benefits when it comes to response capabilities. This was clearly demonstrated in the response to the Boston Marathon bombings when the medical community was largely praised by all involved in the response. The Committee on Homeland Security heard testimony last year from the head of Boston Emergency Medical Services, Chief Hooley, who spoke about the importance of Homeland Security grant funding in their preparation for events such as the Boston Marathon Bombing.

Sadly, we realize that the threat of a biological or chemical or other attack is real. We therefore must do everything that we can to ensure that our first responders are prepared to combat the threat.

This measure has passed the House both in the 112th and the 113th Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support. I ask my colleagues to support this measure and my colleagues in the Senate to do the same.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 361, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act for two reasons.

First, the bill will save lives. Second, the legislation is necessary to support the vital work of first responders in the event of a biological and chemical terrorists attack or incident.

The legislation provides for the development and maintenance of an initial pharmaceutical stockpile, including medical kits, and diagnostics sufficient to protect first responders, their families, and immediate victims from a chemical or biological event.

The Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act will amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for: enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities.

This legislation ensures that first responders have necessary medicines and treatments to protect themselves, their families and those within their vicinity immediately should a biological and chemical terrorist attack occur.

In short, first responders will not be able to do the work of saving lives if they fall victim to an attack or are distracted by worry regarding how their family may be fairing during a biological or chemical attack should one occur.

First responders often include law enforcement officers, fire fighters, and emergency medical personnel.

The city of Houston covers over a 1000 square mile region in Southeast Texas. It has an evening population of nearly two million people and over three million during the day when commuters are in the city.

There are 103 Fire Stations that serve the city of Houston with most offering ambulance or medic support, but there is only one station Number 22 that Specializes in Hazardous Material.

In the city of Houston one out of every ten citizens use Emergency Management Services (EMS) and within a year there are over 200,000 EMS incidents involving over 225,000 patients or potential patients.

EMS response services have 88 City of Houston EMS vehicles, with just under fifty percent staffed by two paramedics and can provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) to patients.

These consist of 15 ALS Squads, and 22 ALS transport units with eight functioning in a "Dual" capacity as both Advanced Life Support and Basic Life Support (BLS).

The remaining fifty-one transport units are Basic Life Support (BLS), and staffed by two Emergency Medical Technicians.

Law enforcement agencies that serve the city of Houston include the Houston Police Department, Harris County Sheriff's Department, Harris County Constables, Port of Houston Authority Police and Corrections Officers.

Because of the nature of chemical or biological terrorist attacks mass casualties are the objective and the impressive resources of our nation's 4th largest city would likely be overwhelmed immediately should an attack occur it is important to provide them with the resources provided by this legislation.

The repositioning of resources in the form of medicines that can support pulmonary respiratory function or arrest neurological damage as a result of poisoning lives can be saved that could otherwise be lost. This bill can reduce deaths and give victims the greatest chance for survival and recovery.

Emergency responders because of this bill would have treatments in the communities where they serve and live to help neighbors, co-workers, and people who are immediate need to live saving help.

As a senior member of the House Homeland Security Committee, I am mindful of the need for our first responders to be prepared and well trained to manage a wide range of potential threats both conventional and unconventional.

This bill offers one more resource that will be available to first responders to do the work they have dedicated their lives to doing—saving lives.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 361 the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act for two reasons.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 361.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. 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.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS ACT

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 615) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to take administrative action to achieve and maintain interoperable communications capabilities among the components of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 615

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 "Department of Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Act" or the "DHS Interoperable Communications Act".

SEC. 2. INCLUSION OF INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITIES IN RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT.

Section 701 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4) of subsection (a), by inserting before the period at the end the following: "; including policies and directives to achieve and maintain interoperable communications among the components of the Department"; and

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

"(d) INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'interoperable communications' means the ability of components of the Department to communicate with each other as necessary, utilizing information technology systems and radio communications systems to exchange voice, data, and video in real time, as necessary, for acts of terrorism, daily operations, planned events, and emergencies."

SEC. 3. STRATEGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a strategy, which shall be updated as necessary, for achieving and maintaining interoperable communications (as such term is defined in subsection (d) of section 701 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by section 2 of this Act) among the components of the Department of Homeland Security, including for daily operations, planned events, and emergencies, with corresponding milestones, that includes, at a minimum the following:

(1) An assessment of interoperability gaps in radio communications among the components of the Department, as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) Information on efforts and activities, including current and planned policies, directives, and training, of the Department since November 1, 2012, to achieve and maintain interoperable communications among

the components of the Department, and planned efforts and activities of the Department to achieve and maintain such interoperable communications.

(3) An assessment of obstacles and challenges to achieving and maintaining interoperable communications among the components of the Department.

(4) Information on, and an assessment of, the adequacy of mechanisms available to the Under Secretary for Management to enforce and compel compliance with interoperable communications policies and directives of the Department.

(5) Guidance provided to the components of the Department to implement interoperable communications policies and directives of the Department.

(6) The total amount of funds expended by the Department since November 1, 2012, and projected future expenditures, to achieve interoperable communications, including on equipment, infrastructure, and maintenance.

(7) Dates upon which Department-wide interoperability is projected to be achieved for voice, data, and video communications, respectively, and interim milestones that correspond to the achievement of each such mode of communication.

(b) SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL.—Together with the strategy required under subsection (a), the Under Secretary for Management shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate information on any intra-agency effort or task force that has been delegated certain responsibilities by the Under Secretary relating to achieving and maintaining interoperable communications among the components of the Department by the dates referred to in paragraph (9) of subsection (a), and on who, within each such component, is responsible for implementing policies and directives issued by the Under Secretary to so achieve and maintain such interoperable communications.

SEC. 4. REPORT.

Not later than 220 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and biannually thereafter, the Under Secretary for Management shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the status of efforts, since the issuance of the strategy required under section 3, to implement such strategy, including the following:

(1) Progress on each interim milestone referred to in paragraph (9) of subsection (a) toward achieving and maintaining interoperable communications among the components of the Department.

(2) Information on any policies, directives, guidance, and training established by the Under Secretary.

(3) An assessment of the level of compliance, adoption, and participation among the components of the Department with the policies, directives, guidance, and training established by the Under Secretary to achieve and maintain interoperable communications among such components.

(4) Information on any additional resources or authorities needed by the Under Secretary.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. 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 Georgia?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 615, the Department of Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Act, introduced by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), the ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications.

This bill amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to include, among the responsibilities of the Department of Homeland Security's Under Secretary for Management, achieving and maintaining interoperable communications among the Department's components.

H.R. 615 addresses the findings and recommendations of a November 2012 DHS Office of Inspector General report, which stated that the Department does not have the appropriate oversight or governance structure to ensure communications interoperability among its components.

The Department has been in the forefront on working with stakeholders to provide our Nation's first responders with the resources and tools needed to have effective interoperable communications. Now the Department needs to practice what they preach. It is vital that the Department's components are able to effectively communicate day to day and, most importantly, during emergencies.

Mr. Speaker, I recently visited our southwest border and met with men and women from the Border Patrol, Customs and Border Protection, and the Coast Guard who are on the front lines of our efforts to secure the border. It is vital that they have the ability to communicate with one another and personnel from other DHS components as they work to achieve their vital missions.

In order to ensure the Department is taking the necessary steps to achieve and maintain interoperable communications capabilities, H.R. 615 requires the Department's Under Secretary for Management to submit an interoperable communications strategy to the Committee on Homeland Security no later than 120 days after enactment.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 615, the Department of Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Act. My goal today is to put

the Department of Homeland Security on the path to achieving agencywide interoperable communications.

Almost 15 years ago, courageous first responders raced to Lower Manhattan, to an area that came to be known as Ground Zero. In the days that followed, first responders from neighboring jurisdictions, including Jersey City, responded to help with response and recovery efforts.

Not long after these devastating attacks, concerns were raised about the interoperability gaps that existed between responders on that deadly September day. The 9/11 Commission identified improving interoperable communications at all levels of government as a pressing recommendation. They emphasized that both technology and governance are critical components of interoperable solutions and recognized DHS as the Federal agency responsible for spearheading such an effort.

Though nationwide over \$13 billion has been invested in achieving interoperable communications at the State and local level, we are still not there. At DHS, over \$430 million has been invested into communication capabilities for its 123,000 radio users since 2003. However, in 2012, the Department's own top watchdog, the Office of Inspector General, found that DHS "personnel do not have reliable interoperable communications for daily operations, planned events, and emergencies."

In May of 2014, the inspector general testified before the Homeland Security Subcommittee that, out of 479 field radios that attempted to communicate on a specific channel, only one user could do so. That is a 99.8 percent failure rate.

Too often, communication failures are attributed to technology or a lack of resources. But here, technology is not the culprit; it is the scapegoat. Indeed, the inspector general found that DHS had not established protocols to ensure that practices are in place to achieve interoperability throughout the Department.

H.R. 615, the DHS Interoperable Communications Act, which I introduced with the gentlewoman from Indiana, Congresswoman SUSAN BROOKS, the former chair of the Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee, would direct the Under Secretary for Management to issue policies and directives related to interoperability, develop a strategy to achieve DHS-wide interoperability, and report to Congress biannually on the Department's progress.

Interoperable communications are essential to emergency response and Homeland Security operations. The men and women in uniform that serve and protect the 10th Congressional District of New Jersey never miss an opportunity to remind me of something we already know: interoperable communications save lives during disasters.

Interoperable communications challenges must be addressed in a timely and thoughtful manner. Last Congress,

this Chamber unanimously approved legislation identical to the measure before you today. Enactment of H.R. 615 into law would put DHS on the path to achieving interoperability.

I would like to thank the former subcommittee chairwoman, SUSAN BROOKS, for her dedicated efforts to work with me on this measure. I will miss working with her on this panel.

I would also like to thank Ranking Member THOMPSON, Chairman McCAUL, and the new chairwoman of the subcommittee, Ms. MCSALLY, for their continued support in addressing this important issue.

I urge my colleagues to support improving interoperable communications at DHS by voting.

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the distinguished gentlelady from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS), the former chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 615, the Department of Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Act.

I did have the opportunity to work on this bill with the fine gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications last Congress when I chaired the subcommittee.

I am very pleased to see this bill on the floor today, and I want to thank Chairman McCAUL and Ranking Member THOMPSON for bringing it back to the floor.

The need for interoperable communications was highlighted, as the Congressman from New Jersey noted, by the 9/11 Commission after the September 11 terrorist attacks. We know that much progress has been made by first responders across the country in gaining interoperability, and the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network that is being developed by the First Responder Network Authority will further contribute to these capabilities.

However, as the Department of Homeland Security inspector general's November 2012 report illustrated, the Department, itself, has not made sufficient progress in addressing its own interoperable communications capabilities.

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H.R. 615 works to address this serious issue by requiring the Department's Under Secretary for Management to develop a strategy for achieving and maintaining interoperable communications between the DHS components. It requires DHS, as you have learned, to report to Congress on the progress it is making toward achieving milestones.

As a former U.S. attorney who helped set up Indiana's Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council after 9/11 and Indiana's

first fusion center, I know firsthand the importance of seamless communication between first responders, especially in times of crisis, including those in the Department of Homeland Security.

Continued inability to make progress on interoperability can have serious consequences for public safety across our country. That is why Congress must hold our various law enforcement agencies, particularly those in Federal Government, accountable for communicating clearly with one another to ensure we eliminate confusion, duplication, and discord among those most necessary when lives are on the line.

That is exactly what the gentleman from New Jersey's bill does, and that is why I encourage my colleagues to support, once again, this very important piece of legislation, and I thank him for his leadership.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency.

I am glad to have her join us here in Congress for her great ability in the State legislature, and she has removed me from being the lowest member in the delegation, off the bottom.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from New Jersey and fellow member of the Committee on Homeland Security, Mr. PAYNE, and obviously my senior for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Ranking Member PAYNE's legislation, H.R. 615, the DHS Interoperable Communications Act. This common-sense, bipartisan legislation builds upon recommendations made by the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security by requiring DHS to develop a strategy for achieving interoperable communications among the Department's components.

During an emergency, be that a terrorist attack or natural disaster such as Superstorm Sandy that devastated my home State of New Jersey, it is essential that first responders are able to communicate.

It is also essential that components of the Department of Homeland Security are able to communicate with one another at all times. H.R. 615, as introduced by my colleague from New Jersey and before us on the floor today, seeks to make that aspiration a reality.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, in the 14 years since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, we have still not reached the day where interoperable communications is a universal reality among State, local, and Federal agencies. Ranking Member PAYNE's bill puts us on a path to fixing that reality as it relates to the Department of Homeland Security.

Importantly, the bill clarifies and enhances the Department's Under Sec-

retary for Management's responsibility for achieving and maintaining interoperable communications among the components of DHS. By doing so, the bill focuses this important mission and will aid Congress in conducting the oversight necessary to see that the policy goals of the bill are achieved.

As ranking member of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency, I look forward to conducting robust oversight of DHS' operations in many areas, including interoperable communications.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for his work on this legislation and urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 615, the DHS Interoperable Communications Act.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers. If the gentleman from New Jersey has no further speakers, I am prepared to close once the gentleman does.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, TSA must be able to talk to FEMA and the Coast Guard during an emergency, be it a terrorist incident or natural disaster. For that reason, the achievement of cross-component interoperable communications is essential to DHS' being able to carry out its mission.

H.R. 615 takes a responsible approach to addressing the oversight findings of the inspector general and the Committee on Homeland Security about a serious operational gap at the Department of Homeland Security: interoperability.

Moreover, an earlier version of this bipartisan measure passed the House unanimously last Congress. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 615.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, it is vital that the various component agencies at the Department of Homeland Security be able to communicate on a daily basis and particularly in times of crisis. This bill will help to ensure these capabilities are implemented and maintained.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 615, the Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Act for three reasons. The bill would address interoperability among information technology systems and radio communications systems to exchange voice, data, and video in real time.

First, the bill will save lives of first responders and those they seek to help. Second, the legislation is necessary to create a seamless level of communication among Department of Homeland Security components that are first responders to a terrorist attack, natural

or manmade disaster; and finally to meet the technological challenges of bridging the communication divide between different communications systems used by first responders within the Department of Homeland Security.

As a senior member of the House Committee on Homeland Security, I am well aware, as are many of my colleagues, of the essential and lifesaving role of communications during a crisis.

Because the tragedy of September 11, 2001, was compounded by communication failures among the brave first responders who entered the burning towers that comprised the World Trade Center it has been an imperative of the Homeland Security Committee to address first responder communication interoperability challenges.

The number of first responders lost on that single day was the greatest loss of first responders at any single event in U.S. History:

343 New York City Fire Department firefighters;

23 New York City Police Department officers;

37 Port Authority Police Department officers; 15 EMTs; and

3 court officers were casualties of the attacks.

The need for this bill authored by Congressman PAYNE is evident.

The City of Houston covers over a 1000 square mile region in Southeast Texas. It has a night-time population of nearly two million people, which peaks with over three million daytime inhabitants.

The city of Houston's 9-1-1 Emergency Center manages nearly 9,000 emergency calls per day. The volume of emergency calls can easily double during times of inclement weather or special City social/sporting events like Hurricanes Ike in September 2008; and Katrina as well as Rita, which occurred in September and October of 2005).

Annually, one out of every ten citizens uses EMS.

There are over 200,000 EMS incidents involving over 225,000 patients or potential patients annually. On the average, EMS responds to a citizen every 3 minutes. Each EMS response is made by one of 88 City of Houston EMS vehicles.

In 2013, the City of Houston's fire Department lost Captain EMT Matthew Renaud, Engineer Operator EMT Robert Bebee, Firefighter EMT Robert Garner and Probationary Firefighter Anne Sullivan when they responded to a hotel fire.

Throughout the history of the Houston Police Department over 110 officers have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Each member of the House of Representatives knows of the loss of a first responder who was going to the aid of those in harm's way. This bill will offer additional resources to the first responders of the Department of Homeland Security.

The bill amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to include among the responsibilities of the Under Secretary for Management responsibilities with respect to policies and di-

rectives to achieve and maintain interoperable communications among the components of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The Under Secretary of Homeland Security would submit to the House and Senate Homeland Security Committees a strategy, which shall be updated as necessary, for achieving and maintaining interoperable communications, including for daily operations, planned events, and emergencies, with corresponding milestones, that includes:

an assessment of interoperability gaps in radio communications DHS components, as of this Act's enactment date;

information on DHS efforts and activities, including current and planned policies, directives, and training, since November 1, 2012, to achieve and maintain interoperable communications, and planned efforts and activities to achieve and maintain interoperable communications;

an assessment of obstacles and challenges to achieving and maintaining interoperable communications;

information on, and an assessment of, the adequacy of mechanisms available to the Under Secretary to enforce and compel compliance with interoperable communications policies and directives of DHS;

guidance provided to DHS components to implement interoperable communications policies and directives;

the total amount of funds expended by DHS since November 1, 2012, and projected future expenditures, to achieve interoperable communications; and

dates upon which DHS-wide interoperability is projected to be achieved for voice, data, and video communications, respectively, and interim milestones.

The bill ensures that the Department of Homeland Security would conduct a survey of intra-agency efforts or task forces that have been delegated responsibilities for achieving and maintaining interoperable communications, and report on the status of these efforts, including:

progress on each interim milestone;

information on any policies, directives, guidance, and training established by the Under Secretary of Homeland Security;

an assessment of the level of compliance, adoption, and participation among the DHS components with the policies, directives, guidance, and training established by the Under Secretary; and

information on any additional resources or authorities needed by the Under Secretary.

This bill will ensure that the Department of Homeland Security's first responders are prepared to meet the challenges of manmade or natural disasters.

I ask my colleagues to join me in voting in favor of H.R. 615.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 615, the Department of Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Act that was introduced by the Congressman PAYNE. I am proud to join Ranking Member THOMPSON and Congresswoman BROOKS in cosponsoring this legislation that will begin to solve a prob-

lem that continues to plague the Department of Homeland Security.

This measure was written to address a November 2012 DHS Office of Inspector General report, which found that DHS lacks an effective governance structure to ensure interoperable communications among its components. This is unacceptable, and an issue that should be fixed, especially after the Department has been in existence for well over a decade.

Component agencies of the Department of Homeland Security must be able to communicate on a daily basis, and particularly in times of crisis. One of the benefits of have a Department of Homeland Security should be that components, including FEMA, ICE, and CBP, are able to act as one department and communicate at will.

This bill requires the Department's Under Secretary of Management to submit a strategy to the Committee on Homeland Security on achieving and maintaining interoperability within the Department.

This measure passed the 113th Congress on a bipartisan vote and I urge all Members to join me in supporting this important legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 615.

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. CARTER of Georgia. 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.

SOCIAL MEDIA WORKING GROUP ACT OF 2015

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 623) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the Department of Homeland Security to establish a social media working group, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 623

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 "Social Media Working Group Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. SOCIAL MEDIA WORKING GROUP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 181 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 318. SOCIAL MEDIA WORKING GROUP.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish within the Department a social