

tactics targeted at America's seniors. Growing up in Wisconsin, I was raised by my maternal grandparents. Though I went east for college, I returned to my hometown, Madison, after graduation to be there for my grandmother, who by then was widowed and who had sacrificed so much of her own time and energy to raise me. Eventually, I became my grandmother's primary caregiver.

Around the time that my grandmother turned 90 years old, she asked me to help her sort through her mail and balance her checkbook. Now, first, I was struck by the sheer volume of solicitations she was getting. I was also shocked by how many were fly-by-night organizations or "look alike" charities that were writing her on a monthly basis. Their pleas for donations looked and sounded legitimate, but I had my suspicions, so I started digging a little bit deeper.

I was also disturbed by the amount of money my grandmother had been giving to some of these entities. She believed that those who were able to do so ought to be as generous as possible to those in need, but she had no way of determining the legitimacy of the entities that were contacting her and soliciting her so regularly.

That experience opened my eyes to the very real exploitation of seniors, like my grandmother, through the mail, telephone, and Internet. Millions of Americans become victims of similar financial exploitation each year, but it is not just the isolated and lonely who may fall prey to these scams. One only need read one's local newspaper in order to hear how widespread this really is.

In my home district in Wisconsin, over the years, we have seen all sorts of scams. One reads of ongoing reports about "notch baby" schemes in which Social Security beneficiaries born between the years 1917 and 1921 are asked to send money to organizations that promise to change the Federal laws to increase their benefits. These organizations go so far as to ask these seniors whether they would like their Federal money in a lump sum or in monthly payments.

Earlier this year, The Capital Times newspaper in Madison, Wisconsin, reported that an 84-year-old Madison woman was duped out of nearly \$3,000 after a phone scammer convinced her that her "granddaughter's boyfriend" was in a Canadian jail and needed bail money. Madison police reported that she received a phone call from the man, who called her "Grandma," and he told her he was in a Canadian jail after being picked up for drunk driving. To convince the elderly woman, "Officer Jacob Harris" came on the line and convinced her of the need for bail money for her "granddaughter's boyfriend." This elderly woman wired the money, and fell victim to a disturbingly common scam.

I also read that, not days after President Obama signed the historic health care reform bill into law, fraudsters were figuring out how to scam seniors. A cable TV advertisement exhorted viewers to call an 800 number so that they wouldn't miss a limited enrollment period to obtain coverage. We all know that there was no limited enrollment period for any coverage in the health care legislation that we passed.

Though we all have read and heard these anecdotal stories, it is difficult to estimate the prevalence of financial exploitation cases due to severe underreporting. According to a 2009 report by Met Life Mature Market Institute, for every case of abuse reported, there are an estimated four or more that go unreported. We do know some facts, though. This same study found that the annual financial loss by victims of senior financial abuse is estimated to be at least \$2.6 billion.

In my home State of Wisconsin, the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups estimates that 35,000 seniors in Wisconsin alone were the victims of financial exploitation last year. The Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions reports that half of their cases now being investigated include older victims.

On a national level, postal inspectors investigated almost 3,000 mail fraud cases in the U.S., and they arrested more than 1,200 mail fraud suspects in 2007 alone. Further, the FBI has confirmed that criminals are modifying their targeting techniques to include online scams, such as phishing and email spamming.

Given the prevalence of financial fraud targeting seniors, Congressman HOWARD COBLE and I introduced the Senior Financial Empowerment Act with a very specific goal in mind—to empower seniors and to end the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of America's elders. The bill builds on the good work already being done by the Federal Trade Commission and by the U.S. Department of Justice, and it seeks to empower these agencies to support local and State efforts to combat financial fraud and to empower our seniors.

I would like to extend a special thanks to my colleague HOWARD COBLE from North Carolina for his leadership on this issue. It has been a pleasure working with him to advance this legislation.

I also want to thank Chairman SCOTT, Chairman CONYERS, and Ranking Members GOHMERT and SMITH for their longstanding commitment to America's seniors.

□ 1430

Mr. Speaker, when I saw my grandmother go through the last years of her life, and what she went through with these solicitations, I made a pledge to make sure that all older Americans

have the tools that they need to protect themselves against financial crimes and fraud. I urge support for the Senior Financial Empowerment Act.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) for her leadership on this bill, as well as the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE). This important legislation will protect a lot of seniors, and I would hope that we would pass the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3040, 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. SCOTT of Virginia. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

NORTHERN BORDER COUNTER-NARCOTICS STRATEGY ACT OF 2010

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4748) to amend the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 to require a northern border counternarcotics strategy, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4748

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 "Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy Act of 2010".

SEC. 2. NORTHERN BORDER COUNTER-NARCOTICS STRATEGY.

The Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-469) is amended by inserting after section 1110 the following new section:

"SEC. 1110A. REQUIREMENT FOR NORTHERN BORDER COUNTERNARCOTICS STRATEGY.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this section, and every two years thereafter, the Director of National Drug Control Policy shall submit to Congress a Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy.

"(b) PURPOSES.—The Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy shall—

"(1) set forth the Government's strategy for preventing the illegal trafficking of drugs across the international border between the United States and Canada, including through

ports of entry and between ports of entry on that border;

“(2) state the specific roles and responsibilities of the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security (including the Office of Counternarcotics Enforcement), and other relevant National Drug Control Program agencies (as defined in section 702 of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1701)) for implementing that strategy; and

“(3) identify the specific resources required to enable the agencies described in paragraph (2) to implement that strategy.

“(c) SPECIFIC CONTENT RELATED TO CROSS-BORDER INDIAN RESERVATIONS.—The Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy shall include—

“(1) a strategy to end the illegal trafficking of drugs through Indian reservations on or near the international border between the United States and Canada; and

“(2) recommendations for additional assistance to tribal law enforcement agencies with respect to such strategy.

“(d) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—The Director shall issue the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy in consultation with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the heads of other relevant National Drug Control Program agencies, and, with respect to subsection (c), the leaders of the affected Indian tribes.

“(e) LIMITATION.—The Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy shall not change existing agency authorities or the laws governing interagency relationships, but may include recommendations about changes to such authorities or laws.

“(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Director shall provide a copy of the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy to the appropriate congressional committees (as defined in section 702 of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1701)), and to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

“(g) TREATMENT OF CLASSIFIED OR LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE INFORMATION.—Any content of the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy that involves information classified under criteria established by an Executive order, or whose public disclosure, as determined by the Director or the head of any relevant National Drug Control Program agency, would be detrimental to the law enforcement or national security activities of any Federal, State, local, or tribal agency, shall be presented to Congress separately from the rest of the Strategy.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. 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 the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4748, the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy Act of 2010, amends the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 to require that the director of the National Drug Control Policy submit to Congress a Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy.

The United States' northern border with Canada is the longest open border in the world, spanning 12 States and over 4,000 miles.

President Obama's recently released Drug Control Strategy describes an increasing amount of drug trafficking and related criminal activity occurring near the Canadian border, including on Indian reservations in that area.

According to a 2010 National Drug Threat Assessment, the amount of drug commonly known as “ecstasy” being seized at the northern border has increased almost 600 percent between 2004 and 2009.

The Office of National Drug Control Policy has developed a comprehensive strategy for addressing drugs coming across the southwest border. Congress supported this effort with a directive contained in the 2006 reauthorization bill.

The bill before us extends that directive to our northern border to help bring focus to the efforts to curb illegal drug trafficking and related crimes on the international border between the United States and Canada.

As with the southern border strategy, the northern border strategy will detail the specific rules and coordinate the efforts of law enforcement agencies, including the ONDCP, the Justice Department, and the Homeland Security Departments.

In addition, H.R. 4748 brings in Indian tribes with reservations on or near the Canadian border for a consulting role in implementing the strategy on the reservations.

I would like to commend our colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS), whose district spans 250 miles along the border, along the St. Lawrence River and Lake Erie, for his leadership in this important legislation.

I would also like to thank the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), for his assistance in bringing this bill to the floor.

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

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 4748, the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy Act requires the director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, ONDCP, to develop a counternarcotics strategy for the U.S. Canadian border.

Given the escalating drug violence in Mexico, many may think that illegal drug trafficking only occurs across our

southwestern border. And while the lion's share of cocaine and heroin is smuggled into America from Mexico, the U.S.-Canadian border is a major transit point for high-potency marijuana, ecstasy and other illegal drugs.

This is not something new. Several years ago, when I was chairman of a subcommittee on the Committee on Homeland Security, we held a hearing in our northwestern area, that is, on our U.S.-Canadian border on the west side of the country, and at that time it was pointed out to us the major trafficking in what was known as “BC Bud,” a high-grade marijuana coming out of British Columbia, also large amounts of money from the United States crossing over into Canada, and a serious number of weapons transiting across our common border.

It's gotten even worse since then. According to the 2010 National Drug Threat Assessment, the Asian drug trafficking organizations are responsible for the resurgence of ecstasy in the U.S. since 2005. And these organizations produce the drug in Canada and then smuggle it across our northern border.

The U.S.-Canadian border is remote, heavily wooded, and sparsely populated, ideal for smugglers seeking to move their product into the U.S. without being detected. These conditions have led to some creative, even brazen, trafficking methods.

For instance, in Operation Frozen Timber, led by Immigration and Customs Enforcement in 2006, six smugglers were caught transporting marijuana and cocaine across the border using helicopters. One smuggler touted the operation as being even better than FedEx because “they delivered anywhere in Washington State.”

Operation Iron Curtain, led by the Drug Enforcement Administration, resulted in charges against 45 suspects involved in trafficking approximately \$250 million worth of high-grade hydroponic marijuana into the U.S. annually.

America's Indian reservations along the Canadian border are also exploited by drug smugglers. Roughly 20 percent of the high-potency marijuana grown in Canada is smuggled across the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation in upstate New York.

In 2006, Congress directed the ONDCP to prepare a counternarcotics strategy for our southwestern border. H.R. 4748 mirrors this requirement to produce a strategy for the northern border. The bill requires coordination with the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, as well as other relevant Federal agencies.

This legislation will help ensure a cohesive approach to combating drug smuggling across our border with Canada. While we continue to address drug trafficking across our southwestern border, we cannot and must not lose

sight of the ease by which our northern border can be exploited by dangerous drug smugglers.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS), whose district borders Canada.

□ 1440

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman CONYERS and Chairman THOMPSON for their leadership and for bringing H.R. 4748 to the floor.

I do live along the Canadian border, and much of my district contains a broad swath of Indian reservation and much of the timber lands that were described by my colleague from California.

Our northern border with Canada spans over 4,000 miles, the longest open border in the world. The livelihoods of thousands of workers and their families in Upstate New York depend on a stable trading relationship with our northern neighbor. In my district alone, we saw more than \$677 million worth of goods exported to Canada in 2008. Nearly 20,000 jobs depend on this trading relationship.

Since coming into office in November, I have met with officials from local and Federal law enforcement, members of the trade community, and small business owners from my district. Immediately before coming to the floor, I was with a number of ICE agents who were discussing this very problem. One issue that nearly every one of them has mentioned to me is the importance of a safe and secure northern border that can ensure the movement of people and goods. Whether it's Canadian tourists who have driven to Upstate New York for dinner or a manufacturing plant that imports its raw materials from Canada, New York has benefited for decades from a robust business relationship across international borders, and any illegal activity that takes place on our border threatens that relationship.

Organized criminal elements are increasingly exploiting the northern border to traffic narcotics, illicit cigarettes, firearms, and humans. According to the 2010 National Drug Threat Assessment, the amount of ecstasy seized at or between northern border ports of entry increased 594 percent from 2004 to 2009. In 2009, there were 1,100 drug-related arrests of adults in New York's north country.

While our Nation's drug czar has developed a comprehensive strategy for dealing with the flow of drugs across the southwest border, dealing with this problem at the northern border is currently left up to individual law enforcement agencies. The Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy Act will require the Office of National Drug

Control Policy to develop a comprehensive counternarcotics plan on the northern border.

By passing this legislation, we will be requiring all the relevant law enforcement officials at the Federal, State, and local levels to come together and start the process of developing a new approach to combat this problem. It is vital to both the economic development of our region and the safety of our community that we take the steps to stop the drug trade across our northern border. I ask my colleagues for their support.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I would reiterate my remarks, and say that this is a very, very good idea. Hopefully, it will pass unanimously.

I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New York and the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, Mr. THOMPSON, for their hard work on this bill. It's an extremely important bill dealing with narcotics on the northern border. I would hope that we would pass the bill.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4748, the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy Act of 2010. The bill is sponsored by Representative BILL OWENS of New York, a valued member of the Committee on Homeland Security and a Member representing a congressional district along our Nation's northern border. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the bill.

H.R. 4748 would require the Director of National Drug Control Policy, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security, to develop and submit to Congress a Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy. The document will set forth the government's strategy for preventing the illegal trafficking of drugs across the U.S.-Canada border; establish the responsibilities of the relevant Federal agencies in carrying out the strategy; and identify the resources necessary for implementation.

Having an effective strategy is an essential step in combating narcotics smuggling and trafficking along our northern border. Much attention is paid to the challenges along our nation's border with Mexico, and rightfully so. However, securing the U.S.-Canada border, while expediting legitimate trade and travel, is also imperative for meaningful border security.

The bill is not only integral to border security, but is vital for economic development in New York's North Country and other communities along our border with Canada. Thousands of jobs in Upstate New York and elsewhere depend on the swift movement of lawful commerce across the northern border, and any illicit activity along the border may undermine this robust trading relationship. H.R. 4748 will help ensure that the U.S. and Canada continue to enjoy the world's largest bilateral trade relationship.

I commend Representative OWENS, a leader on my Committee on northern border security

issues, for bringing into focus the need for a strategic approach to stem the movement of illicit drugs across the U.S.-Canadian border, a longstanding northern border security challenge. I congratulate Representative OWENS on bringing H.R. 4748 to the House floor, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Representative OWENS for his work on drafting this bill.

I rise in support of H.R. 4748, the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy of 2010. This legislation fulfills a critical need by mandating that the Administration provide a comprehensive strategy to stem the flow of narcotics between the United States and Canada.

Our northern border with Canada is the longest open border in the world. While the Administration has developed a strategy for addressing the flow of drugs across the southwest border, our northern border must not be forgotten.

As a cosponsor of this legislation and as the representative of a district with nearly 60 miles of international border, I understand the critical need to keep our communities safe from the influence of drug trafficking.

It is essential that law enforcement agencies have the tools to minimize the influence of narcotics trafficking. In Washington state, Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) have consistently used the I-5 corridor to distribute meth, cocaine, ecstasy, and marijuana from Canada into our local communities.

It is vital that the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) work with the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a comprehensive northern border counternarcotics strategy to ensure our local communities have the necessary resources to combat this illicit activity.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this legislation.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I have no further requests for time, 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 (Mr. SCOTT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4748, 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. SCOTT of Virginia. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 301, PAKISTAN WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1556 and ask for its immediate consideration.