

**MEMBER DAY:
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION**

**HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE
ADMINISTRATION
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS**

FIRST SESSION

MARCH 4, 2025

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COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

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MEMBER DAY: COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

March 4, 2025

**COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D.C.**

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:06 a.m., in room 1310, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Bryan Steil [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Steil, Griffith, Murphy, Bice, Carey, Miller, and Morelle.

Staff present: Annemarie Cake, Professional Staff/Deputy Clerk; Rachel Collins, Deputy General Counsel and Parliamentarian; Kristen Monterroso, Director of Operations and Legislative Clerk; Michael Platt, Staff Director; Elliot Smith, Director of Oversight; Jordan Wilson, Director of Member Services; Khalil Abboud, Minority Deputy Staff Director; Jamie Fleet, Minority Staff Director; and Sean Wright, Minority Chief Counsel.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BRYAN STEIL, CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION, A U.S. REP- RESENTATIVE FROM WISCONSIN

Chairman STEIL. The Committee on House Administration will come to order.

I note that a quorum is present.

Without objection, the chair may declare a recess at any time.

Also, without objection, the hearing record will remain open for 5 legislative days so Members may submit any materials they wish to be included therein.

Thank you, Ranking Member Morelle, Members of the Committee, and our witnesses for participating in today's hearing.

Today, the Committee on House Administration continues our legislative oversight with Member Day for the 119th Congress. The Committee on House Administration is tasked with ensuring the legislative branch as a whole is operating efficiently and effectively. As a Committee with broad oversight of many legislative entities, we often bring forward legislation that impacts our workplace and our colleagues here in the Capitol.

From campus safety to committee funding and Federal election law, every single Representative is impacted by the work we do here in this Committee. That is why it is critical for us to hear from our colleagues at the beginning of each Congress to see how we can work together to bring forward legislation that truly better serves the American people.

In addition to our legislative oversight duties, the Committee also assists Member offices through fulfilling Member service requests, programming for staff, and Members and more. For example, during the 118th Congress, we completed 660 Member service requests for Republicans, 750 newsletters on House operations, and a total programming attendance of over 3,000.

We held a Member day hearing at the beginning of the 118th Congress, as well. In that hearing, we heard many great recommendations from our colleagues. We even were able to implement recommendations we received through pieces of legislation that passed this Committee. For example, we heard from our colleague, Congresswoman Claudia Tenney of New York, about election integrity efforts to prevent noncitizen voting.

I look forward to hearing from our colleagues today about a variety of issues this Committee will consider in the coming months. I thank our colleagues for coming before the Committee to testify today. I look forward to having a positive discussion about how we can work together to improve our institution.

With that, I will yield to the Ranking Member, Mr. Morelle, for 5 minutes for opening remarks.

[The prepared statement of Chairman Steil follows:]

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE
ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION BRYAN STEIL**

Today, the Committee on House Administration continues our legislative oversight with Member Day for the 119th Congress. The Committee on House Administration is tasked with ensuring the legislative branch as a whole is operating efficiently and effectively.

As a Committee with broad oversight of many legislative entities, we often bring forward legislation that impacts our workplace and our colleagues here in the Capitol. From campus safety to committee funding and Federal election law, every single Representative is impacted by the work we do here in this Committee. That is why it is critical for us to hear from our colleagues at the beginning of each Congress to see how we can work together to bring forward legislation that truly better serves the American people.

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**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH MORELLE, RANKING
MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM NEW YORK**

Mr. MORELLE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for calling this meeting and ensuring our compliance with the rules of the House.

I want to welcome all of our colleagues and friends to the Committee on House Administration.

Our portfolio, as you have articulated, of authorities here is pretty diverse. We have considerable legislative and oversight responsibilities, from the handing—from the funding and administration of Federal elections to the stewardship of our cultural institutions, such as the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress. We are ultimately a customer-service enterprise. Whether it is the security of our buildings, the food in our cafeterias, the paint on our walls, or how we communicate with constituents, we oversee all of it, a responsibility I know we all take very seriously.

I would, as you did, nod to the Committee's Subcommittee on Modernization and Innovation and that panels predecessors in the Congress, many ideas on improving the function and form of what we do has come out of that Subcommittee, and I appreciate all their work.

You know, we are ultimately the oversight entity of the House, and the place could not function without the thousands of employees, who, by the way, often go unacknowledged. We should thank them for the extraordinary service they do, particularly at a time when the Federal workforce is being subjected to some indiscriminate, you know, decisions by the administration. I want them to know their efforts do not go unnoticed or unappreciated.

I look forward to hearing from our colleagues about what is important to them and their constituents and how they think we can improve our service to the House. I am sure there will be no shortage of Members appearing today simply to lavish us with praise and acclaim for what we are doing right. I am eagerly welcoming those comments as well.

Thanks for your kind words. Thanks for holding the hearing.

With that, I look forward to hearing from our colleagues, and I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Ranking Member Morelle follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION JOSEPH MORELLE

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for calling this meeting and ensuring our compliance with the rules of the House. I want to welcome all of our colleagues and friends to the Committee on House Administration.

Our portfolio, as you have articulated, of authorities here is pretty diverse. We have considerable legislative and oversight responsibilities, from the handing—from the funding and administration of Federal elections to the stewardship of our cultural institutions, such as the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress.

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I look forward to hearing from our colleagues about what is important to them and their constituents and how they think we can improve our service to the House. I am sure there will be no shortage of Members appearing today simply to lavish

us with praise and acclaim for what we are doing right. I am eagerly welcoming those comments as well.

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman yields back.

Without objection, all other Members' opening statements will be made part of the hearing record if they are submitted to the Committee clerk by 5 p.m. today.

Today, we have two panels. Each witness will give a 3-minute opening statement, then the majority and minority will each have a total of 5 minutes per side to question the witnesses.

We now welcome our first panel of witnesses, and I will recognize you, Mr. Frost, from Florida for 3 minutes.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. MAXWELL FROST, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Mr. FROST. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair and Mr. Ranking Member, and thank you for the opportunity to testify today on two very important matters I hope the Committee will prioritize this Congress.

First, I will be reintroducing the Voting Overseas Treated Equally for Servicemembers Act, or the VOTES Act. I am grateful to the Members of this Committee for their unanimous support of the VOTES Act when it was marked up last Congress. This country owes a lot to those who volunteer to serve, and for as long as our Nation has fought wars and deployed servicemembers abroad, we have recognized the right of those in uniform to participate in the democracy that they defend.

This is personal to me. I come from a family that has been in the United States Air Force since it was the United States Army Air Corps. Absentee voting for servicemembers goes at least as far back to the civil war, and that legacy continues under UOCAVA, the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, and the MOVE Act, which guaranteed ballot access to Active Duty servicemembers abroad.

The MOVE Act, however, was passed over 15 years ago. Today, it is not just Active Duty servicemembers who might be deployed overseas, and that guarantee of ballot access might not extend to some of the 760,000 Reserve and National Guard members who might be deployed overseas for critical operation, training exercises, and national emergencies.

The VOTES Act corrects this by ensuring that all servicemembers serving overseas, regardless of their duty status, get their ballot in time to vote in Federal elections. It is a straightforward, bipartisan solution endorsed by the American Legion, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, and the National Guard Association of the United States.

I ask that the Committee markup this bill and report it favorably. I will be introducing it soon.

Second, I would love the Committee to address an issue that would immediately make it easier for Members, especially those who come from disaster-prone districts, to better serve our constituents. Congress should allow district offices to use their website and online platform to direct constituents to community organizations, resources, and services.

When a hurricane hits central Florida or a tornado tears through the central Wisconsin, our constituents come to our offices and our websites looking for help. While we can help constituents filing claims with FEMA, we all know local and community recovery resources make the biggest difference, and we would love to be able to point our constituents to those local resources.

Folks come to us for help, and they deserve better than being sent away because their issue is not necessarily a Federal one. This Committee could make that happen. Not all districts have the same community groups or resources, and each Member would have their own discretion to decide how they would engage, but at least they would have the ability to do so, if needed.

This is something that the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress investigated and offered as a recommendation to Congress. Just like the Committee passed the resolution to authorizing cosponsored constituent service events, my hope is that we can make this change. I am ready to help, and thank you so much for your time and important work. I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Representative Frost follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE MAXWELL FROST

Committee on House Administration

Member Day Testimony

Congressman Maxwell Alejandro Frost (FL-10)

March 4, 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on two very important matters that I hope the Committee will prioritize in this 119th Congress.

First, for the second term, I will be introducing legislation called the Voting Overseas Treated Equally for Servicemembers Act, or the VOTES Act. I'm grateful to the Members of the Committee on House Administration for their unanimous support of the VOTES Act when it was marked up last Congress.

The American way of life sits on the shoulders of the brave military servicemembers who protect and defend us day and night. It's not for nothing that folks say we're the land of the free because of the brave.

If you or a family member has served, this country owes you a lot – especially those sent downrange in support of ground operations.

For as long as our nation has fought wars and deployed service members abroad, we have recognized the fundamental right of those in uniform to participate in our democracy. During the Civil War, states pioneered absentee voting to ensure soldiers could cast ballots.

That legacy continues under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) and the MOVE Act, which guaranteed ballot access to *active-duty* servicemembers abroad.

However, the MOVE Act was passed over 15 years ago. Today, it's not just active-duty servicemembers who may be deployed overseas. That guarantee of ballot access might not extend to some of the 760,000 Reserve and National Guard members – many of whom deploy for critical operations, training exercises, and national emergencies.

The VOTES Act corrects this by ensuring all servicemembers serving overseas, regardless of their duty status, receive their ballots in time to vote in federal elections.

This bill is endorsed by the American Legion, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, and the National Guard Association of the United States. I ask that the Committee prioritize advancing this legislation because those who serve our country have a right to have their voices heard.

Second, I would like the Committee to address an issue that would immediately make it easier for members, especially those who come from disaster prone districts, to better serve our constituents.

Congress should allow district offices to use their website and online platforms to direct constituents to community organizations, resources, and services.

When a hurricane hits central Florida, or a tornado tears through Wisconsin, our constituents come to our offices and our websites looking for help. While we can assist our constituents with filing claims for relief from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, we all know recovery resources from the local level

and led by community groups can provide the most support. As leaders in our community, we are expected to help direct our constituents toward what they need to recover, not just send them home because their issue is not a federal one. As leaders at the highest level of government, we should be able to convene resources in one place, rather than force our constituents to do a copious amount of outreach and research in their time of crisis.

The Committee on House Administration could ensure that this is an option. Not all districts have the same community groups or resources, and every member should be given plenty of leeway in who they include, or if they even participate at all.

This is something the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress investigated and offered as a recommendation to Congress. Just like the Committee passed a resolution authorizing co-sponsored constituent service events, my hope is that we can make this change. I am ready to help.

Thank you for your time and important work.

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman yields back.
I recognize myself for 5 minutes for questions.

I appreciate your testimony, Mr. Frost. We have had some great conversations, particularly as it relates to making sure that our servicemembers are able to vote overseas.

Ms. Lee, on this Committee, the chair of the Subcommittee on Elections in particular, has a significant interest in making sure that we are looking at additional updates to UOCAVA in this Congress. As that debate continues, we look forward to working with you. We appreciate your interest, and we were happy to work with you as we passed your bill out of this Committee last year. I think there is an opportunity as we look at UOCAVA, maybe a little bit more holistically, to make sure that we are making updates in that space that are needed.

As it relates to your other point, providing local resources, this is something that we have been discussing on this Committee and appreciate your—hearing your support of making that change. I think you are absolutely correct. When natural disasters, emergencies occur in a Member's district, often our constituents, folks in our home State, reach out really not knowing where to turn.

Often, as Federal policymakers, we think through the distinction between Federal law, Federal resources, State law, State resources, local, and local resources, where, if your roof just got blown off—in my State by a tornado, maybe in your State by a hurricane—you do not really give a hoot which Government entity you should turn to; you are just looking for help. Providing that flexibility to Federal offices is something that we are exploring, and appreciate your interest and feedback, and we will continue to look at that opportunity this year.

I yield back. I will recognize the Ranking Member for 5 minutes.
Mr. MORELLE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Frost. You and I have had many, many conversations about the bill that relates to servicemembers. I could not agree with you more and look forward to working with the chair and my colleagues here and Ms. Lee, who is one of your cosponsors and the vice chair here of the Committee, to get that done.

As well, I think the issue that relates to natural disasters makes a great deal of sense. I think the challenge in part is figuring out what the trigger is, whether there is a declaration of some kind, but I think we could work on that. Then the question of which resources do you direct them to and how do you make sure that, you

know, you have got a current list of places where you can do it, it is a little bit of a challenge, but I certainly think it is well worth doing. I appreciate both your being here today and both suggestions, which I think are things we ought to take up. Thanks for your time. Thanks for being here.

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman yields back.

I recognize the representative from Oregon, Ms. Salinas, for 3 minutes.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. ANDREA SALINAS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OREGON

Ms. SALINAS. Thank you, Chairman Steil and Ranking Member Morelle. I am grateful to have the opportunity to speak to the Committee today on the Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act. I apologize, I am not able to stay for questions, but I am happy to report back any questions the Committee may have.

The Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act will ensure that every eligible voter in America is able to cast a safe, secure, and accessible ballot by mail in our Federal elections. That includes folks who cannot make it to the polls due to, as we have been talking about, natural disasters, age, illness, disability, or simply because they work two or three jobs and have limited schedules.

My State of Oregon has been a vote-by-mail State for nearly 30 years. We have consistently high levels of voter turnout. Research has shown that voters from both sides of the aisle vote by mail at similar rates. This bill would not favor one party over the other; it would benefit all Americans.

This includes our brave and hardworking first responders, who do an indispensable job. Their jobs are dangerous, and they are difficult. Beyond the taxing physical work, they also require intensive work hours that extend beyond a normal workday. The amount of work they do cuts into weekends, public holidays, and, yes, even election day. Given these circumstances, it is essential that first responders, and all voters in similar situations, are provided the ability to participate in our democracy.

In addition to allowing eligible voters—every eligible voter—to easily and efficiently participate in our elections, vote by mail saves a significant amount of money. Officials in my State have reported that vote by mail decreased costs by at least one-third, which for our State is around \$3 million a year. On top of those savings, vote by mail benefits the economy by improving productivity and decreasing lost wages because Americans can go vote from their kitchen table instead of waiting in lines that snake around the block.

A report from 2012 found that the amount of time Americans spent waiting in line to vote cost over \$540 million in lost productivity and wages. The benefits of my bill do not end there. It also includes a requirement that States must provide voters with an opportunity to cure their ballots. This is critical because voters casting their ballots may make errors due to a lack of access to an election official to assist them when they are filling out their ballot.

The Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act would extend the access that Oregonians have had for decades to every American. It would establish a national right to vote by mail, which would only

strengthen our democracy by allowing more Americans to make their voices heard. That is why the Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act is also an integral part of the Freedom to Vote Act.

I encourage this Committee to give its full and fair consideration to the Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act and to oppose any efforts that may arise to restrict access to the ballot, including any efforts to restrict the ability of Americans to vote by mail.

Again, I thank you so much for your time and for this hearing. I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Representative Salinas follows:]

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE ANDREA
SALINAS**

Rep. Salinas – Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act
Committee on House Administration – Member Day remarks

Thank you, Chairman Steil [style] and Ranking Member Morelle [more-elli]. I am grateful for the opportunity to speak to the Committee on House Administration today about my bill, the *Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act*.

The *Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act* will ensure that every eligible voter in America is able to cast a safe, secure, and accessible ballot—by mail—in our federal elections. That includes folks who can't make it to the polls due to age, illness, disability, or simply because they work two or three jobs and don't have the time.

My state of Oregon has been a vote-by-mail state for almost 30 years. We have consistently high levels of voter turnout. Research has shown that voters from both sides of the aisle vote by mail at similar rates, so this bill would not favor one party over the other—it would benefit all Americans.

This includes our brave and hardworking first responders who do an indispensable job. Their jobs are dangerous, and they are difficult. Beyond the taxing physical work, the jobs also require intensive work hours that extend beyond a normal work day.

The amount of work they do cuts into weekends, public holidays, and yes, even Election Day. Given these circumstances, it is essential that first responders—and

all voters in similar situations—are provided the ability to participate in our democracy.

In addition to allowing every eligible voter to easily and efficiently participate in our elections, voting-by-mail saves a significant amount of money. Officials in my state have reported that voting-by-mail decreased costs by at least one-third, which is around \$3 million each year.

On top of those savings, voting-by-mail benefits the economy by improving productivity and decreasing lost wages because Americans can vote from their kitchen table instead of waiting in lines that snake around the block. A report from 2012 found that the amount of time Americans spent waiting in line to vote cost over \$540 million in lost productivity and wages.

The benefits of my bill don't end there—it also includes a requirement that states must provide voters with an opportunity to cure their ballots. This is critical because voters casting their ballots by mail may be more likely to make errors due to a lack of access to an election official to assist them.

The *Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act* would extend the access that Oregonians have had for decades to every American. It would establish a national right to vote by mail, which would only strengthen our democracy by allowing more Americans to make their voices heard.

That's why the *Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act* is also an integral part of the *Freedom to Vote Act*.

I encourage this Committee to give full and fair consideration to the *Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act*—and to oppose any efforts that may arise to restrict access to the ballot, including any efforts to restrict the ability of Americans to vote by mail.

Thank you for your time.

Chairman STEIL. The gentlewoman yields back. Thank you very much.

We will go straight to Mr. Panetta, and then we will go back and do questions at the end of the panel.

We will recognize Mr. Panetta for 3 minutes.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. JIMMY PANETTA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. PANETTA. Great. Thank you, Chairman Steil and Ranking Member Morelle.

I appreciate the concerns of my colleagues and echo their sentiments.

My request is much more selfish, I will be honest with you, selfish to the people of my district in the 19th Congressional District on the central coast of California. We need more money, is what it comes down to, in regards to being able to effectively serve our constituents. I say that thanks to this independent redistricting commission that used my district—previously used my district as hamburger helper to create the district to the east of mine and therefore completely spread out my district over a wide variety of communities of interest, causing me to open up four district offices in the 19th Congressional District, which has been a financial strain on my office and on the Members' Representational Allowance.

That is why I respectfully request your consideration for changes to better support Members who represent larger geographic districts with a high cost of living and high property values. The changes that I am asking for will enable Members like me to adequately serve the distinct communities of interest and recruit and retain qualified staff.

Now, my district, California's 19th Congressional District, which I provided each of the Members a map of, just so you can get a little bit of the flavor of it, spans 2,817 square miles and covers four counties, each with distinct Federal needs, and I think that is the highlight right there that we have got to focus on.

The communities in my district are separated by geography that necessitates offices in each population center. Without the four offices that I have opened, it would be very expensive and time consuming for working families in each of those four distinct communities to access congressional services in person.

In addition to geographic separations, my district makes up several distinct communities of interest. You have got south San Jose, which is a bedroom community to the commuters of Silicon Valley. You have got Santa Cruz, which has tourism, hospitality, some agriculture economies. You have got Monterey County, which has the specialty crop agricultural industry and a number of military installations. Then you go all the way down the coastline to northern San Luis Obispo County, which has cattle, wine, and coastal tourism as well.

These counties and these areas are very, very different, and the people are different. You know what? You cannot really expect them to travel to another area—another community of interest within the 19th Congressional District. Each of these constituencies require local staff who understand their unique concerns in addi-

tion to access to physical offices. Additionally, due to California's redistricting, as talked about, I have had to meet most of these constituents for the first time in the last Congress, which is 55 percent of the constituency which was new.

To add additional costs, the office rents in my district are among the highest in the Nation. While I understand and appreciate that the CAO uses sub-market rates to account for more expensive office rents, this calculation fails to account the quantity of offices needed. Unfortunately, maintaining multiple offices is more expensive and results in renting more total square footage than a single district office.

Despite these differences in the cost of living, there is no adjustment in the formula dedicated to personnel as well. That means that pay for personnel that includes staff in my district, where the median salary is \$116,000, is the same as Kentucky's Fifth District, where the median salary is \$44,000.

If I may? Thank you. Recent reports have also confirmed that the cost of housing in my district is among the highest in the Nation.

Look, I want to recognize your leadership for championing MRA increases, and thank you, thank you, thank you for the 6.2 percent increase that the MRA included in 2023. Unfortunately, for districts like mine, it has not gone far enough. I know I am over my time. I think you get the gist of where I am coming from when it comes to my type of district, how expensive it is, how spread out it is, how many different communities of interest that I have. Therefore, I am asking for a change in the formulation for MRAs to take into account all of the obstacles and challenges that I have in the 19th Congressional District and provide more when it comes to the MRA. Thank you. I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Representative Panetta follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JIMMY PANETTA

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRADE
COMMITTEE ON
BUDGET
CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP



United States House of Representatives

19th Congressional District, California

Jimmy Panetta

March 4, 2025

WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE:
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WASHINGTON, DC 20515

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800 PINE STREET
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Testimony of Congressman Jimmy Panetta before the House Committee on Administration

Chairman Steil and Ranking Member Morelle, thank you for inviting me to testify today before the Committee on House Administration. I would like to raise for the committee concerns with the formula for determining the Members' Representational Allowance (MRA) and respectfully request your consideration of changes to the MRA to better support members who represent larger geographic districts with high costs of living and high property values. These changes will enable Members like me to adequately serve multiple communities of interest and recruit and retain qualified staff.

California's 19th Congressional district, which I represent, stretches from the suburban neighborhoods of South San Jose, over the mountains to Santa Cruz, and then down the coast through Monterey and Big Sur, all the way to Cambria in San Luis Obispo County. It then runs East for fifty miles to Kern County to include the towns of Paso Robles and Atascadero, furthest to the south. In all, the district covers four counties (Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Luis Obispo) with distinct federal needs. It spans 2,817 square miles, but due to perennial closures of Highway 1, cannot be traversed without traveling through the Salinas Valley in California's 18th Congressional District. A trip from my San Jose District Office to my Paso Robles District Office requires driving over 100 miles through California's 18th Congressional District, home to my former, but not current, constituents.

The distinct communities in my district are separated by geography that necessitates offices in each population center. South San Jose's neighborhoods are separated from coastal Santa Cruz by mountains. Santa Cruz and Monterey are separated by what can be an hour-plus commute during rush hour, necessitating separate offices to serve both communities. The communities I serve in Northern San Luis Obispo County are a two-hour drive or more to their fellow constituents in Monterey County, requiring a fourth district office to serve my constituents in that county. This is especially true of the coastal cities of Cambria and San Simeon, which are physically cut off from my Monterey office due aforementioned coastal highway closures. The average distance between my four district offices is more than 52 miles, and without the four offices I have opened it would be prohibitively expensive and time-consuming for working families to access Congressional services in person, and for staff to engage outside of the office with each community.

In addition to geographic separations, my district makes up several distinct communities of interest. South San Jose is a bedroom community for commuters to Silicon Valley for jobs in the technology sector. Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties have tourism and hospitality economies,

in addition to agriculture, and include coastal and mountainous regions with very separate needs from the San Jose suburbs. Northern San Luis Obispo County incorporates cattle ranches, vineyards, and wineries distinct from the leafy greens and berry growers in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties. Simply put, my northern-most constituents in San Jose working at technology start-ups have little in common with those employed in the agriculture sector in the southern-most part of my district, which is home to the largest cattlemen's association in the state of California. These constituencies each have different needs and require local staff who understand their unique concerns, in addition to access to physical offices.

Adding to these challenges is the fact that I have had to meet most of these constituents for the first time in the 118th Congress. Due to California's redistricting in 2020, fifty-five percent of my constituency in the 118th Congress are new constituents, pulled from districts previously represented in Santa Cruz County by Rep. Anna Eshoo, Santa Clara County by Rep. Zoe Lofgren, and San Luis Obispo County by Rep. Salud Carbajal. Redistricting has made it all the more imperative that we meet constituents where they are, even if they are more than 100 miles apart.

To add additional costs, office rents in CA-19 are among the highest in the nation. While I understand and appreciate that the Chief Administrative Officer uses sub-market rates to account for more expensive office rents, this calculation fails to account for the quantity of offices needed. In this case, even in an office with one or two staffers, the need for space to host constituents means that districts serving more geographically separate communities requires more total office space for the same number of staffers.

There is also the challenge of recruiting and retaining staff in an area with the highest cost of living in the country. Despite these differences in cost of living, there is no adjustment in the formula dedicated personnel, the Clerk Hire, to account for them. This means that pay for personnel that includes staff in California's 19th Congressional District, where the median salary is \$116,064, is the same as Kentucky's 5th Congressional District, where the median salary is \$44,175¹ (less than the minimum House of Representatives full-time staff salary). Recent reports have confirmed that the cost of living in my district is among the highest in the nation. The latest National Low Income Housing Coalition "Out of Reach" report for 2023 names Santa Cruz County the least affordable rental market in the U.S.² Separately, the National Association of Realtors names the San Jose metro area as the least affordable market for middle-class income ranges.³

This means that, with the same-sized personnel budget as less expensive districts, our office struggles to compete with both the public and private sector for qualified employees. In the San Jose metropolitan statistical area (MSA), the average office and administrative support salary is

¹ U.S. Census, 2023 Data.

² National Low Income Housing Coalition, "Out of Reach," 2023, https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/2023_OOR.pdf.

³ CNBC, "The least affordable metro areas for America's middle class—5 of them are in California," April 24, 2003, <https://www.cnbc.com/2024/04/24/least-affordable-metro-areas-for-americas-middle-class.html>.

over \$66,000, while the average community and social service salary is nearly \$84,000.⁴ In Santa Cruz County, county employees recently negotiated an 11.5% pay increase over the next three years,⁵ and Monterey County employees negotiated a full 12% increase over the same time period.⁶ These factors will make government employment at the local level more attractive relative to federal Congressional employment.

I recognize your leadership and appreciate the MRA increases you championed, and am grateful for 6.2 percent increase that my MRA included in 2023 (although unfortunately, this figure was unchanged for 2024). Despite previous increases, I am compelled to explain how this amount has not gone far enough in paying for four district offices overall that I have located directly in my district's population centers, nor is it sufficient to recruit and retain district-based to operate those district offices and provide a standard level of constituent services. In fact, I have budgeted for more than \$10,000 in total office costs each month for the duration of this Congress.

At this rate, my budget for staff salaries, franking services, and other official expenses are stretching budgets thin. I have had to delay security improvements and technology upgrades for five-year-old computers, and have delayed retreats to improve staff cohesion.

Given these challenges, I believe that the current MRA formula is outdated and should be updated to account for geographic size and cost of living.

I hope that you will favorably consider my request so members can best serve their constituents, and I am happy to work with the committee on specific ways in which we can achieve a fairer formula.

I appreciate your attention to my testimony today and welcome any questions you may have.



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wages in San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, May 2023, https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/occupationalemploymentandwages_sanjose.htm

⁵ KSBW, "Santa Cruz County and SEIU Local 521 reach agreement to avoid strike," September 27, 2024, <https://www.ksbw.com/article/santa-cruz-county-seiu-521-california-agreement-avoid-strike/62415665>

⁶ KSBW, "County of Monterey reaches tentative agreement with county's largest union," September 3, 2024, <https://www.ksbw.com/article/county-of-monterey-reaches-tentative-agreement-with-countys-largest-union/62047029>

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman yields back.
 The gentlewoman from Illinois, Mrs. Ramirez, is recognized for 3 minutes.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. DELIA C. RAMIREZ, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Ranking Member Morelle, for providing me—thank you for the opportunity to be able to testify today about how the SAVE Act could strip 70 million American women in the United States from their right to vote.

Let me start by pointing out a fact some of my colleagues seem incapable of accepting: Noncitizens cannot vote. That is the law. Noncitizens do not vote, and it is a fact. My colleagues on the other side have decided to use this information to whip people into fear-driven frenzy to suppress the votes of anyone who threatens an extremist, unconstitutional, authoritarian agenda, and that includes women.

As Chair Steil admitted in his testimony in front of the Rules Committee last Congress, under the SAVE Act, Americans would not be able to register to vote with their driver's license or REAL IDs. IDs do not meet the SAVE Act's requirement of showing a holder's citizenship status, because, again, the fact is that noncitizens can legally access REAL IDs. The only documentation that is acceptable under the SAVE Act that most Americans will be able to use are passports and birth certificates paired with IDs.

Here is the problem: Only half of Americans own a passport, and an estimated 70 million women in the United States changed their name upon marriage, meaning their IDs and their birth certificates do not match. According to the Pew Research Center, 80 percent of American women adopt their husband's name, and it is my understanding that three women who served in this Committee have also done so.

If they do not have a passport and their birth certificate does not match their ID, then what happens then? According to the text of the SAVE Act, these 70 million American citizens will be unable to prove their citizenship and would be barred from registering to vote. However, the impact is not limited to married women: There is also survivors of domestic violence who decided to create new identities for themselves and sometimes for their sons and for their daughters. They would be penalized for ensuring their survival.

Folks, that is unacceptable.

I have heard from Republicans over and over again that they want to protect women. Let me ask you, how is this bill protecting women's right to vote? The SAVE Act is not an election security bill. It is carefully constructed legislation targeting American women, targeting Americans—Black, Brown, veterans, indigenous, and working class. It is a bill to disenfranchise millions of Americans. It is part of the authoritarian playbook—including the funding freeze and the persecution of diverse cities—and it takes courage and moral clarity to stand against it.

Today, I wanted to speak because I want to invite every Member of this Committee and the House Democrats and Republicans to see this bill for what it is: to stand on the right side of history and

to stand against the SAVE Act. Thank you for your attention and time this evening—this morning. With that, I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Representative Ramirez follows:]

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE DELIA C.
RAMIREZ**

Remarks, Talking Points:

Remarks (5 minutes MAX)

- Thank you, Chair Steil [style] and Ranking Member Morelle [more-elli], for providing me with an opportunity to testify today about how the SAVE Act could strip 70 million American women in the United States of their right to vote.
- Let me start by pointing out a fact some my colleagues seem incapable of accepting: Non-citizens cannot vote. That is the law. Non-citizens do not vote. That is a fact.
- My colleagues on the other side have decided to use disinformation to whip people into a fear-driven frenzy to suppress the votes of anyone who threatens their extremist, unconstitutional, white supremacist, authoritarian agenda.
- Including women.
- As Chair Steil admitted in his testimony in front of the Rules Committee last Congress, under the SAVE Act, Americans would not be able to register to vote with their driver's license or REAL IDs.
- IDs do not meet the SAVE Act's requirements of showing a holder's citizenship status because – again – the fact is that non-citizens can legally access REAL IDs.
- So, the only documentation that is acceptable under the SAVE Act that most Americans will be able to use are passports and birth certificates paired with IDs.
- The problem?
- Only half of Americans own a passport, and an estimated 70 million women in the United States changed their name upon marriage– meaning their IDs and birth certificates don't match.
 - According to the Pew Research Center, nearly 80% of American women adopt their husband's name.
 - It is my understanding that the three women who serve on the House Administration Committee majority did that.
- So, if they don't have a passport, and their birth certificate doesn't match their ID, what happens then?
- According to the text of the SAVE Act, these 70 million American citizens will be unable to prove their citizenship and would be barred from registering to vote.

- However, the impact is not limited to married women. This is also about survivors of domestic violence who decided to create new identities for themselves and sometimes for their sons and daughters.
- They will be penalized for ensuring their survival. That is unacceptable.
- I've heard from Republicans over and over again how they want to protect women.
- So, I want to believe that Chair Steil wouldn't want to disenfranchise 28% of his constituents— the over 162,000 women in Wisconsin's 1st congressional district whose IDs do not match their birth certificates.
- And I like to think my colleague from Illinois who serves on this Committee, Congresswoman Miller, would not want to prevent two-and-a-half million women in our state Illinois— including 186,000 in her district, Illinois's 15th congressional district—from exercising their right to vote.
- The SAVE Act is not an election security bill. It is carefully constructed legislation targeting American women, targeting Americans— Black, Brown, veterans, Indigenous, and working class.
- It is a bill to disenfranchise millions upon millions of Americans.
- It is part of the authoritarian playbook – including the funding freeze and the persecution of diverse cities- and it takes courage and moral clarity to stand against it.
- I invite every member of this Committee and the House— Democrats and Republicans— to see this bill for what it is and to stand on the right side of history against the SAVE Act.
- Thank you for your time and your attention.

Chairman STEIL. The Representative from Illinois yields back.
I will recognize myself for 5 minutes for the purpose of asking questions.

Mr. Panetta, I was given a map of your district. It does look long and a little unique, and so the commission in California maybe has an opportunity to get some more compact districts in the State. Your point as it relates to the number of offices you have is well taken, and so I appreciate you coming and testifying before us today.

As it relates to my colleague from Illinois, I think there is a real opportunity to improve election integrity, and if you compare my home State of Wisconsin and the State of Illinois, the contrast could not be more clear. In the State of Illinois, there is no requirement for a photo ID; in the State of Wisconsin, there is a requirement for a photo ID. We could look to the State of North Dakota, where North Dakota includes in REAL ID whether or not an individual is a citizen, and so that actually addresses the concern you brought forward, something maybe the State of Illinois could take a look at. I think there is some real opportunities at the State level.

In your testimony, you noted that noncitizens do not vote. As we have shown in this Committee, we have identified where noncitizens have gotten on the voter rolls, where, in certain situations,

noncitizens have voted. It is the reason election integrity legislation, such as the SAVE Act, is absolutely essential to make sure that noncitizens are not voting in American elections.

To say that that is part of, as you noted, part of a—I will quote it here—to suppress the votes of anyone who threatens their extremist, unconstitutional, White supremacist, authoritarian agenda," end quote, I would say is common sense, common sense to require an individual to show photo identification when they come to the polls to say that they are who they say they are, to make sure that it is only U.S. citizens voting in U.S. elections.

If we look at liberal cities, such as our Nation's capital right here in Washington, D.C., which politically is not that different than the city of Chicago, in our Nation's capital, under current law, noncitizens are legally allowed to vote in municipal elections. In fact, what we saw was multiple noncitizens participating in this most recent November election at the municipal level.

Yes, it is true noncitizens cannot participate in Federal elections. We know that the radical left wants noncitizens to vote, and you can simply look at our Nation's capital here in Washington, D.C., that is using taxpayer dollars not only to allow that but to encourage noncitizens to participate.

As we look at the contrast between States, I would offer that Illinois has some of the weakest election integrity laws in our country, and so maybe an opportunity to go to the home State of Illinois and to say, "We need to step up, to make sure that we are providing election integrity so that a noncitizen does not cancel out the vote of one, legal American citizen who is participating."

To say that "noncitizens do not vote, that is a fact," we have shown in this Committee that that statement is not true. It is why election integrity legislation is so absolutely critical.

With 2 minutes left, I want to yield to my colleague from Illinois, Mrs. Miller, to comment on election integrity status in the State of Illinois. Mrs. Miller.

Mrs. MILLER. Thank you, Chairman.

I would hope that my colleague from Illinois will come to the understanding that the need for robust voter ID and election integrity laws is essential. Illinois has a long history of electoral irregularities, and the citizens of Illinois deserve secure and trustworthy elections. We do not have those. I would note that the SAVE Act does have robust protections for married women whose names have changed. Arizona has a very similar statute on the books, and no one has been disenfranchised. It is very disappointing that my colleague from Illinois has chosen to resort to scare tactics instead of joining the Committee's efforts to secure our elections.

Thank you, and I yield to the Chairman.

Chairman STEIL. The gentlewoman yields back.

Mr. Griffith. I yield to Mr. Griffith.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Panetta. How many square miles did you say your district is?

Mr. PANETTA. Oh, 2,800 square miles, but I would ask that you look at not just the geography; I would ask that you look at the different communities of interest.

Mr. GRIFFITH. I am not against you on that. I just—I do have one suggestion, and I am not saying that I am opposed to your proposal. I have a district that is 9,000 square miles.

Mr. PANETTA. I knew you would say that. I knew you were going there. I know it.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Now, I do—I mean, you raised some other good points. What we do is traveling staff office hours where we go in the municipal governments in the various—and we use the, you know, various offices that they provide to us once a month where our staff goes in, and that has been very helpful. Your district is how long from one end to the other? How many hours does it take you to drive?

Mr. PANETTA. About 4 hours.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mine is a little bit bigger, but not a whole lot, depending on where you are starting from.

Mr. PANETTA. Understood.

Mr. GRIFFITH. One of the issues that I think you are going to find with this new district—you may already have—is the prohibition on flying. Unless you take a commercial flight—now, maybe you have commercial flights. I have no commercial airports in my district, and the prohibition, even within your own district, I think, has made it harder for people with large districts to well serve their people.

I would say you might want to—we might want to be looking at that too, Mr. Chairman, as to whether or not, if you are flying within your district or within 20 or 30 miles of your district, to use some of the small commuter airports and to allow us to fly with people who—I mean, we pay for the gas. We note it all in our records for ethics purposes, but, right now, it is not—that is not allowed.

There have been many occasions, particularly on like 9/11, when I am trying to get to official events and cannot get from one place to the next in sufficient time, and I am only able to do one or maybe two events out of six or seven in my district. Having a long district does make it difficult. You do have—and you point out properly you do have the issue with the fact that your district is a lot more expensive than mine. My household income is about \$50,000.

I know I am over, but I would happily have taken my own 5 minutes.

Anyway, I do appreciate that and so I just—I throw that out as a suggestion, but it does make it more difficult, particularly with the cost of having your folks living in a much higher expense area.

I yield back.

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman yields back.

The Ranking Member is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORELLE. Thank you.

Thank you, both, for being here again.

Quick questions for you, Mr. Panetta. Were you suggesting it is both a cost of rental and the costs associated with having four offices in high-expense areas, or were you also talking about staff allocations? Is it both?

Mr. PANETTA. Both. Because, you know, we are having to compete with these counties that pay a hell of a lot more than we do

at the Federal level. Yet the cost of living is ridiculously high. Therefore, it is trying to balance and trying to get—recruit and retain talent that keeps on getting sucked up into these county offices or State offices that are paying a lot more than we are because that is how they can afford to live in such an expensive area.

Mr. MORELLE. You are essentially, I think, and I do not want to put words in your mouth, but some adjustment for everyone's MRA based on a baseline and then what the additional cost or lower cost of living is. If you start with an average and then, if you are in an area that is below average, you get a lower MRA, and if you are in a—is that essentially what you are suggesting, some—

Mr. PANETTA. Exactly. Exactly, Ranking Member.

Mr. MORELLE [continuing]. some factor?

Mr. PANETTA. Please, yes. That is exactly it. Something to take into account, the subjective factors that are there in each district that really kind of make it different than if you just kind of threw them all together, which they do now. Like I said, the comparison of the Kentucky's Fifth District versus California's 19th Congressional District with the cost of living, as Mr. Griffith talked about, how expensive it is, it just makes it very, very difficult. To have a district, like I said, not just geographically bigger but the different communities of interest that have different service needs, you have really got to go into those communities and stay in those communities, and they appreciate that, and they deserve that.

Mr. MORELLE. Thank you. Thanks.

Mrs. Ramirez, first of all, thank you so much for your comments. I think, if there is an issue on which the two sides disagree more than the SAVE Act and election law, I do not know what it is. We try to work together on most issues. This is one that there is clearly a huge divide.

I would just point out, and I will let you comment on this, but the question or the issue of non-U.S. citizens voting in Federal elections only seems to be a problem when the Republicans lose, not when they win. I have not heard a single thing or any examples of non-U.S. citizens voting. I certainly have not heard of the radical left organizing anyone to do it this past year.

I would actually argue the SAVE Act is an extreme, very expensive, and cumbersome solution in search of a problem. You know, we will continue on this Committee to have our differences. I wonder if you could share with me, in Illinois, where you represent, how many complaints are you aware of this year of non-U.S. citizens voting in the Presidential election that just passed?

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Thank you, Mr. Morelle. I mean, I think you would hear complaints from my colleague here who would be saying that. When you actually look at the record, we do not have—I mean, first, let me make sure that people understand this, for those of you that may not understand the immigration system well. If a noncitizen would vote in an election, they would be prohibited to never, ever be able to apply for residency or citizenship. A non-citizen does not vote—

Mr. MORELLE. Let me interrupt you for a second. Isn't it a felony?

Mrs. RAMIREZ. It is a felony, and, therefore, they are—

Mr. MORELLE. They risk deportation.

Mrs. RAMIREZ [continuing]. prohibited in any way to every apply for a green card or a pathway to citizenship if they voted. This is the scare tactics that are being used, but really it is about the women. I mean, for example, in Chair Steil's district, we have 162,000 women who would now have to figure out how to bring a birth certificate if their REAL ID does not prove that they are a citizen. I mean, really, this is really about voter suppression, and this boogeyman thing that if you put the word "immigrant" in a bill, it will force people to vote one way.

Mr. MORELLE. I did note, to your point, if you are a woman—my wife made the decision to take my name when we got married. On her birth certificate, the name Morelle would not appear—

Mrs. RAMIREZ. That is right.

Mr. MORELLE [continuing]. so she would have to assume she would have to bring a marriage license. She does have a passport, but to your point, half of the American public does not have a passport. Now, to register, you cannot do it by mail. You would have to go to a local board of elections. That eliminates campuses having voter registration drives or vote by—or register by mail. You would also have to have a slew of documentation to prove you are an American citizen, to prove that you are who you say you are, which adds all types of obstacles to the ability for anyone to register, let alone to vote.

Frankly, still, there is no—I have not heard a single person post election day on the Republican side say there was a massive amount of non-U.S. citizens voting in Federal elections. I agree with you. I appreciate you coming. We obviously have a huge gulf between us. My view, and I suspect yours, is that we should do everything we can to make sure that every single American has a voice at the ballot and to make sure we use different methods to ensure that that happens.

Anyway—

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Thank you.

Chairman STEIL [continuing]. with that, I appreciate both of you being here and for your interest in the work of this Committee.

With that, I yield back.

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman yields back.

The Committee will pause while the witness panel changes.

Mr. PANETTA. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. MORELLE. Thank you.

Chairman STEIL. Thank you.

We welcome the second panel.

As we did with the previous panel, we will give each witness 3 minutes to testify. Following the conclusion of the testimony, the majority and the minority will each control 5 minutes total for questions to our colleagues.

I will begin by recognizing the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Olszewski.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. JOHNNY OLSZEWSKI, JR., A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Mr. OLSZEWSKI. Thank you very much, Chairman Steil, Ranking Member Morelle, Members of the Committee. Thanks for the oppor-

tunity to provide and address a timely issue: the dedicated public servants who comprise our Federal workforce and the assault that we are seeing from President Trump and Elon Musk.

These days, it seems far too easy to demonize these workers from afar for political gain. However, for those of us privileged enough to work here on Capitol Hill, particularly the Members of this distinguished Committee on House Administration, we know better.

Every single day, we see public servants working hard behind the scenes so that we can perform our constitutional duties on behalf of those we represent, whether that is the audio and video engineers from the House Recording Studio, who came in early this morning to ensure this could be broadcast to the public; the Capitol Police officers and civilian employees, who protect us while we deliberate; the world-class carpenters, masons, and other skilled tradespeople, who maintain these historic buildings; the cybersecurity professionals, who work around the clock; the attorneys, the parliamentarians, the clerks, and those who facilitate our legislative process.

These public servants, along with countless others, are lucky that they have constitutional protections that shield them from the purge being unleashed by the President and Mr. Musk on the executive branch. However, the 3 million other Federal civilian employees in the executive branch now find themselves scared, confused, and abandoned by the very country they have served for years or, in some cases, decades. To me, and I hope to you, I find this an incredible betrayal.

Maryland is home to 140,000 Federal civilian employees, more than 22,000 of whom are constituents in District Two. These are real people with real bills to pay and real families to support. Just as important, they provide critical services to Americans, ensuring we are safe when we fly, our food is safe to eat, and processing Social Security checks and tax refunds. Americans are in for a rude awakening when there is virtually no one left to perform these and other vital services.

My guest tonight at the President's joint address is my constituent, Katie Stahl. Katie is a biologist who was recently let go from her position with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She was hired during President Trump's first term to help farmers in Maryland. She was fired in President Trump's second term because she was in probationary status, and she was only in probationary status because she was exceptional at her job. She was promoted. Katie was fired for being good at her job. She received no notice, no severance, not even the documentation she needed to apply for unemployment. I hope you agree with me that this is wrong.

Before coming to Congress, I served as Baltimore County executive where I led efforts to find efficiencies and cut wasteful spending. I welcome that discussion here, too. I also recognize that our employees are our most valuable resource and the best way we can identify those cuts at any level of government. What President Trump and Elon Musk are doing is not about efficiency. Their actions prove to me they do not understand that good employees are our best resource.

It is my sincere hope that Members of this Committee, Republicans and Democrats alike, will join me in condoning these actions and pushing back against them.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity today.
[The prepared statement of Representative Olszewski follows:]

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JOHNNY
OLSZEWSKI, JR.**

Committee on House Administration

Member Day

March 4, 2025

Testimony of Congressman John “Johnny O” Olszewski (MD-02)

Chairman Steil, Ranking Member Morelle, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to address an urgent and timely issue: the dedicated public servants who comprise our federal workforce, and the all-out assault on them by President Trump and Elon Musk.

These days, it seems far too easy to demonize these workers from afar for political gain. However, for those of us privileged enough to work here in the Capitol—particularly the distinguished Members of this Committee on House Administration—know better. Every single day, we see public servants working hard behind the scenes so that we can perform our Constitutional duties on behalf of our constituents. I’m referring to people like:

- The audio/video engineers from the House Recording Studio who came in early this morning to ensure this hearing could be broadcast to the public;
- The Capitol Police officers and civilian employees who protect us while we deliberate;
- The world class carpenters, masons, and other skilled tradespeople who maintain these historic buildings;
- The cybersecurity professionals who work around the clock to protect our data and systems from adversarial threats;
- The attorneys, parliamentarians, and clerks who facilitate the legislative process on the House Floor, just to name a few.

These public servants—along with countless others—are fortunate to be part of the small group of federal workers with Constitutional protections shielding them from the indiscriminate purge being unleashed by President Trump and Elon Musk on the Executive Branch. However, the 3 million **other** federal civilian employees in the Executive Branch now find themselves scared, confused, and abandoned by the very country they have served for years—often decades. To me, and I hope to you, this is an incredible betrayal.

Maryland is home to more than 140,000 federal civilian employees, including more than 22,000 of my own constituents. These are real people with real families to support and real bills to pay. Just as importantly, they provide critical services to Americans: ensuring we’re safe when we fly, ensuring our food is safe to eat, and processing Social Security checks and tax refunds. Americans are in for a rude awakening when there is virtually nobody left to perform these and other vital services.

My guest at tonight’s Presidential Joint Address is my constituent, Katie Stahl. Katie is a biologist who was recently fired from her position with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She

was hired during President Trump's first term to help farmers in Maryland. She was fired in Trump's second term because she was in a probationary status — and was only in probation status because of her exceptional work at the agency. In other words, Katie was fired for being good at her job. She received no notice. No severance. Not even the documentation she needed to apply for unemployment. This is **WRONG**.

Before coming to Congress, I served as Baltimore County Executive, where I led efforts to find efficiencies and cut wasteful spending. I welcome that discussion here too, but I also recognize that our employees are our most valuable resource — and the best way to identify cuts and efficiencies at any level of government. What President Trump and Elon Musk are doing is not about efficiency. Their actions prove to me that they do not understand that good employees are our best resource.

These mass firings are indiscriminate, arbitrary, and cruel, and they weaken our nation.

It is my sincere hope that all members of this Committee — Republicans and Democrats alike — will join me in condoning these actions and in pushing back against them.

Thank you, once again, for allowing me to testify today.

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman from Maryland yields back.

The gentleman from Rhode Island, Mr. Magaziner, is recognized for 3 minutes.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. SETH MAGAZINER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Mr. MAGAZINER. Thank you, Chairman and Ranking Member. I am here to ask for your support of H.R. 396, the TRUST in Congress Act, a bill introduced by myself and Mr. Roy with more than 50 cosponsors, Republicans and Democrats, to ban Members of Congress from trading stocks.

All of us in elected office should be focused on doing what is right for the people who sent us here, not turning a profit for ourselves. As Members of Congress, we frequently have access to inside, sensitive information, and we make decisions that impact the performance of the market. Because of this, the opportunity for Members to profit off of our positions is just too great. This presents an enormous loophole in House Ethics rules that must be closed.

As Members of Congress, we generally have strict limits on our outside income. If you or I wanted to make extra money after hours by driving an Uber or bartending, there are strict caps on how much outside income we can make. There is no limit whatsoever on Members of Congress trading stocks off of their position. Again, a tremendous loophole. It is ridiculous. It is absurd, and it must change.

Our bipartisan legislation bans Members, their spouses, and dependent children from trading individual stocks while in office. Members who hold individual stocks will have the option to either divest those assets or place them into a blind trust where they cannot have knowledge of when they are bought or sold.

Americans across the political spectrum overwhelmingly support a ban on congressional stock trading. Recent polling showed nearly 90 percent of Americans support prohibiting Members of Congress and their families from trading individual stocks. With this legislation, Congress can take an important step in earning back the trust of the American people. This is a bipartisan and straightforward bill. It has been endorsed by numerous nonpartisan good-Government organizations across the spectrum.

I am thankful to Representative Roy for his partnership and leadership on this issue, as well as former Representative Abigail Spanberger, who originally introduced the TRUST in Congress Act in 2020. This bill continues to grow in bipartisan support and momentum. It is time to finally get it done, and I urge the Committee to join us in supporting this legislation. I will yield back. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Representative Magaziner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE SETH MAGAZINER

SETH MAGAZINER
2ND DISTRICT, RHODE ISLAND

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3902

Member Day: Committee on House Administration
Tuesday, March 4, 2025

I am here to ask for your support of H.R. 396 - TRUST in Congress Act, a bill introduced by me and Rep. Chip Roy with more than 50 cosponsors, Republicans and Democrats, to ban Members of Congress from trading stocks.

All of us in elected office should be focused on doing what is right for the people who elected us, not turning a profit. As Members of Congress, we frequently have access to sensitive information and make decisions that impact the market. Because of this, the opportunity for Members to profit off of their positions is just too great.

This presents an enormous loophole in Congressional ethics rules. As Members of Congress, we generally have strict limits on outside income. For example, income from outside employment bartending or driving Ubers is strictly capped. Yet we are allowed to trade stocks, including the stocks of companies whose value we influence by our official actions, without any similar restrictions. This is ridiculous and absurd.

Our bipartisan legislation bans Members, their spouses, and their dependent children from trading individual stocks while in office. Members who hold individual stocks will have the option to either divest those assets or place them into a blind trust where they cannot have knowledge of when they are bought or sold.

Americans across the political spectrum overwhelmingly support a ban on stock trading by Members of Congress: Recent polling shows 86 percent of Americans support prohibiting Members of Congress and their families from trading individual stocks. With this legislation, Congress can earn back the trust of the American people.

The TRUST in Congress Act is the most bipartisan and straightforward bill to tackle this issue. This bill has been endorsed by numerous government accountability organizations from all backgrounds, including Public Citizen, Project on Government Oversight (POGO), End Citizens United (ECU) Action Fund, CREW, Protect Democracy, Americans for Prosperity, National Taxpayers Union, Fix the Court, Taxpayers Protection Alliance, Government Accountability Project, and Issue One.

I am thankful for the continued support of Representative Chip Roy, as well as the leadership of former Virginia Representative Abigail Spanberger, who originally introduced the TRUST in Congress Act in 2020. Since then, the bill has only grown in bipartisan support with each subsequent year.

I urge the Committee to make this issue a priority and pass this legislation to ban Members of Congress from trading stocks once and for all.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman yields back.

The gentleman from Texas, my friend and colleague Mr. Roy, is recognized for 3 minutes.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. CHIP ROY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Mr. ROY. Is the light on? I do not think so. Oh, there it is. It lit up. All right. Thanks, guys. Sorry about that.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it. I appreciate the time. Thanks for holding this day.

Seth, thanks for your words there.

I want to—I do want to thank Abigail for her work. She is no longer serving in Congress with us.

I am not going to repeat what Seth just said. I cosponsor what his remarks just were, but I would just add—let me just go through a couple examples here. I am not going to mention by name because I am not here to point out any Member. This is not about Members and trying to get personal. We have got a Democrat here, 4,000 trades, \$66 million worth with a 19 percent return; Republican, 1,925 trades, \$167 million worth, 22.7 percent return; a Democrat, 575 trades, \$91 million worth, 21.8 percent return; a Republican Senator, 270 trades, \$7.16 million in volume, 5.7 percent return; a Democrat, 186 trades for \$13 million for a 56 percent return. That is a pretty good return. I should be following that particular Democrat. A Republican, 164 trades for \$1 million worth; a Republican, 160 trades, \$4 million worth, 30 percent return.

I could keep going. There is a laundry list here that I could keep going down. I could go down and talk about, you know, a Republican that made a 149 percent return in 2024, a Democrat that made 142 percent return, a Democrat that made 123 percent, a Republican that made 111 percent return.

My point is just this: The American people—the reason it is called the TRUST Act is, how can the American people trust that we are actually doing this with the blindfolds we are supposed to have on? Like Lady Justice in our justice system, we are supposed to be objective. How can you be objective if you are looking at a question about breaking up Big Tech in Judiciary or a question about section 230 or a question about healthcare policy when insurance companies and hospitals and pharmaceutical companies are rolling in Government money? How can we have a serious conversation about defense when defense contractors are really, not only rolling in money—they are driving half our damn defense policy? We are all sitting here, and everybody is trading these stocks.

All we are trying to say is, maybe, just maybe we should put all these things in broadly held mutual funds. Maybe, just maybe we should say, let us limit the ability you can trade them. Now, there is some differences of opinion. We have some colleagues, another bill that is Republican and Democrat supported, that has penalties in it. Let me explain why I do not think we should have the kinds of penalties that are in that bill. I do not think we should be policing ourselves here in Congress with criminal penalties being at the end of that rainbow because that turns Congress into something it should not be.

I am interested in saying, well, if you break these Ethics rules, if we were to adopt this legislation, maybe you are no longer a Chairman; maybe you are no longer sitting on certain committees. We can police things and have penalties if we break those. We need to restore the American people's trust in Congress. We should not allow people to profit by day trading while we are sitting here. We can do that.

The last point I will make is—it is not in our bill—we could also adopt, what is it called, the 1031 exchanges—is that what it—you know, a policy where, you know, you can convert all your stuff when you get here from equities, you could go put them in a mutual fund but not hit the tax, you know, implications of that. A lot of things we can do. Very open. I think I speak for Seth too. We are open to whatever, but the time is now to do it, and we ought to move. I appreciate the Chairman for giving us the time.

[The prepared statement of Representative Roy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE CHIP ROY

SUMMARY

- Require all Members of Congress, and their spouses and dependent children, to put certain investment assets into a qualified blind trust within 180 days after the enactment of this legislation.
- New Members of Congress and their spouses and dependent children would be required to place covered investments into a qualified blind trust within 90 days of assuming office. Affected individuals can remove assets from the blind trust 180 days after the Member leaves Congress.
- Require all Members to either
 - 1) Certify to the Clerk of the House of Representatives or the Secretary of the Senate that they have established a blind trust to include covered investments or
 - 2) Certify to the Clerk or the Secretary that they do not own any covered investments.
 - The status of these certifications would be made publicly available by the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate.
- Define covered investments as the following: a security, commodity, future, or any comparable economic interest acquired through synthetic means such as the use of a derivative.
- Clarify that the following do not qualify as covered investments for the purpose of this bill: a widely held investment fund (such as a mutual fund) or a U.S. Treasury bill, note, or bond. These investments would not have to be placed in a blind trust.

THOUGHTS/TALKERS (3 MIN)

- This is the fourth Congress in which I have introduced the TRUST in Congress Act with a Democratic co-lead, previously with Rep. Spanberger and now Rep. Magaziner.
- In the 119th Congress, H.R.396 has 11 Republican cosponsors and 49 Democrat cosponsors.
 - Republican cosponsors: Juan Ciscomani, Eli Crane, Dusty Johnson, Young Kim, Mike Lawler, Nancy Mace, Dr. Greg Murphy, Scotty Perry, Ryan Mackenzie, and Zachary Nunn
- Members should not be day trading while voting on legislation that directly impacts their stock portfolios – Congress continues to outperform the stock market, and I do not believe this is a coincidence.
- The Damage
 - Capitol Trades reports that 113 members of Congress made 9,261 trades in 2024 involving 706 million shares or other assets.

MEMBER	TRADES	VOLUME (MILLIONS)	ESTIMATED RETURN
Rep. Ro Khanna (D-CA)	4,013	66.76	19.1%
Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX)	1,925	167.63	22.7%
Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ)	575	91.44	21.8%
Sen. Tommy Tuberville (R-AL)	270	7.16	5.7%
Rep. Kathy Manning (D-NC)	186	13.58	56.3%
Rep. John James (R-MI)	164	1.33	N/A
Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA)	160	4.13	30.2%
Rep. Jared Moskowitz (D-FL)	143	1.26	16.3%
Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE)	100	3.32	32.6%
Sen. Markwayne Mullin (R-OK)	97	6.54	28.0%

Data source: Capitol Trades (2024).

- There is no reason members should be trading **thousands of stocks a year.**

Members of Congress With the Best Performance in 2024

1. Rep. David Rouzer (R-NC): 149.0%
2. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL): 142.3%
3. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR): 123.8%
4. Rep. Roger Williams (R-TX): 111.2%
5. Rep. Morgan McGarvey (D-KY): 105.8%
6. Rep. Larry Bucshon (R-IN): 98.6%
7. Rep. Pete Sessions (R-TX): 95.2%
8. Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME): 77.5%
9. Rep. David Kustoff (R-TN): 71.5%
10. Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA): 70.9%

Data source: Unusual Whales (2025).

- Congress should not be in the business of assessing criminal penalties on its members. That is for the courts and their voters to decide. I am open to internal punishments on restricting Committee and leadership positions.
- I urge the Committee to consider this – and other – proposals to address this problem and make it easier for Members to do their jobs.

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman yields back.
The gentleman, Mr. Carter, is recognized for 3 minutes.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF GEORGIA

Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to present before you today. Thank you for allowing me to testify.

I want to discuss some very important matters that I hope the Committee will prioritize in this 119th Congress. Under the previous administration, the United States has experienced a historic rise of drug overdoses and poisoning driven by an increased supply of synthetic opioids, such as illicit fentanyl and its analogs.

Last fiscal year, Customs and Border Protection confiscated over 21,000 pounds of fentanyl at our borders. That is enough fentanyl to kill every American several times over, and that is just the drugs we know about. Illicit fentanyl overdoses, and please listen to this—hello?—illicit fentanyl overdoses are now the No. 1 cause of death among adults 18 to 45, the No. 1 cause of death.

However, I believe we have a great opportunity to make significant and sustainable progress in combatting this crisis. In 2023, I wrote a letter, this letter right here, to the Food and Drug Administration, calling for naloxone, an overdose reversal drug, to be available without a prescription. Now, I am often critical, I think with good reason, of the FDA for what they do not do. However, I applaud them for doing this. They did that. They made naloxone OTC where you do not have to have a prescription to get it, and that is good. That is what we need.

Naloxone nasal spray is safe. It is easy to use. It is proven to reduce medical emergencies, drug overdoses, and deaths by up to 46 percent. As the fentanyl crisis continues to devastate our country, there is no moral, medical, or safety-related reason for these life-saving overdose reversal agents to remain locked under prescription regulations. We must continue to expand availability of overdose-reversal treatments like naloxone, removing the stigma associated with carrying it and making it as common as a defibrillator. I have naloxone in my backpack. I carry it with me everywhere I have to go. I have never had to use it, thank God, but I have it if I do have to use it.

Mr. Chairman, the Republican Members, many of the Republican Members on this Committee today, were over at the CHC. The CHC has naloxone by the defibrillator. Here at the Capitol, you have got to call the Capitol Police first, and then it has got to be reported as a medical emergency before you can get that naloxone.

My request here is simple: Naloxone ought to be available here at the Capitol. It ought to be where the defibrillators are. It ought to be available. It is safe. You cannot misuse it. I suspect you could if you tried hard enough, but, essentially, it is safe, and we need to make sure that it is available. That is what we are trying to do.

That is why I sent a letter to the Committee on House Administration, the Office of the Attending Physician, and the Architect of the Capitol urging them to stock FDA-approved opioid overdose-reversal agents such as naloxone in the House of Representatives of

fice buildings. In Washington, D.C., the drug overdose death is 64.3 per 100,000 people, one of the highest rates in the Nation.

Mr. Chairman, this is something we need to do. We need to make sure we get this done. I look forward to continuing to work with the Committee to ensure that FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal agents such as naloxone are available and accessible in the House of Representatives buildings. Thank you, and I will yield back.

[The prepared statement of Representative Carter follows:]

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE EARL L.
“BUDDY” CARTER**

EARL L. “BUDDY” CARTER
FIRST DISTRICT OF GEORGIA

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE
CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
HEALTH
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
THE BUDGET

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**Testimony
Committee on House Administration
Member Day: Committee on House Administration
March 04, 2025**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for allowing me to testify today at this Member Day hearing so that I can discuss some very important matters that I hope the Committee will prioritize in this 119th Congress.

Under the previous Administration, the United States experienced a historic rise of drug overdoses and poisonings, driven by an increased supply of synthetic opioids, such as illicit fentanyl and its analogs. Last fiscal year, Customs and Border Protection confiscated over 21,000 pounds of fentanyl at our borders. That is enough fentanyl to kill every American several times over. And that's just the drugs we know about.

Ilicit fentanyl overdoses are now the number one cause of death among adults 18 to 45. However, I believe we have a great opportunity to make significant and sustainable progress in combating this crisis.

In 2023, I wrote a letter to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) calling for naloxone, an overdose reversal drug, to be available without a prescription. Thankfully, the FDA approved the first over-the-counter naloxone nasal spray on March 9, 2023, and the product is now available. Naloxone nasal spray is a safe, easy to use treatment that is proven to reduce medical emergencies, drug overdoses, and deaths by up to 46 percent.

As the fentanyl crisis continues to devastate our country, there is no moral, medical, or safety-related reason for these life-saving overdose reversal agents to remain locked under prescription regulations. We must continue to expand the availability of overdose reversal treatments like naloxone, removing the stigma associated with carrying it and making it as common as a defibrillator.

That is why I sent a letter to the Committee on House Administration, the Office of Attending Physician, and the Architect of the Capitol urging them to stock FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal agents, such as naloxone, in House of Representative Office Buildings – including in the district.

In Washington, D.C., the drug overdose death rate is 64.3 per 100,000 people – one of the highest rates in the nation. It's critical that the Committee on House Administration lead by example and stock opioid overdose reversal agents in every location where there is a defibrillator

throughout the House office buildings – including in the district. There is no moral, medical, or safety-related reason for these life-saving overdose reversal agents to not be widely accessible to Members of Congress and staff. If used quickly enough, naloxone can reverse the effects of fentanyl poisoning and can be the difference between life or death. Studies show that increasing access to these treatments can reduce mortality rates in communities by up to 46 percent.

With your support, we can demonstrate our commitment to addressing the fentanyl crisis that is plaguing our country and save lives by increasing access to overdose reversal agents and making it as common as a defibrillator. I keep naloxone on me, and I recommend that everyone has this, because you never know when you could be able to save a life.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Committee to ensure FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal agents, such as naloxone, is available and accessible in the House of Representative Office Buildings.

Sincerely,



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Carter, yields back.

I will recognize myself for 5 minutes.

I will yield to Mrs. Bice for 90 seconds.

Mrs. BICE. Thank you.

Mr. Roy and Mr. Magaziner, thank you for bringing this forward. As someone who made the decision when I was elected to Congress to sell all of my stocks and put everything into EFTs and mutual funds, I understand the scrutiny and concerns that we have about this. Here is something that I struggle with, and that is, it is not just Members of Congress that I think should be included in this. I mean, our staff has access to classified information if you have that clearance. If you are looking at the judicial system, there are many judges who are looking at court cases that are antitrust or otherwise, and it could have an impact.

Explain to me why we should limit this to only Members of Congress and not expand this to staff and others to be able to—if we are truly interested in protecting the institution, it should not just be Members of Congress that are under this new legislation.

Mr. ROY. Well, I will speak for myself and say that, well, that is why you all are on this great Committee, right. You take in this stuff, and then let us work on the legislation. Let us bring it forward. Let us amend it, offer ideas, and then let the legislative process work. I just think we need to let the legislative process work.

On the substantive question, the reason we did not put it in the bill, and the reason Abigail and I did not put it in a while back was that we did not—and I do not want to eat up all your time—was that we wanted to focus on this one issue. Now, when you talk

about judges, you talk about executive officials, agree. Staff gets a little more complex when we ask these people to come in, work in our offices, but I hear you. I am certainly open to it. We wanted to focus on the core problems of Members, address it, and then move from there.

Mr. MAGAZINER. If I could just very quickly, I think it is a very valid point. You know, personally, you know, I am open to looking at including staff or certain categories of staff, looking at other branches. I think something that we agree on is we also do not want the perfect to be the enemy of the good here. Like, we want to get something on the on this, and we can think of lots of ways to come up with the strongest version possible that may make it harder to pass. We just need to find that balance of something that is doable but also meaningful.

Mr. ROY. We have the—

Mrs. BICE. Thank you. I yield back. My time has expired. Thank you.

Chairman STEIL. The gentlewoman yields back.

Mr. Carter, appreciate you being here and testifying. I think you bring up a really important point of making sure that we have emergency services in the Capitol. There is always discussion about the best way to provide that, but I appreciate your testimony and interest in that space.

I want to jump back to you, Mr. Roy, if I can. I think you are asking the right questions, and I appreciate you doing it. When the STOCK Act was passed in 2012, it was referred to six committees, Committee on Administration being one. The TRUST Act last Congress was referred just to this Committee, and so it is navigating through with our other committees in the House as well. Removing the appearance of impropriety from Members, I think it is really, really important.

One of the questions that I have, and I could offer—I will offer it to you, but, Mr. Magaziner, feel free to jump in as well, is, how do we make sure in your bill that the blind trust is actually blind? What I mean by that is, sometimes in blind trust—remove Congress—blind trust in general, they have like 20/20 vision, and it really makes you suspect because now you have removed disclosure, right. The current regime is a disclosure regime. An alternative method to provide the American public confidence would be a nondisclosure regime, a blind trust which would, by definition, remove disclosure, or it would not be blind. How do you make sure that a blind trust is really blind?

Mr. ROY. Well, I think that is one of the things that we would have to work through with the Committee, bring in experts and figure out the best way to do it. There are ways and different entities that set it up to make it truly blind, to create barriers between you and that individual. Look, I have got to be honest with you—

Chairman STEIL. Do you prefer the blind—there is kind of two broad avenues of approach. One is the blind approach, right, which is no one knows—

Mr. ROY. Right.

Chairman STEIL [continuing]. what is in the black box, including the Member and including the American people. The other is a full disclosure regime, which is, here is all the information made. Both

are good, and this is going to be the dialog we are going to have here, but I think it is an interesting and worthy point to consider.

Mr. ROY. I do, too. The only thing I would add is, if it is cleaner for us to just say, "Do not do that either," and just say, "Look, you have got to be in broadly held mutual funds," or, I mean, look, and I am open to regimes where we say, "Look, we totally ban the buy side." You and I have talked about this before.

Chairman STEIL. Yes.

Mr. ROY. Ban the buy side. You cannot procure additional equities or options or whatever, but then you are able to hold equities that you came to Congress with, and that is all fully transparent, maybe like—and you have to pre, you know, sell your—or whatever, premarket your trades—

Chairman STEIL. We see that in many ways with the administration—

Mr. ROY. Right.

Chairman STEIL [continuing]. having different rules and regulations than we do. I think it is always important to remember that any insider trading is illegal by anyone who engages in insider trading. What we are working on is not to create new insider trading law. That is illegal and should be, and people should be held accountable if they break the law. This is also about the appearance of the impropriety in the first place.

I know my colleague will have his 5 minutes, and so I am going to recognize the time. I will yield back. I will recognize the Ranking Member for his 5 minutes.

Mr. MORELLE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all my colleagues who asked, I think, really important questions.

Thank you to all of you for being here.

I will just start with Mr. Magaziner and Mr. Roy. As someone who has divested several years ago myself, I completely agree.

I would associate myself with the remarks by Mrs. Bice, and I think it needs to be broader.

I do admit, Mr. Roy, I think it is a bit of a challenge when you are talking about staff, but particularly senior staff that are involved and in conversations with Members. It is hard to acknowledge that they do not have real influence here. I certainly think extending this to the judiciary makes great deal of sense.

I am not sure I totally agree that a blind trust and disclosure are binary questions. There could be a way to have an administrator of a blind trust disclose. The question is, who gets to look at it, et cetera? I think there are ways to maybe work that difference out, but I think it is worthy to have that conversation.

I am just sort of curious, I am not sure I understand why, Mr. Roy, you take the position there would be no criminal sanctions. I am not sure I understand that. I do not know, if you could shed a little light on that for me.

Mr. ROY. Well, and, first of all, I also want to—

Mr. MORELLE. I mean, I would prefer that no one breaks the law—

Mr. ROY. Yes.

Mr. MORELLE [continuing]. so we do not have to have—but I—you know.

Mr. ROY. I do not want to monopolize the time. I want to let Seth jump in on this. I will just answer that question for me—

Mr. MORELLE. Yes.

Mr. ROY [continuing]. in saying I think it is a dangerous place when Congress gets into policing ourselves with respect to criminal-type activity. When you start attaching fines or you start attaching things that start to go into that realm, we spend our time policing each other as opposed to acknowledging an ethics violation, allowing the people to decide that in the election, and/or potentially, like I said, with your Chairmanships, your power, that we do have the power to dole out.

Due process matters. Look, I appreciated my friend, Jamie Raskin, who in Judiciary Committee the other day said he did not vote for the removal of one of our Members of Congress, Mr. Santos, because he did not think he had had due process. I am not here to debate that. I understand differences of opinion. I just think we ought to be careful with that approach. I would give Seth a moment.

Mr. MORELLE. Yes. Mr. Magaziner.

Mr. MAGAZINER. I will respond to that, and then, if you do not mind, quickly respond to the Chairman's question as well. The way I think about all of these questions is we want something that is strong and meaningful but also achievable. Like, I do not want the perfect to be the enemy of the good here. In the context of penalties, we want penalties that are meaningful. We want penalties that will be painful but not to the point that we cannot get something passed, right.

Realistically, I am skeptical that Members are going to vote for something that is going to, you know, potentially lead to, you know, them being thrown in jail or criminally prosecuted if their spouse accidentally, you know, executes a trade or something like that, right. We can have penalties that are meaningful and strong perhaps internal to the House; you lose your committee assignments, you know, something. We can work together on what is meaningful but also achievable. I think we have got to find that right balance.

Mr. MORELLE. Yes.

Mr. MAGAZINER. There should be some meaningful penalties.

Then, just quickly, I mean, I would just say that what we have seen since the STOCK Act was passed is that transparency regimes alone are not enough, right. Like, there needs to be—it needs to be harder for people to insider trade, right. Like, yes, insider trading is already illegal, but it is just too easy for Members to do it, and transparency alone has not solved that problem. Transparency has shown us that the problem is very large, as Mr. Chip alluded to.

I forget what your other question was, but I will come back to it later.

Mr. MORELLE. No, that is—thank you. I will, before I move on, just say, and this is just me editorializing, I think the compensation for Members and reimbursement for Members for expenses needs to be looked at—

Mr. MAGAZINER. I agree.

Mr. MORELLE [continuing]. in conjunction with that, frankly.

Mr. MAGAZINER. Oh, sorry, and blind trust, on that, yes, so we could look at making expenses related to setting up a blind trust

MRA eligible, for example. I would also, again, just argue that, when it comes to blind trust, no system is perfect.

Mr. MORELLE. Yes.

Mr. MAGAZINER. You know, the question is, is it better than what we have now? The answer would clearly be yes, I would say.

Mr. MORELLE. In regard to your comments, Mr. Carter, I think we just have to sort of figure out where the drug would reside, whether it was with Capitol Police, who are our first responders, or—but I think it is well worth considering. I did not realize Capitol Police do not have it. Maybe they do. I do not know the answer to that, but I think it is certainly worth investigating.

Mr. CARTER. If I may, I have got a bill that would require naloxone to be available in all elementary schools and secondary schools in America. Wherever you see a defibrillator, you ought to see naloxone.

Mr. MORELLE. Gotcha.

Mr. CARTER. No. 1 cause of death now for 18-to-45-year-olds.

Mr. MORELLE. Yep.

Mr. CARTER. It can be reversed. You could save lives.

Mr. MORELLE. Yes. No, I appreciate that. I appreciate your comments.

I just want to leave it with—or ask Mr. Olszewski, I am sure I am torturing—the Chairman asked me. I said, I do not know; I just call him Johnny O. Just a quick description, when you were county executive, if you were looking for efficiencies, this seems akin to me right now as chopping off your foot to lose a couple pounds. What manner do you think is preferable? How did you handle it?

Mr. OLSZEWSKI. If I may, Ranking Member, just to make this bipartisan love continue, I will associate myself with the remarks of Representative Carter and in support of the naloxone. I also have one in my backpack.

We did a top-to-bottom review of our Government, and we were already pretty lean. We brought in an outside agency, not unlike DOGE. We did—it was called Government—I will get the Committee the name—public works. It was public works. We did a line-by-line review of all of the things that our employees were doing, all of our programs, and our employees. They talked to the directors. They talked to the employees.

The employees were the ones that said to us, “Here is where you can do things better and do things differently,” and we realized significant savings in our local government.

Mr. MORELLE. I appreciate that. Thanks for the courtesy.

I yield back.

Chairman STEIL. The gentleman yields back. I would like to thank all of our witnesses today, two productive panels here on the Committee on House Administration.

Without objection, each Member, including the witnesses, will have 5 legislative days to insert additional materials into the record and to revise and extend their remarks.

If there is no further business, I thank the Members for their participation.

Without objection, the Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:05 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

SUBMISSIONS FOR THE RECORD**PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE LAMONICA R. MCIVER**

Written Statement of
Congresswoman LaMonica R. McIver
Submitted March 3, 2025.

Efficiency and competitiveness on the world stage are priorities we hear about frequently in hearings like this one. I'd like to highlight a key aspect of this body in dire need of modernization: proxy voting. We are a more diverse body than we've ever been, with people of various backgrounds, parental statuses and family responsibilities, and we have the opportunity to boldly embrace change, and look at new avenues to make this body more representative and more participatory. We can make sure no one is left without a voice in these halls. That's why I firmly support proxy voting, especially for new parents in Congress, and why I'm a proud co-sponsor of H.Res. 23, the Proxy Voting for New Parents Resolution.

More than 80 percent of House members are parents and I am certain we all share a deep love and commitment to our family lives and children. I hear my colleagues talk about "family values" and strengthening American families—making room for families within our own House rules is a perfect way to show that we are a family-friendly body with policies that help parents carry out this important work. Even members without young children can understand the burden on our work that caring for a sick parent or dealing with a personal health crisis represents, and just how much it would mean to have flexibility in these moments. Our nation is far behind its peers and potential when we think about parental and family leave. We must reckon with the real barriers we put up to a healthy family life, and do more to give new parents flexibility and grace.

The idea that voting by proxy is somehow neglecting one's duties or constitutional responsibilities is absurd. Assertions that any of our colleagues with a new child or finding themselves in the hospital are merely "lazy" or "uncommitted" ignore the realities of parenting or caring for a sick loved one, and the realities of being a member of the House. Our work and commitment to our constituents is too important to leave any vote at the mercy of personal emergencies. Proxy voting ensures that our nation's business can carry on even when circumstances keep a member from joining us physically.

Beyond proxy voting, I want to ensure members have and make use of the appropriate resources to keep themselves, their families, and their staff safe, especially in-district where member security resources are more limited. Too many members have experienced personally the danger and vitriol brought on by growing domestic extremism and while we do face threats in our D.C. workplaces, we also know that similar threats exist back home, often in situations without the comprehensive services and protections offered by USCP here in Washington.

Whether attending town halls, community meetings, or other events in-district, a member's focus should be on connecting with constituents, not worrying about their own safety and wellbeing. I

know my colleagues appreciate how fundamental these interactions are to fostering democratic engagement and ensuring that the voices of their constituents are heard, but with growing exposure at district events and heightened tensions in our political climate comes greater potential for targeted acts of violence, intimidation, and harassment. I've spoken with too many colleagues that have stories of a time when their safety and lives were threatened, and they didn't have the resources to manage that threat, or didn't know where to go to find them. I have seen firsthand that many local leaders have better security resources at home than do members of this body. Investing in these safety and security resources for members of Congress helps allow us all to serve our communities and the public more successfully, and takes a step forward in our broader work of protecting the work of public servants.

Our mandate is to give a voice to the people, to uphold democracy, and to create efficient and effective government processes, no matter the circumstances. Our rules must continue to be a reflection of these principles—and be backed up with the appropriate resources. I thank the committee for this opportunity to share my thoughts on these important issues.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE TOM COLE

TOM COLE
4TH DISTRICT, OKLAHOMA
DEPUTY WHIP
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
CHAIRMAN



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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March 4, 2025

The Honorable Bryan Steil
Chairman
Committee on House Administration
1309 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Joe Morelle
Ranking Member
Committee on House Administration
1309 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Committee on House Administration Full Committee Hearing, "Member Day: Committee on House Administration."

I submit the following statement in support of H.R. 723, the Protect American Election Administration Act of 2025. H.R. 723 would build upon existing federal election administration laws within the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). More specifically, this legislation would make it illegal for election administration entities to solicit, receive, or expend any payment or donation of funds, property, or personal services from a private entity to administer an election for federal office. The only exception to this prohibition would be for the acceptance and use of space to be used as a polling place or early voting site.

During recent elections, especially the 2020 election, election administration in the United States was politically influenced because of multi-millions in private spending by private individuals with political agendas. In return, the private funds expended by many election administration offices were used to implement insecure voting methods, harvest or cure ballots, and conduct extensive outreach campaigns to benefit the donors' preferred candidates. These funds were targeted in Democratic counties to increase turnout in areas that would be beneficial to Democratic candidates.

H.R. 723 would block the private takeover of government election administration, protect states' preferred voting methods, prevent funding for ballot harvesting or curing, stop the usage of election infrastructure for ideologically motivated voter outreach campaigns, and rebuild Americans' confidence in nonpartisan election administration.

I urge the Committee on House Administration to give proper consideration to H.R. 723, the Protect American Election Administration Act of 2025.

Sincerely,



TOM COLE

Member of Congress

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE VAL HOYLE

House Administration Committee
"Member Day: Committee on House Administration"
March 4, 2025
Representative Val Hoyle

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. It is critical for the House to lower the barrier to entry for Americans to participate in their democracy.

Nearly 30 years ago, Oregonians overwhelmingly voted to become the first state to conduct entirely vote by mail elections thanks to the leadership of Republican Secretary of State Norma Paulus. With vote by mail, eligible voters receive their ballot in the mail weeks before Election Day. In Oregon, they also receive a voter pamphlet that provides detailed information on every candidate and campaign. Voters can then return their ballots through the mail or a secure drop-off site, which provides a paper trail for every vote cast and safeguards election security.

Additionally, Oregon passed the country's first Motor Voter law that automatically registers citizens to vote when they get a driver's license at the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles. Today, twenty-five states and the District of Columbia have adopted some form of automatic voter registration.

Oregon's combination of vote by mail and automatic voter registration has led to higher turnout rates, more accurate voting rolls and more secure elections. Oregonians of all parties have consistently supported this election model. That's why I am working to ensure voters across the country have the same opportunity.

I am planning to introduce the Vote at Home Act, which was previously led in the House by former-Representative Blumenauer. This bill would ensure that all eligible Americans would have the option to vote by mail and be registered to vote at the local DMV, similar to Oregon's system. I have seen first-hand the benefits of these election reforms, so I hope you will support this common-sense legislation and work with me to get it signed into law.

Voting by mail is just one way that government has evolved to better serve Americans. The Committee should look for ways to help Members better deliver for our constituents, such as increasing office capacity to respond to emerging needs. I hope to partner with you to achieve these goals.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE DARRELL ISSA**Rep. Darrell Issa – Statement for the Record
Committee on House Administration Member Day Hearing**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your strong leadership during the 118th Congress and so far in the 119th Congress. As you and your colleagues consider changes to House policy to modernize its internal management and operations, I write with four proposals for your consideration.

First, I request a change to House policy regarding personal office security clearances. As detailed in previous communications, the current policy limits the ability of personal offices to adequately support member needs and prevents the recruitment and retention of highly qualified staff. As you consider ways to ensure all Members have the support needed to consider, advance, and vote on accurate and detailed policy measures, the adjustments I have laid out to the current limitations are essential to support that end.

Second, I request the modernization of Members' identification cards to serve as a singular card for multiple required purposes. Currently, Members must carry three different devices – an identification card, voting card, and elevator card – to be used in the Capitol complex. A single card with the capability for all three tasks would be a more efficient practice to adopt.

Similarly, Congressional staff identification cards should also be modernized. Staff identification cards already utilize integrated circuit chips to access critical Capitol locations including offices and parking lots. With network security concerns on the rise, employing this technology as a key to accessing the House network would protect secure information and systems. The military implements similar card access technology to enter secure networks and view mission-critical files. Utilizing staff identification cards as a key to access the House network would enhance protection of sensitive documents.

Lastly, I request an adjustment to future legislation governing Workplace Rights and Responsibilities training. I understand that H. Res 435's directs Members, officers, and employees of the House of Representatives to complete annual training. Because the training's substance remains substantially similar each year, I propose that new legislation dictates the training be completed once per Congress rather than on an annual basis. Limiting this requirement to once per Congress would maintain the high standards of conduct expected within the House of Representatives while also optimizing resources.

Thank you for your consideration.



REPRESENTATIVE PANETTA DISTRICT MAP

