

also their humanity, heating standards must be improved.

It is my hope that this amendment today, which mandates that HUD produce model heating guidelines, will assist in this endeavor. It is also my hope that all of my colleagues will support this effort.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition to this amendment, although I am not opposed to it.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I listened very carefully to the gentleman's comments on the floor. I am prepared to accept the amendment. She makes some reasonable arguments. I urge its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MENG. I thank the Chairman for his support.

Mr. ENGEL. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. MENG. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me. I certainly support what she is trying to do.

Last December it came to light that the New York City Housing Authority, NYCHA, has as recently as 2013 shut down boilers in public housing properties unless outside temperatures drop below 25 degrees. This forces residents to go without heat during the coldest months of the year.

I grew up in affordable housing. I grew up in city housing. So I am particularly sensitive to everything that the New York City Housing Authority does.

I was outraged by this revelation. More than 400,000 New Yorkers live in NYCHA buildings, and, what's more, more than half of these residents live below the poverty line.

These New Yorkers, along with every American living in public housing, pay rent and, in return, depend on Housing Authority leadership to fulfill the very reasonable need, a safe and decent shelter.

A practice that forces tenants to grapple with bitter temperatures just doesn't fail to meet that need, it is reckless and demeaning.

Myself, Ms. MENG, and eight other members of the New York City delegation sent a letter to the New York City Housing Authority asking that they immediately issue guidance condemning this practice and make certain that none of their buildings continue to adhere to this outrageous policy.

It is important, though, that no American living in public housing be forced to suffer through the winter months, and that is exactly what this

amendment will prevent by requiring the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to issue guidelines on minimum heating requirements.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this and ensure that public housing residents' health and safety are protected.

I want to thank my colleague from New York (Ms. MENG) for partnering with me on this important issue, and I thank her for her leadership.

Ms. MENG. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MENG).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2015

The Committee resumed its sitting.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. PALAZZO

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. POE of Texas). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 114-411.

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 55, after line 11, insert the following new section:

SEC. 111. EXCEPTION TO PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY RESIDENT BOARD MEMBER REQUIREMENT.

Subsection (b) of section 2 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and (3)”;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

“(3) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN JURISDICTIONS.—

“(A) EXCEPTION.—A covered agency (as such term is defined in subparagraph (C) of this paragraph) shall not be required to include on the board of directors or a similar governing board of such agency a member described in paragraph (1).

“(B) ADVISORY BOARD REQUIREMENT.—Each covered agency that administers Federal housing assistance under section 8 (42 U.S.C. 1437f) that chooses not to include a member described in paragraph (1) on the board of directors or a similar governing board of the agency shall establish an advisory board of not less than 6 residents of public housing or recipients of assistance under section 8 (42 U.S.C. 1437f) to provide advice and comment to the agency or other administering entity on issues related to public housing and section 8. Such advisory board shall meet not less than quarterly.

“(C) COVERED AGENCY OR ENTITY.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘covered agency’ means a public housing agency or such other entity that administers Federal housing assistance for—

“(I) the Housing Authority of the county of Los Angeles, California; or

“(ii) any of the States of Alaska, Iowa, and Mississippi.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 594, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Chairman, today's bill to improve public housing is a strong step in streamlining a massive Federal program. I want to thank Chairman HENSARLING for allowing us to have this debate.

As a former public housing authority executive, I know all too well how important it is to balance financial and managerial responsibility and oversight while, at the same time, ensuring residents' needs are met.

This amendment is simple and addresses an outdated and misinformed statute in the United States Housing Act that requires the membership of directors of a public housing agency contain one member who is directly assisted by the agency.

Opposition to this rule is not new. When HUD proposed these rules in 1999, PHAs across the United States issued statements of opposition.

Some would argue that requiring resident members to serve on the board is a blatant conflict of interest, as he or she would be making decisions that financially impact his or her family and their well-being. While I agree, I am not here to debate that today.

This amendment addresses only the PHAs in three States and one county. This is because, in our respective State constitutions, there are provisions that expressly oppose the idea of a board member of any group receiving benefits from the very agency upon which he or she serves.

This amendment does not rob the residents in specified areas of a voice in the affairs of their housing. In fact, it is a Federal requirement that each PHA have a resident advisory board comprised of at least one resident who serves as a liaison between the PHA and housing residents. I speak from experience when I say that their input is always acknowledged and much appreciated.

This commonsense provision is usually passed through the appropriations process, as it has been for decades. My amendment simply makes it permanent. I encourage adoption of this commonsense provision.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.