

proper intervention. This holds particular promise for rural and underserved areas where it can be difficult to recruit and retain health professionals but could offer opportunities for continuing provider education and engagement.

This legislation enjoys broad bipartisan support. It has been endorsed by a number of health professional organizations, including America's Essential Hospitals, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, the American Nurses Association, and the National Association of Community Health Centers, to name but a few.

This legislation does not impact direct spending or revenues. It offers a means by which to evaluate successful models in the private sector and opportunities to build upon them and adopt them if successful.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on S. 2873.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2873, the ECHO Act, that I co-lead with my colleague Representative BURGESS in the House and Senators HATCH and SCHATZ in the Senate.

The ECHO Act elevates the successful Project ECHO model, which uses technology to remotely connect healthcare providers to one another so they can communicate best practices and new techniques.

UC Davis Medical Center, in my district of Sacramento, has some of the best and brightest doctors, and they are working hard to share their expertise across our region and the country. We are also fortunate in Sacramento to have a strong safety net of top-notch community health centers that work to provide the primary care needs of underserved populations. However, primary care is a big job, and often these providers have not received the education or training they need in specialty areas such as pain management.

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UC Davis is successfully partnering with over 125 community health centers in California, to provide that collaborative education on responsible and safe pain management, resulting in increased use of evidence-based tools and reduced prescriptions for high-dose opioids. Better understanding of pain and effective pain management will contribute toward combating our Nation's devastating opioid abuse and heroin epidemic.

This Project ECHO bill is a first step in scaling approaches like this nationwide to ensure that every provider has access to the best information on a variety of topics, from pain to addiction, dermatology, infectious diseases, neurology, and much more.

We need to build on this progress to ensure that we are harnessing the power of technology to improve patient care and save lives. I urge my colleagues to support S. 2873.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congressman BURGESS for his work on this, and I urge my colleagues to send S. 2873 to the President's desk for signature.

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, only 10 percent of physicians practice in rural areas in this country, but those areas contain 25 percent of the population. Obviously, there is a mismatch.

Access to care in underserved areas is especially challenging for patients with chronic or complex conditions. Overburdened primary care providers often will have to refer complex patients to hospitals or specialists for care that actually could just as well be delivered at home. These unnecessary referrals delay care and increase costs for patients in the system. The Project Extension for Community Health Outcomes, or Project ECHO, is one example of an innovative model that is being used to address this challenge.

Project ECHO uses interactive videoconferencing to link specialist teams with primary care providers in medical education clinics that include didactic teaching and case-based learning.

Project ECHO has equipped local providers across the country with the extraordinary skills necessary to take on healthcare challenges threatening our communities. Project ECHO has been used to increase the number of docs able to prescribe for opioid abuse, to rapidly educate providers on public health crises, such as a novel flu outbreak, and to train providers to address complex mental health disorders.

This bipartisan, bicameral bill has broad support from healthcare providers and systems. It passed the Senate 97-0 last week. Again, I want to thank Congresswoman MATSUI of California for her partnership on the bill. I encourage my colleagues to support its passage.

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2873, Expanding Capacity for Health Outcomes Act, which would increase access to health care services in rural areas.

This bill authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services to study the Project ECHO model, which launched a revolutionary long distance health care model that uses videoconferencing for collaboration and case-learning.

The Project ECHO model has proven to be successful in bringing much needed health care to some of our nation's most remote regions.

By taking study of this model to the national level, we have the opportunity to fully harness emerging technologies to transform the way health care is practiced.

As a life long health care professional from a district with rural and underserved areas, I know firsthand how challenging it can be to provide access to high quality health care to these areas.

Connecting primary care providers with specialists through video streaming helps bridge the gap in both distance and access, reducing travel and costs for both patient and provider alike.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation so that we can continue working to provide specialty care to all Americans across the nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2873.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IMPROVING BROADBAND ACCESS FOR VETERANS ACT OF 2016

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6394) to require the Federal Communications Commission to submit to Congress a report on promoting broadband Internet access service for veterans.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6394

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Improving Broadband Access for Veterans Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. REPORT ON PROMOTING BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE FOR VETERANS.

(a) VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term "veteran" has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission shall submit to Congress a report on promoting broadband Internet access service for veterans, in particular low-income veterans and veterans residing in rural areas. In such report, the Commission shall—

(1) examine such access and how to promote such access; and

(2) provide findings and recommendations for Congress with respect to such access and how to promote such access.

(c) PUBLIC NOTICE AND OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT.—In preparing the report required by subsection (b), the Commission shall provide the public with notice and an opportunity to comment on broadband Internet access service for veterans, in particular low-income veterans and veterans residing in rural areas, and how to promote such access.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA) and the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6394, the Improving Broadband Access for Veterans Act of 2016.

Our veterans face unique and difficult challenges upon their return home from service, but access to broadband Internet service should not be one. Broadband access can help equip our veterans with the tools necessary to be successful in today's 21st century economy, and that is why I urge all of my colleagues to support this commonsense, nonpartisan bill.

H.R. 6394 simply requires the Federal Communications Commission to submit a report to Congress on ways to better improve access to broadband for our Nation's veterans; in particular, low-income veterans and veterans living in rural areas.

We as legislators will be able to make better informed policy decisions based upon the recommendations made in the report and, thereby, help ensure our veterans have access to such a fundamental tool in today's economy. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 6394.

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

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6394, the Improving Broadband Access for Veterans Act of 2016.

I thank my colleagues, Mr. MCNERNEY, who will be speaking very shortly, and Mr. KINZINGER, both colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee with myself and Mr. LATTA. Both of them have had a focus on how the Internet with be helpful to veterans. Obviously, Internet is really helpful to all of us, but veterans have some special challenges, and we have a special obligation to veterans.

This legislation is absolutely focused on the obligation that we have to try to help our veterans have access to the Internet. That is especially important in rural areas, something very close to the heart of Mr. LATTA and me.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY), the cosponsor of this bill with Mr. KINZINGER, and a wonderful colleague on the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Vermont for his work on this, and my colleague from Ohio, and also Mr. KINZINGER from Illinois for his work.

My bill, H.R. 6394, sets us on a path of working to close the digital divide for veterans. Access to broadband Internet service provides an important resource for the more than 20 million veterans across our Nation, with the highest population residing in my State of California.

Having a broadband Internet connection helps veterans apply for jobs more

easily, obtain necessary vocational training, and communicate with friends and family. It lets them keep up with current events. It gives them access to healthcare services. And they can get important information about their benefits and military records. Without broadband Internet access, it is difficult to fully participate in today's society.

Veterans face many challenges when they return home. Not having Internet access makes what is already an incredibly tough transition process even harder. This is particularly likely to be the case for low-income veterans and veterans living in rural areas.

Although we lack data on the number of veterans with broadband Internet access, the U.S. Census Bureau and the Pew Research Center both report that broadband adoption rates are significantly lower among Americans who live at or below the Federal poverty level.

An analysis by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration at the U.S. Department of Commerce further finds that broadband adoption rates in rural areas of the country are lower than they are in urban areas.

We must find ways to ensure that veterans, especially the more than 1.4 million living below the Federal poverty level and the 5.3 million residing in rural areas, are not left behind. This is why my bill directs the Federal Communications Commission to examine the current state of broadband access for veterans and what can be done to increase access, with a focus on low-income veterans and veterans residing in rural areas. The findings and recommendations from the report will be important for paving the way to get more veterans connected.

Again, I want to thank my cosponsor, Mr. KINZINGER, for his support, and I urge my colleagues to vote for the bill.

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

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, there are more than 20 million veterans across the Nation, and every single one of them deserves access to broadband Internet. This bill can help give Congress the information it needs to help improve the lives of our veterans, and I urge all of my colleagues for their support of the gentleman's legislation.

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6394, the Improving Broadband Access for Veterans Act of 2016.

The First District of Georgia is blessed to be home to four of our military's fantastic installations and more importantly, to the great men and women who choose to serve our country.

Our military's greatest strength is found in those individuals who have chosen to defend our freedoms and our values.

Those veterans bring a wealth of information and experience to the civilian sector that benefits innovation and those who are exposed to it.

This bill requires the FCC to submit to Congress a report on the promotion of broadband access for veterans with a focus on low-income veterans and those living in rural areas.

By ensuring those veterans have access to high-speed broadband, that determination and hard-working spirit found in so many veterans that I've met can be fostered and grown.

I want to thank Congressman MCNERNEY, Congressman KINZINGER and the rest of the Energy and Commerce Committee for their hard work on such an important issue for the growth of our veteran community.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6394.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE THAT ACCESS TO DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS AND CONNECTIVITY IS NECESSARY TO PREPARE YOUTH

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 939) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that access to digital communications tools and connectivity is necessary to prepare youth in the United States to compete in the 21st century economy.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 939

Whereas the United States should lead the world in providing high-quality education and opportunities to its citizens;

Whereas digital skills are essential for education and preparing citizens for the economy of the future;

Whereas, on a daily basis, teachers across the country assign homework that requires Internet access to be completed;

Whereas there are 5,000,000 households with school-age children in the United States that do not have high-speed Internet access at home and fall into what is known as the "homework gap";

Whereas a disproportionate number of students without high-speed Internet access at home reside in low-income and minority households;

Whereas students and families in rural areas face additional challenges when homework requires Internet access that is out of reach;

Whereas every student deserves an opportunity at 21st century success;

Whereas participation in the classroom can be improved when all students are equipped with the tools to complete their homework;

Whereas educators can increase the use of cutting-edge education technology and digital learning resources when those resources