

complete the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. I would like to thank the chairman and ranking member for working with me and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to include two amendments of critical importance to Hispanic-serving institutions.

One amendment would eliminate the 2-year wait out period that interrupts HSI's ability to benefit from the title V Developing Institutions grants. The second amendment will finally put an end to the so-called "50 Percent Rule" that became an intrusive requirement mandating that Hispanic-serving institutions collect and report to the Department of Education individual information on family income and family size for every Hispanic student on campus in order to demonstrate that 50 percent of the Hispanic student enrollment meets the definition of low income.

HSIs already are required to demonstrate that they have a high population of needy students as measured by eligibility for need-based student aid. The 50 percent rule added nothing to the targeting of funds to those with greatest need and only created an administrative nightmare that was a disincentive to participation in the title V program.

The 2-year wait out period and the 50 percent rule have been barriers that have been harmful to the HSI program to the detriment of the institutions and the students they serve. It is high time that we remove these barriers and I am pleased that we will not make our community wait until reauthorization is complete to move forward.

I, along with my colleagues in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, have been working for over 4 years to remove these barriers.

At the beginning of this Congress, we introduced H.R. 761, the Next Generation Hispanic Serving Institutions Act. This legislation included both of these amendments for HSIs. Our bill also included provisions to establish a long overdue graduate program for HSIs. With the passage of H.R. 6138, we will be two thirds of the way toward our goal. It is my hope that we can complete the job before the 109th Congress adjourns.

Again, I would like to thank the chairman and ranking member as well as my good friend from New Mexico in the other body for working with us to improve the HSI program. These are very important amendments.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6138.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am concerned by the inclusion of provisions in this bill related to eligible trustee relationships with eligible institutions and the negative implications that these provisions will have on the availability of low-cost Federal loans and need-based grants in Pennsylvania and across the Nation.

I am also concerned that this legislation was not discussed with the affected institutions and is being brought to the floor for a vote less than a week after it was introduced.

Nearly 150 institutions of higher education participate as Federal Family Education Loan—FFEL—program lenders to their graduate and professional students, including many of the leading medical and law schools in the country. The financial benefits offered to students who borrow through their institution are better than what was available to students at the institution prior to the school becoming a lender. These institutions are required to pay the loan origination fees or reduce the interest rates that their borrowers are charged, and many institutions choose to do both.

Over the past 8 years, Widener University in my district has been able to provide nearly \$8 million more in grant aid to needy students as a result of its activity as a school lender. Over 90 percent of the students at Widener require financial aid to pursue their studies. In addition, Widener also provided loans at lower costs than Sallie Mae and the big banks and has charged no up-front fees to students borrowing their loans from the university.

The provisions in H.R. 6138 would not allow school lenders to make Graduate PLUS loans to their students after December 31, 2006. The Graduate PLUS loan program has only been available since July 1, 2006, and was designed to replace graduate students' need to borrow higher-cost private loans to cover their remaining need. A number of institutions have sought to meet their borrowers' financing needs through eligible lender trustee arrangements under which a bank originates and holds loans on behalf of a trust established by the institution. The proceeds from the sale and repayment of these loans are used to help students. By continuing to deny school lenders the ability to make Graduate PLUS loans directly and stopping them from making them under trustee arrangements, the bill shifts millions of dollars from funds to help needy students to the profits of the big corporate lenders.

The inability to make Graduate PLUS will result in a loss of over \$50 million need based grant aid for students at the 14 school lenders in Pennsylvania. In addition to Widener University in my district, the University of Pennsylvania, University of Scranton, Drexel, Duquesne, Carnegie Mellon, Temple, University of Pittsburgh, and seven other medical and professional schools in Pennsylvania also participate as school lenders.

In addition, the provisions also impact existing structures that have been in place for many years. A 2005 U.S. Government Accountability Office—GAO—study found a wide diversity in how these institutions finance, administer, and structure their FFEL lending programs. For example, some have used affiliated foundations as the lender because of State laws prohibiting institutions from incurring debt directly or because they have chosen to issue taxable bonds to finance their loans. Some of these arrangements involve eligible lender trustee relationships as well as affiliate organizations. The bill would not allow institutions to use or modify these types of structures after date of enactment.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6138, a bill intended to extend the programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965. The Higher Education Act—HEA—authorizes the major Federal student aid programs that are responsible for the majority of financial assistance to postsecondary students.

The provisions in this bill will ensure that the HEA will not expire at the end of this fiscal year by extending its provisions another 9 months through June 30, 2007.

In 1965, the Higher Education Act was established to help low- and middle-income students pursue higher education. Today, the Federal Government invests more than \$70 billion in direct financial aid to students and families, and hundreds of millions of dollars are provided to colleges and universities so that they may better serve their students.

However, it seems as though every time we extend this crucial legislation, the provisions it

contains divert the resources further and further away from where they are most needed. Eighty-six percent of high school graduates from families with incomes over \$80,750 go on to college while only 57 percent of graduates from families earning less than \$33,000 do so. Pell grants and student loans are supposed to help narrow this gap. And yet, when dollar amounts are scoffed at as expenses rather than investments, it is our next generation of doctors, lawyers, teachers, civil servants, and other professionals who suffer.

This will be the fifth time this Congress that we have extended the Higher Education Act. Although I am disappointed that we have not been able to reauthorize this crucial bill, I am pleased that we can manage to keep these programs active for the time being.

In addition to the existing provisions for Pell grants, teacher training, student loans, and distance education, H.R. 6138 contributes further language to increase the accessibility of higher education by: reducing red tape for Hispanic-serving institutions by eliminating the 2-year wait-out period between grant applications; continues funding payments made to guaranty agencies so that those agencies can continue working to help students avoid defaulting on their loans; provides loan forgiveness to spouses and parents of those who died or became disabled in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6138, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ESTHER MARTINEZ NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES PRESERVATION ACT OF 2006

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4766) to amend the Native American Languages Act to provide for the support of Native American language survival schools, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4766

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 "Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. EXPANSION OF PROGRAM TO ENSURE THE SURVIVAL AND CONTINUING VITALITY OF NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES.

Section 803C of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2991b-3) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (5) by striking "and" at the end,

(B) in paragraph (6) by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and", and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(7)(A) Native American language nests, which are site-based educational programs that—

“(i) provide instruction and child care through the use of a Native American language for at least 10 children under the age of 7 for an average of at least 500 hours per year per student;

“(ii) provide classes in a Native American language for parents (or legal guardians) of students enrolled in a Native American language nest (including Native American language-speaking parents); and

“(iii) ensure that a Native American language is the dominant medium of instruction in the Native American language nest;

“(B) Native American language survival schools, which are site-based educational programs for school-age students that—

“(i) provide an average of at least 500 hours of instruction through the use of 1 or more Native American languages for at least 15 students for whom a Native American language survival school is their principal place of instruction;

“(ii) develop instructional courses and materials for learning Native American languages and for instruction through the use of Native American languages;

“(iii) provide for teacher training;

“(iv) work toward a goal of all students achieving—

“(I) fluency in a Native American language; and

“(II) academic proficiency in mathematics, reading (or language arts), and science; and

“(v) are located in areas that have high numbers or percentages of Native American students; and

“(C) Native American language restoration programs, which are educational programs that—

“(i) operate at least 1 Native American language program for the community in which it serves;

“(ii) provide training programs for teachers of Native American languages;

“(iii) develop instructional materials for the programs;

“(iv) work toward a goal of increasing proficiency and fluency in at least 1 Native American language;

“(v) provide instruction in at least 1 Native American language; and

“(vi) may use funds received under this section for—

“(I) Native American language programs, such as Native American language immersion programs, Native American language and culture camps, Native American language programs provided in coordination and cooperation with educational entities, Native American language programs provided in coordination and cooperation with local universities and colleges, Native American language programs that use a master-apprentice model of learning languages, and Native American language programs provided through a regional program to better serve geographically dispersed students;

“(II) Native American language teacher training programs, such as training programs in Native American language translation for fluent speakers, training programs for Native American language teachers, training programs for teachers in schools to utilize Native American language materials, tools, and interactive media to teach Native American language; and

“(III) the development of Native American language materials, such as books, audio and visual tools, and interactive media programs.”,

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (5) by striking “and” at the end,

(B) in paragraph (6) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”, and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) in the case of an application for a grant to carry out any purpose specified in subsection

(b)(7)(B), a certification by the applicant that the applicant has not less than 3 years of experience in operating and administering a Native American language survival school, a Native American language nest, or any other educational program in which instruction is conducted in a Native American language.”, and

(3) in subsection (e)(2) by inserting before the period the following: “, except that grants made under such subsection for any purpose specified in subsection (b)(7) may be made only on a 3-year basis”.

SEC. 3. DEFINITION.

Section 815 of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2992c) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (6) as paragraphs (2) through (7), respectively, and

(2) by inserting before paragraph (2), as so redesignated, the following:

“(1) ‘average’ means the aggregate number of hours of instruction through the use of a Native American language to all students enrolled in a native language immersion program during a school year divided by the total number of students enrolled in the immersion program.”.

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR PROGRAM TO ENSURE THE SURVIVAL AND CONTINUING VITALITY OF NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES.

Section 816(e) of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2992d(e)) is amended by striking “1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002” and inserting “2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4766.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4766, the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006. Within the confines of existing programs under the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Native Americans, this measure will empower Native American tribes, organizations, colleges and governing bodies as they seek to preserve Native languages and cultures.

I would like to commend my colleague, Congresswoman HEATHER WILSON, for leading the charge on this issue. Native American tribes nationwide are struggling with the loss of their languages, and, indeed, to lose even one Native language is to lose a piece of our Nation's history.

Mrs. WILSON, along with her colleague Mr. TOM UDALL, has really done a great service to us, as she invited me to her district last month. I will mention a little bit more about that later, but I want to thank her for doing that. I also want to commend Ranking Member KILDEE, who has been a strong supporter of Native American programs

forever since I came here, and I am sure much longer than that.

H.R. 4766 is being considered in the same spirit as a previous version of the legislation which was examined by our Education and Workforce Committee last month in a field hearing held in Representative WILSON's district in Albuquerque. That hearing provided us an opportunity to learn firsthand about the extent and impact of Native American language loss in New Mexico, throughout the Southwest, and across the Nation. We heard from Native American advocates, academics and students about the need to preserve their languages in the face of a dramatic decline, and today I am proud we are responding.

In that hearing we began with an invocation by a Native American Governor in his language and ended with a benediction in his language by the same Native American Governor. There was a great feeling in the room, and some people commented that they hoped this wasn't just a shot and they would never see us again and never hear from us. We are back, and we are passing the bill.

In many Native American communities, Native languages are disappearing at an alarming rate. As a matter of fact, it is estimated that only 20 indigenous languages will remain viable by the year 2050.

The link between education, language, and culture is considered by many as paramount to preserving the very identity of Native Americans. By encouraging a greater focus on Native language programs, we are not only striving to preserve that identity, but we are encouraging greater academic performance among Native American students as well. The fact that this bill does so within the confines of existing programs makes it worthy of even stronger support from this body.

Mr. Speaker, when we discuss Native American language preservation, we are not just simply talking about a method of communication within tribes. This issue is far deeper than that. It represents the preservation of an important part of our Nation's history, culture, and legacy.

By providing grants to Native American language programs consisting of language nests, survival schools and restoration programs, we are bolstering that preservation effort. This measure will empower Native Americans to take the steps they deem necessary to preserve their indigenous languages and thus their cultures.

After visiting with them last month in New Mexico, I am convinced that we not only are doing right by giving them the opportunity to preserve their languages in this way, but we are also right for working in a creative, fiscally responsible manner to preserve critical elements of our national heritage.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this worthwhile legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4766, the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006, introduced by my colleague from New Mexico, Mrs. HEATHER WILSON.

Language scholars estimate that there were approximately 300 languages spoken in North America prior to the arrival of Columbus. Some project that without intervention, only 20 indigenous languages will remain viable by the year 2050. This bill will help save Native languages, whose very survival depends upon our intervention.

Native languages are one of the treasures of this country's heritage, history, and diversity. The names of many States, cities, towns, streets, rivers and other geographical names in our country are derived from Native words. It would be a dishonor to continue to lose the languages to which we owe their origin.

Native languages have played a vital role in protecting our country in times of war, Mr. Speaker. In World War I and World War II, many brave Native Americans performed the role of "code talkers" to help protect this great country.

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We owe much of this language preservation assistance to the legacy of our heroic code talkers. The key to stemming the loss of our Native American languages is by significantly increasing support for Native American language immersion programs. In addition to developing fluent speakers, language immersion programs have other remarkable benefits. Studies are showing that native language immersion programs decrease native dropout rates and increase educational attainment compared to their counterparts without such opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, these programs are valuable in fostering self-awareness, self-esteem, social growth, and problem-solving skills which are crucial in developing confident individuals who can tackle life's challenges in developing the next generation of Native American leaders.

H.R. 4766 allows the commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans Department of Health and Human Services to award grants to support and strengthen Native American language immersion programs, including language and language restoration programs. H.R. 4766 takes an important step forward in recognizing that vital importance of the Federal Government proactively working to save an important part of our heritage.

I would be remiss if I did not point out that the allowance for this grant program is just a promise, and this promise cannot be realized without a real increase in funding from the Administration for Native Americans which has been level funded at \$44 million for the last 3 years. I pledge today

that if this bill should become law, I shall send a letter to the Appropriations Committee supporting the increased funding necessary to support this program. I invite Chairman MCKEON to join me in this effort. And I know that Mrs. WILSON is also concerned with this.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4766. And if this bill should become law, I invite all Members to join me in supporting appropriations necessary to fulfill our promise made today.

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

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I would state that I would be happy to join with the gentleman on that letter.

I am happy now to yield whatever time she may consume to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON), the author of this bill.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. At a government-run boarding school for American Indians in the 1920s, Esther Martinez was not allowed to speak Tewa, her native language. Nor could she listen to the kinds of stories that her grandfather would tell her at her native San Juan Pueblo, now known as Owingeh. The goal of the school was to assimilate American Indians, and that meant leaving the past, the stories, and the language behind. But Mrs. Martinez never did.

After graduating from high school, Mrs. Martinez raised 10 children on an income earned from working as a janitor and in other service industry jobs, and she taught her children Tewa.

Esther took linguistics classes, and in her 50s she became a teacher. She taught Tewa in the local public schools. In 1983, her dictionary of San Juan Tewa was published, and just a little more than 2 weeks ago on September 14, Esther Martinez was honored as one of 12 2006 National Heritage fellows by the National Endowment of the Arts, the highest recognition in the folk and traditional arts in America.

Two days later, as she returned to San Juan Pueblo, Esther Martinez was killed in a car accident in Espanola, New Mexico, caused by a suspected drunken driver. She was 94 years young. With the permission of her family and particularly of her grandson, Matthew, and the support of Governor Joe Garcia, I would like to honor Esther's efforts to preserve native languages by naming this bill for her.

Our native languages are dying. Only about 20 of over 300 precolonial indigenous languages will be left by the year 2050. And I wanted to thank my colleagues TOM UDALL, RICK RENZI from Arizona, and particularly Chairman MCKEON and Mr. PETRI, for taking a personal interest in this, and of course Ranking Member KILDEE for his longtime leadership on Native American education.

This bill will increase the support for Native American language so that we can create and recreate fluent speakers of native languages. It doesn't create a new program, but rather incorporates

Native American needs for language nests and survivor schools and restoration programs into current authorized funds.

Mr. Speaker, not too far from this House down at the foot of Capitol Hill, we have the newest building in the Smithsonian Institution. It is a beautiful building. It is the Museum of the American Indian, and inside it we are preserving Navajo rugs and bead work and beautiful pieces of art and kachinas and fetishes. We spend millions of dollars to preserve objects from the past. This bill I ask my colleagues to support tonight preserves a living culture through the preservation of language.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) for his support. I ask my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL).

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4766, the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act of 2006; and I would like to thank my colleague from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) for introducing this important piece of legislation. It is an honor to be a cosponsor of it. I would also like to thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for his hard work on this issue, as well as many other Members who have taken an interest in this very important issue, and also thank Chairman MCKEON who brought the committee to New Mexico.

I remember, Mr. Chairman, we were in that room and it was standing room only. I think we could have gotten a much bigger room and even a bigger crowd. But it was an enormous crowd, and I think we were all impressed, and you could see and feel the real interest in this issue in terms of native communities caring about preserving their language. So it was wonderful to have you in New Mexico and have the committee out there and TOM PETRI, the gentleman from Wisconsin, who was also there.

Mr. Speaker, we pass this legislation today with the great hope for the future, but with great sorrow for the recent past. As has been mentioned, Ms. Esther Martinez, a master storyteller from Ohkay Owingeh, a pueblo located in my district, was tragically killed on September 17, 2006. Esther was returning home from the airport on the heels of a trip to Washington, D.C. to be honored as a 2006 National Heritage Fellow by the National Endowment for the Arts. Esther was 94 years old.

She had dedicated her life to maintaining and preserving the various forms of the Tewa language. Among her Pueblo people, Esther, or Aunt Esther, as many called her, is best known for her storytelling, but also recognized for her linguistic and educational

contributions. Esther taught Tewa at the San Juan Day School and for more than 20 years served as the school's director of bilingual education. She also published her stories and used them as learning tools in the classroom.

As a master of the Tewa language, she compiled Tewa dictionaries in various dialects for the Northern New Mexico Pueblos, and also translated the New Testament into Tewa.

Considering Esther's dedication to preserving her native language, it is a fitting tribute that this legislation be named after her. The importance of language and its ability to enhance the rich dynamics of our Nation's history is often overlooked. From learning the ancestry of those who came before us to passing stories down through the generations to maintaining religious, cultural, and social ties, language is fundamental. Passing this legislation today is an indication that the importance of cultivating and passing languages down to younger generations is now being recognized.

I have had the great honor of visiting the Pueblos, the Navajos and the Apaches, and others, in my district during my four terms in the Congress and learning the traditions and characteristics unique to each individual tribe. One similarity, however, is that native languages are being lost. Tribal elders are often the only ones fluent in the language as an increasing number of children are growing up in homes that speak only English.

The urgent need to protect and preserve Native American languages is clear. We must invest in their preservation by implementing immersion programs. Passage of this legislation today is an important step toward reversing that trend. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY).

Mr. POMEROY. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank my colleagues for what has been a very interesting, indeed moving, debate. Esther Martinez is someone I wish I had met. You have certainly done her great credit in your stirring words on the floor this evening.

It was only a couple of years ago we had a procession of horses, Native Americans dressed in their traditional clothing as we came down the Mall, part of the ceremonies attendant to the opening of the newest Smithsonian just down 100 yards from where we speak. It is and stands as ongoing testament to the rich history and culture of the native peoples of our land. But in a much broader way we need to make certain that these cultures continue to live and thrive and are passed on within the generations.

I so wish that all of my colleagues had the opportunity to attend some of the events I attend in North Dakota. We are proud to host four reservations, four tribes, each with their own distinct cultures and ceremonies, but

typically begin with the flag song, an honor song, a prayer delivered by an elder and so often in the native tongue. I have often thought, what will happen when these elders are no longer with us? Will we still have the native tongue?

This legislation is a wonderful commitment of this Congress to the legitimacy of the actions to preserve native languages, and commits, in my opinion, very strategic ways to continue to advance these native languages. In listening, young children, we know just by how the brain develops, language can be so effectively taught, and then continuing that trend right through junior high and high school grounding these emerging young men and women in solid notions of their culture and their history and their native pride. It can only be as important a part of their upbringing as our own respective cultural traditions have been with ours.

So I am very proud to join the discussion tonight and urge that we pass this bill and then work, as my friend, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), has mentioned to get the appropriations support behind to get the funding.

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

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Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say, seeing Mr. POMEROY from North Dakota get up and speak about this, and we have talked about this before, I had a younger brother that served a mission for our church in the Dakotas with the Indian people. He would have loved what we are doing here tonight.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4766, the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006. This is important legislation which seeks to protect, preserve, and promote indigenous languages across the United States. Among the estimated 175 indigenous languages spoken by citizens of the United States today is the Chamorro language, the indigenous language of the Chamorro people of Guam.

Ethnographers and linguists recognize the Chamorro language as belonging to the western group of the Austronesian language family. The Chamorro language has been spoken by the Chamorro people for more than 5000 years. It is a beautiful language that has survived outside influences and westernization.

Chamorro and English are the official languages of Guam. I am proud to support H.R. 4766 because it proposes to increase federal resources for Native American language immersion programs. The version of H.R. 4766 that has been brought to the House floor this evening also would amend the Native American Programs Act to authorize the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) in the Department of Health and Human Services to award grants to organizations and colleges dedicated to Native American language preservation. The bill specifically authorizes grants to establish site-based educational programs for children and their families, "survivor schools," and restoration programs.

The preservation of the Chamorro language and culture is within the current authorized mission of the ANA-administered grant programs that H.R. 4766 seeks to expand and for which it seeks to reauthorize funding. The Native American Programs Act, which H.R. 4766 seeks to amend, contains a definition for "Native American Pacific Islander" that includes the Chamorro people and our indigenous language. This definition is codified in 42 U.S.C. 2992c and should guide the ANA in administering future grant programs in accordance with this legislation should it be enacted.

Mr. Speaker, I also note for the record that H.R. 4766 has received the support of the 28th Guam Legislature. The inclusion of the Chamorro language as among the Native American languages sought to be preserved by this legislation is an important element. I urge support for H.R. 4766. I thank the sponsor of this bill, my colleague from New Mexico, Mrs. WILSON, and the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Education and Workforce Committee, for advancing this legislation and for ensuring Guam and the Pacific Territories were included in the legislation.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4766, the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006.

Language is an important part of one's culture and heritage. Unfortunately, many languages are dying off at a tremendous rate. Native American languages are especially vulnerable and might soon become extinct if we do not take action to preserve them. It is predicted that by 2050, only 20 indigenous languages will remain viable in the United States.

Serving as a member of the Native American Caucus and having worked closely with the Native American communities of Southern California as a Congressman (and previously in the California State Assembly and State Senate), I am committed to helping preserve Native American language and culture.

In fact, I think Congress should take additional steps to help educate all Americans about Native American culture and traditions—and to honor the contributions that the "first Americans" have made to the larger American culture.

That's why I introduced a resolution a couple of years ago to encourage schools across the country to honor Native Americans for their contributions to American history, culture and education. The House passed this resolution, H.R. 168, during the 107th Congress.

And that's why I have been working to establish a Native American holiday. I believe that a national holiday would help raise awareness about American Indians. When I served in the California Legislature, the San Manuel Band asked me to introduce a bill calling for such a holiday. We passed it in California, and now I have introduced similar legislation, H. Res. 76, in the House of Representatives.

So I understand what is at stake today: We have a chance to prevent Native languages from disappearing forever. This is why we must pass this legislation.

Native American languages can be revitalized through language immersion programs. Language immersion programs have the ability to create fluency among students. In addition, students who participate in such programs often have higher rates of academic success than their peers who do not. This legislation therefore would be one way to raise

the academic achievement of Native American students.

The Native American Language Preservation Act would contribute to an already existing Native language grant program within the Department of Health and Human Services by allocating grants for language immersion programs which would not only help keep the language alive, but also help ensure that Native languages are accessible for the next seven generations to come.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 4766. Let's preserve and honor Native American heritage and save our Native languages.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006 (H.R. 4766). I would like to congratulate my colleague from New Mexico, Mrs. WILSON, for bringing this issue forward.

This is important legislation to preserve the culture and increase fluency in Native American society. Sadly, all across America, Native American languages are in rapid decline; estimates are that there may be only 20 Native American languages remaining by the year 2050. These languages are unique to our country and unique to our history. If we do not preserve them, they will disappear forever.

This bill will establish a series of grants to help preserve the language and culture of our Native American people. This will help create programs that will teach our young people of the importance of learning the language of their ancestors and continuing to preserve the history and culture of their people.

Finally, the language programs created in this bill are locally based educational programs that will help both children learn and preserve languages in households all across America.

My constituent Dr. Christine Sims, a professor of language at the University of New Mexico, and Pueblo of Acoma tribal member says, "The future of America's first languages, those that are indigenous to this country hang in the balance of what we do as a Nation to help tribal communities preserve them. Much has been given up by countless generations of Native people in the wake of this country's expansion and growth into the great nation that it is today. It is only right and just that Congress consider the tremendous price that America's first people paid in terms of losing so much throughout the course of this nation's history, including the loss of native languages. Among America's Native language communities remaining today, the hopes and the dreams that Native elders, parents and tribes hold for their children are those which include the maintenance and revitalization of tribal heritage languages. We can do no less in this country, therefore, than to ensure that tribal communities have the opportunity and the funding resources that will help make these hopes and dreams for their children a reality."

"Today's education for the American Indian student must open the doors for youngsters to have more opportunities to learn their own languages as provided in the provisions of H.R. 4766. This bill, so aptly named for one of New Mexico's tribal elders, Mrs. Esther Martinez from San Juan Pueblo (who tragically died in a car accident this past week), would not only honor the memory of this renowned Native language advocate and leader, but as well, demonstrate the commitment that Congress is

willing to make in support of the intent and purpose of the Native Languages Preservation Act."

Again, I want to thank my New Mexico colleague, Mrs. WILSON, for bringing this bill forward, her hard work and dedication are a credit to her and she is a credit to our State.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, throughout the country, Native American languages are experiencing a rapid decline. Of the nearly 300 native languages of the United States, only 210 are still spoken, and all too often these languages are spoken only among the elderly. This is a particularly troubling development, given the importance of Native American languages to tribal identity and culture. As such, I was pleased that Congresswoman HEATHER WILSON introduced H.R. 4766, the Native American Languages Preservation Act, which would provide federal support for programs that provide language training for young children and their families. I would also like to recognize Chairman BUCK MCKEON for the expedited manner in which he has moved this legislation.

On August 31st, I had the opportunity to travel to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to participate in a hearing held by the Education and the Workforce Committee on the "Recovery and Preservation of Native American Languages". We heard from representatives of several tribes regarding their experiences with this problem and ways in which they have attempted to preserve their native languages. Fortunately, efforts are underway to save these languages and to encourage a new generation of Native Americans to keep their languages alive as an integral part of Native American culture and identity.

I was particularly pleased that a representative from the Oneida Nation of my home state of Wisconsin was able to testify at this hearing. The Oneida have made language preservation a priority by pairing Elder native speakers with younger English-speakers to train a new generation to appreciate and preserve the traditional language. Since 1996, the Oneida have developed a Language Revitalization Program to connect their fluent Elders with trainees in a semi-immersion process that would produce speakers, and most importantly, teachers of the Oneida language.

Although tribes like the Oneida have already begun to develop programs to preserve their own languages, Congress can help other tribes create programs of their own. H.R. 4766 will provide more options for revitalization programs and take advantage of existing grants within the Administration for Native Americans Office. Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this bill and for the revitalization of native languages.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4766, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to provide for the revitalization of Native

American languages through Native American language immersion programs; and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING SECRETARY OF EDUCATION WAIVER AUTHORITY

Mr. JINDAL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6106) to extend the waiver authority for the Secretary of Education under title IV, section 105, of Public Law 109-148.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 6106

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY.

Section 105 of title IV of division B of Public Law 109-148 (119 Stat. 2797) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by inserting "and, at the discretion of the Secretary, for fiscal year 2007" after "2006"; and

(2) in subsection (c)(2)—

(A) by inserting "or 2007" after "fiscal year 2006"; and

(B) by striking "fiscal year 2007" and inserting "for the respective succeeding fiscal year".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JINDAL) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JINDAL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 6106.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this important legislation. It is in response to the devastating hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the impact they had on the schools of Louisiana.

More than 1,100 public and private schools were forced to close in the wake of those hurricanes. Approximately 158,000 students were displaced as a direct result of the hurricanes. Restoration efforts are under way, but there is still much work that needs to be done.

As a result of the storms and the flooding, the local tax base in several gulf coast communities was decimated. The loss of business and government infrastructure, jobs and housing deprived school districts of local property taxes that normally fund school operations.

In Louisiana, Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes were the most severely impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Currently, approximately 23,000 students are enrolled in the Orleans Parish School System and Recovery School