

RECOGNIZING MISSISSIPPI SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 667

**HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Mr. PICKERING. Madam Speaker, today I submit into the RECORD Concurrent Resolution No. 667 adopted by the Mississippi Senate and House of Representatives. The resolution urges the United States Congress to accept the decision of the United States Air Force concerning the award of the jet tanker contract to Northrop Grumman Corporation and EADS North America. Each day we delay approving this contract, we prevent the Air Force men and women from receiving the equipment necessary to ensure our national security. I encourage my colleagues to review this resolution.

DEBT CANCELLATION OP-ED

**HON. GWEN MOORE**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, this op-ed, written by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, appeared in the Baltimore Sun last week. Archbishop Tutu's words bring attention to our efforts to promote debt relief here in the House, such as passage of the Jubilee Act last month, and underscore the need for this bill to be passed into law.

[From the Baltimore Sun, May 7, 2008]

DEBT CANCELLATION A VICTORY FOR THE WORLD

(By Desmond Tutu)

Last month, the House of Representatives showed leadership in the fight against global poverty by passing the Jubilee Act for Responsible Lending and Expanded Debt Cancellation, which would extend lifesaving debt cancellation to more poor nations around the globe.

Too many of the world's poor children needlessly starve or go without education because too many impoverished nations—even after the laudable debt relief provided to date—are still funneling scarce resources to multilateral banks instead of paying for needs at home.

The world community has found crushing debt to be akin to a modern-day apartheid, and has responded with debt cancellation. Unjust debt leaves developing nations at the behest of the powerful. Shall we let the children of Africa and Asia die of curable disease, prevent them from going to school and limit their opportunities for meaningful work—all to payoff unjust and illegitimate loans made to their forefathers?

When I think of the crisis of international debt, I think of my African neighbor, Lesotho. Many of Lesotho's people cannot afford basic nourishment. The AIDS epidemic has plagued the nation, but needed medicine is out of reach for too many.

Lesotho's situation shows how debt and extreme poverty create a crisis for children. Children's wards in that nation's hospitals are filled with anxious mothers 24 hours a day, administering medicine and caring for their children as a nurse or doctor might do in my country of South Africa. They have no choice. Lesotho has only 6 pediatricians looking after its 800,000 children.

One-third of Lesotho's children are not in school. Meanwhile, Lesotho's debt repayments equal its entire education budget. Instead of investing in its people, health and development, Lesotho—a nation of 2 million people with external debt of \$647 million—sends debt payments to the developed world.

Millions of the world's poorest people suffer hunger and illness as desperately needed resources flow out of their countries in the form of debt payments. Yet many countries, like Lesotho, are not eligible for debt relief because current initiatives are not based on a country's level of poverty or need.

Much of this debt originates from loans made to corrupt and oppressive regimes that did not benefit the population. As a South African, I know firsthand the injustice of this situation as our country continues to repay money that was used to sustain the apartheid system and suppress the movement for racial justice. The Jubilee Act calls for an audit of the odious debts of countries such as South Africa so that the question of whether this money is truly "owed" can finally be addressed.

The movement to cancel debt is an ongoing moral campaign that joins religious leaders around the globe under the biblical principle of Jubilee, which says that everything belongs to God. My own Anglican communion has long supported debt relief, calling the continued burden of debt upon the poorest people of the world "a moral scandal."

Christian evangelical organizations, including Baptist World Alliance and the Salvation Army, have called on President Bush to support the Jubilee Act. Pope Benedict XVI, who made his first visit to the United States last month as Congress voted on the Jubilee Act, has called for debt cancellation for the poorest countries to be "continued and accelerated."

As the Senate now considers the Jubilee Act, it can do its part to help ensure that Africans and Asians are able to use their own resources for their own development. When success comes on expanded debt cancellation, as it did with an end to apartheid, this victory will not be ours alone but will belong to the whole world.

Desmond Tutu is archbishop emeritus of Cape Town, South Africa.

HONORING METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON YMCA

**HON. ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Mr. WYNN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor one of America's outstanding organizations and one of the Washington Metropolitan area's greatest gifts, specifically in the areas that I represent in Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties, the Metropolitan Washington YMCA.

The mission of the YMCA is to "foster the spiritual, mental and physical development of individuals, families and communities according to the ideals of inclusiveness, equality and respect for all." To that end, Madam Speaker:

The YMCA provides child care, before- and after-school care, summer day camp, resident overnight camp, teen camps, youth and adult sports leagues, health and wellness programs, teen activities, community service programs, swim lessons, aquatic wellness programs, youth and family intervention programs, youth leadership clubs, senior health and wellness programs, senior social activities and much more.

Specifically Madam Speaker, I want to honor the YMCA and Camp Letts, a 219-acre retreat center founded in 1906 on the majestic Chesapeake Bay.

With children and campers from all over the country and counselors from all over the world, YMCA Camp Letts is truly a global community promoting tolerance, inclusion and diversity among all its visitors and staff members while providing a safe environment for children to make friends, participate in activities, and have a great time.

Madam Speaker, Camp Letts specializes in the field of recreation with an emphasis on youth development. The diverse staff representing over 20 countries model and teach the YMCA's core values of "Honesty, Caring, Respect and Responsibility."

It all began in 1906, when YMCA Boys Work Director Albert M. Chesley pitched camp on five acres along the South River, initiating what is now the oldest organized resident camp in the Washington area. The camp moved in 1922 to its present location, thanks to the generosity of John Cowen Letts, and today youngsters from the Baltimore-Washington area and beyond flock to this secure and exciting environment to kindle friendships and master new skills—all the while learning more about themselves, their peers and the world in which they live.

This 219-acre peninsula has miles of wooded trails for hiking, horseback riding, and nature discovery; vast green fields for a variety of team sports; tennis courts; an olympic-sized swimming pool, sailboats and small craft; certified nets, balls, racquets, hoops and targets for various sports; and much more to enjoy a broad selection of aquatic, land-based and waterfront activities.

In addition to providing numerous recreational activities for youth and families, the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington, under the steadfast leadership of Angie L. Reese-Hawkins, is the leading human service organization and the largest provider of child care in the greater Washington area, serving over 30,000 children each year.

Under Mrs. Reese-Hawkins's leadership, the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington is the 17th largest YMCA association in North America, with operating revenue of \$46 million, and 84,000 individual and family members in a service area of 4 million people.

Today, the Metropolitan Washington YMCA has 17 branches and program centers that touch close to 250,000 lives a year in the District of Columbia, northern Virginia and suburban Maryland. Almost 3,400 volunteers—an increase of 10 percent over 2005—served the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington in 2006.

During 2006 the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington raised \$1.1 million in its annual sustaining Building Bridges Campaign and gave out over \$2.13 million in financial assistance to more than 12,500 families and individuals, enabling them to participate in child care, after-school and camp programs, membership, wellness, therapeutic and senior services throughout the metropolitan area.

Madam Speaker, how lucky we are to have the YMCA and its committed staff working to improve opportunities for all children, but particularly those in the Metropolitan Washington area.