

members learn to give for the rest of their lives.

AmeriCorps Week also provides a platform to highlight the valuable community organizations that deserve our support. Earlier this week, critical new AmeriCorps grants were announced. This funding provides necessary resources to some of America's most innovative and effective community organizations.

Those who support this resolution and AmeriCorps Week will be in good company. Dozens of State governors have issued AmeriCorps Week proclamations from local leaders to professional baseball teams. Thousands of diverse Americans are expressing their support for the AmeriCorps programs and its volunteers. These supporters recognize that AmeriCorps members do more than volunteer their time. They are ambassadors of hope, good will, and personal initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me, my fellow National Service Caucus cochairs, and the 40 bipartisan cosponsors of this resolution in support of AmeriCorps Week and these amazing volunteers.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) such time as he may consume.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, when there were the great debates on TV between Vice President Nixon and then-Senator John F. Kennedy, while my family were Republicans and, as a young person in 8th grade, John F. Kennedy spoke to me when he talked about serving our country and the world by being a Peace Corps volunteer. I thought, wouldn't it be amazing to go to college and afterwards join the Peace Corps; and that's what I did with my wife. And that experience changed my life. That experience had a tremendous impact on my life. In fact, Peace Corps volunteers will tell you it was the greatest time of their life, not that the rest of our lives hasn't been good.

And when President Clinton, building on what President Bush 41 had done on national service, said, We need to create AmeriCorps, his administration reached out to Republicans; and it was an amazing experience to work with President Clinton and his administration because they said they wanted this to be a bipartisan effort, and they listened to Republicans.

Instead of a one-size-fits-all national program, they did something Republicans really like, and that is they made it a local and State effort. And the problem with that is that you could not only have really great programs, you might have some that weren't so good. And it would give people an opportunity to criticize AmeriCorps, as some critics did, because there were literally hundreds and hundreds of various programs meeting local and State needs.

But to President Clinton's credit and to his people who were bringing this

program forward, in spite of the fact a majority of Republicans did not support it, they still allowed us to have significant input.

I have nothing but respect for AmeriCorps, nothing but respect for the fact that we are talking, in some cases, young people who have never had a work experience, and we're giving them experience with individuals who can tutor them, in nongovernment organizations. What a wonderful way for these young people to begin to become adults and experience the incredible fulfillment that comes from being of service to others.

I have never understood why some Republicans have criticized AmeriCorps because they said you get paid. Well, Peace Corps volunteers had a living wage. We were able to feed ourselves and we were provided housing. It's something that you don't have under AmeriCorps. There it's a minimum wage, but no housing. They have a stipend for education. Republicans tend to think that you should earn what you get, and this is a program where you earn what you get. You can't pocket the money. You have to put it into bettering yourself with education, which is a very logical thing to do. Frankly, it's something that most Republicans would have argued for: not being given something; earning it.

So these AmeriCorps individuals, which we call volunteers, are getting the best of the best. They are growing up with a meaningful job, not a long-term job, they're earning educational credits, they're getting an education, and they're, for the rest of their lives, going to have that incredible memory of service that I think only strengthens individuals and our country.

So I'm really grateful that we can recognize AmeriCorps for what it is, an outstanding program initiated by President Clinton to his credit, and to his credit, still working with Republicans in spite of the fact they didn't deliver a majority of the votes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield back the balance of our time and encourage everybody to support the resolution.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would urge passage of this resolution. I, too, agree that when we give of ourselves, we give the very best.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, in the Peace Corps we say, "Once a volunteer, always a volunteer." There was a time when I thought that those words were just a slogan. However, over the years I've watched the friends I made in the Peace Corps in Colombia continue to volunteer in their communities and around the world. And this continuity of volunteerism is not unique to the Peace Corps.

In fact, it has become clear to people who understand public service and volunteerism, that to "give back" is a habit. And you can get more of it, if you open up more opportunities to people involved in volunteer service. There is a virtuous cycle in volunteerism and it is a cycle that we do well to encourage.

AmeriCorps is one of the great innovations in public policy that has created opportunities for Americans all across the country to volunteer. From working in inner city schools to working in food bank in small towns, AmeriCorps opens the doors for people to volunteer and in so doing provides a stepping stone to a life of service.

I commend AmeriCorps for all it does and for all the doors to service it has opened. So, today as the House of Representatives recognizes AmeriCorps, I encourage all those who can do so to find a way to volunteer in their community and to give back.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1173.

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. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

□ 1600

HONORING PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 789) honoring public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities providing services for foster children, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 789

Whereas over 500,000 children in the United States are currently in foster care which is twice as many as 15 years ago;

Whereas the majority of these children and youth have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect;

Whereas foster children experience a number of unique challenges based on instability in their home and school environments;

Whereas just over half of all foster children complete high school, 30 percent continue to rely on public assistance into adulthood and 25 percent will experience homelessness at one point in their lives;

Whereas numerous public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities work tirelessly to recruit loving foster families and improve the lives of foster children;

Whereas these groups strive to consider the best interest of each child and focus on keeping families together when possible;

Whereas they provide invaluable resources to foster families as well as teachers, counselors, physicians, clergy, and others who

work closely with children in the foster care system;

Whereas these groups are dedicated to changing public policy and raising awareness related to the special needs of foster children; and

Whereas they continue to sponsor research, develop best practices, and offer assistance to youth transitioning out of the system to ensure they receive adequate support as they reach adulthood: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives honors the contributions of public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities dedicated to finding homes for foster children and assisting foster families in securing the future success of their foster children.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and insert material relevant to H. Res. 789 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the public welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations, private entities and compassionate individuals that work tirelessly to support foster children.

Since May is National Foster Care Month, it is appropriate that today we salute the many individuals and organizations that provide foster care services to over 500,000 children currently in foster care nationwide.

National Foster Care Month originated in 1988 and has served to heighten awareness for the issue since that time. By increasing visibility of this important issue, organizations are better able to reach out to the community and recruit individuals to support children throughout the year. By connecting foster youth with caring adults we can ensure that children do not face life's challenges alone.

Child welfare issues are present in families of all races, ethnicities and cultures. However, children of color make up a disproportionate number of children in foster care. Without a stable home, these young people confront many challenges. Although some of these young people are able to overcome the challenges of abuse and neglect, others continue to deal with their effects long into adulthood.

Research finds that just 54 percent of foster care youth complete high school and 25 percent will face homelessness at some point in their lives. Additionally, research has shown that children in foster care are more likely than their peers to deal with poverty, unemployment, incarceration, poor health and other hardships.

We must do what we can to support these young Americans and help them cultivate the necessary skills to live successfully and independently. More than 20,000 young people age out of foster care each year, and today we recognize the many individuals, families, neighborhoods, communities and organizations that work collectively together to ensure that all children can grow up with the support they need to be healthy and safe.

So, Mr. Speaker, once again I express my support for H. Res. 789 and recognize the hard work so many put in on a daily basis to help children in foster care reunite with their parents, be cared for by relatives or to be adopted by loving families. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to the distinguished Congresswoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN) such time as she may consume. She is the sponsor of the resolution.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as this resolution's author, I rise to support H. Res. 789. It is vital that the organizations that are committed to improving the lives of foster care children be commended for their hard work and for their sacrifices.

Today, there are over 500,000 children, that's over a half million children, in foster care across the United States of America, many of whom come from troubled homes and many of whom have been moved from family to family several times. My husband and I have been privileged to have 23 foster children live in our home, and we know from experience that these wonderful organizations that work with our foster children played a critical role in ensuring that they were matched with loving families and they grew up to achieve successful lives. These organizations are to be commended, Mr. Speaker.

Dedicated to changing public policy and also to raising awareness related to the very special and individual needs of foster children, these groups sponsor research, they develop best practices, and they offer assistance to youth who are transitioning out of the system to ensure that they receive adequate support as they reach adulthood. They provide invaluable resources to foster families as well as to teachers, to counselors, physicians, clergy and other people who work closely with children who are being helped by the foster care system.

These men and women and agencies are striving to consider the best interests of every child, and they work to keep families together whenever possible. Today, more Americans are beginning to understand the very real and very special needs of foster care children due to their dedicated public awareness efforts, and I am proud to

honor these organizations that have touched the lives of so many of America's children and improved their lives and put them steadily on a path to success.

To complement this resolution, it is my hope that the House will soon have the opportunity to consider H.R. 4311, the School Choice for Foster Kids Act, because this Act will allow foster children of all ages to stay at the school that they've grown comfortable with, even when they change foster homes, which all too frequently seems to happen in the lives of foster children. It will provide them with some stability in their own tumultuous lives.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that you and our fellow colleagues will join us in honoring the contributions of all public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities who are sincerely dedicated to finding homes for foster children and to assisting foster families in securing the success of our future children.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would reserve the balance of my time.

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

I am also a strong believer in what we are doing here in honoring foster care with this month. This is an opportunity to give these children a sense of well-being, a home, a stability, nurturing adults.

We've seen it work time and again, as the gentlewoman from Minnesota has explained. There are currently over 500,000 children in foster care in the United States, and the majority of these children have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect. So those who welcome these children in, give them that opportunity, deserve our plaudits in terms of what they've done to help in our society.

Just over half of all foster children complete high school, 30 percent continue to rely on public assistance into adulthood, and 25 percent will experience homelessness at one point in their lives. So we're dealing with circumstances, in many instances, in which we have to try to intervene and to make a difference.

We should pay tribute to the public child welfare agencies, the nonprofits and the private entities that provide these services for these children because, indeed, they are reaching out and making a difference in the lives of many of these individuals.

The groups we honor today provide invaluable resources to foster families, teachers, counselors, physicians, clergy and others who work closely with the children in the foster care system. They sponsor research, develop best practices, and offer assistance to youth transitioning out of the system to ensure they receive adequate support as they reach adulthood. There are an estimated 12 million foster care alumni in the United States representing all walks of life.

We pay tribute to those individuals in this resolution, and I would hope

that all of our colleagues would be supportive of the resolution.

I thank the gentlewoman for her sponsorship and all those who brought it to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 789, honoring public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities providing services for foster children.

May is National Foster Care Month. We take this time to bring awareness to the many sides of foster care. Children are placed in foster care when their parents are no longer able to ensure their essential well being. These children need stable, loving care until they can either safely reunite with their families or cultivate other lasting relationships with nurturing adults.

Foster care is essential to protecting abused and neglected children. There are currently over 500,000 children in foster care in the United States. The majority of these children have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect.

During this month we recognize the unique challenges foster children experience based on the instability in their home and school environments. Just over half of all foster children complete high school, 30 percent continue to rely on public assistance into adulthood, and 25 percent will experience homelessness at one point in their lives.

Today, we pay tribute to the public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities that provide services for foster children. These organizations work tirelessly to improve the lives of foster children by considering the best interest of each child, focusing on keeping families together when possible, and recruiting loving foster families.

The groups we honor today provide invaluable resources to foster families, teachers, counselors, physicians, clergy, and others who work closely with children in the foster care system. They sponsor research, develop best practices, and offer assistance to youth transitioning out of the system to ensure they receive adequate support as they reach adulthood. There are an estimated 12 million foster care alumni in the United States representing all walks of life.

Today, we honor the contributions of public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities dedicated to finding homes for foster children and assisting foster families in securing the future success of their foster children. These groups are committed to raising awareness related to the special needs of foster children.

That is why I stand in support of this resolution and I ask for my colleagues' support.

I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I just want to be associated with the comments of Mr. CASTLE, and I also want to commend Mrs. BACHMANN and her family, her husband, for the outstanding role modeling which they display. I was taught that you can't lead where you don't go and you can't teach what you don't know, and they demonstrate the very best of what it means to be associated and involved with caring for children who are not necessarily your own. And so I certainly commend them for the outstanding service they provide.

I urge passage of this resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 789, honoring public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities providing services for foster children. I first would like to thank my distinguished colleague, Representative MICHELE BACHMANN of Minnesota, for introducing this important legislation. This resolution acknowledges the importance of foster parents and other community partners who care for hurting children.

Children are placed in foster care because of society's concern for their well-being. Any time spent by a child in temporary care should be therapeutic but may be harmful to the child's growth, development, and well-being. Interruptions in the continuity of a child's caregiver are often detrimental. Repeated moves from home to home compound the adverse consequences that stress and inadequate parenting have on the child's development and ability to cope. Adults cope with impermanence by building on an accrued sense of self-reliance and by anticipating and planning for a time of greater constancy. Children, however, especially when young, have limited life experience on which to establish their sense of self. In addition, their sense of time focuses exclusively on the present and precludes meaningful understanding of "temporary" versus "permanent" or anticipation of the future. For young children, periods of weeks or months are not comprehensible. Disruption in either place or with a caregiver for even 1 day may be stressful. The younger the child and the more extended the period of uncertainty or separation, the more detrimental it will be to the child's well-being.

The observance brings sharply into focus the critical needs of foster children and the importance of our foster parents who respond so faithfully and selflessly to the children's needs. Some children are placed in foster care briefly while a family crisis is resolved. Others remain in care for longer periods of time, depending upon the circumstances that led to their removal from their family's home. Over 500,000 children in the United States are currently in foster care which is twice as many as 20 years ago. The majority of these children and youth have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect. Our foster parents deserve special praise because they open their homes and their hearts to foster children and love them unconditionally. They understand that a safe, secure home is very important to the healthy development of a child.

An increasing number of young children are being placed in foster care because of parental neglect. Neglect has very profound and long-lasting consequences on all aspects of child development—poor attachment formation, understimulation, development delay, poor physical development, and antisocial behavior. Being in an environment in which child-directed support and communication is limited makes it more difficult for a child to develop the brain connections that facilitate language and vocabulary development, and therefore may impair communication skills. Recent findings in infant mental health show how development can be facilitated, how treatment can enhance brain development and psychological health, and how prevention strategies can lessen the ill effects of neglect.

Adoption by foster families has the potential to benefit not only the child being adopted, but

also the foster family and the child welfare agency. There are a number of reasons that a child's foster parents may be the best adoptive parents for that child. Foster parents have a greater knowledge of a child's experiences prior to placement and know what behaviors to expect from the child. If they have sufficient background information about what happened to a child before this placement, some knowledge of how children generally respond to such experiences, and extensive information about this child's specific behavior patterns, the foster family is better able to understand and respond to the child's needs in a positive and appropriate way. Foster parents usually have fewer fantasies and fears about the child's birth family, because they often have met and know them as real people with real problems. Foster parents have a better understanding of their role and relationship with the agency—and perhaps a relationship with their worker.

Foster children experience a number of unique challenges based on instability in their home and school environments. Just over half of all foster children complete high school, 40 percent continue to rely on public assistance into adulthood and 25 percent will experience homelessness at one point in their lives. Numerous public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities work tirelessly to recruit loving foster families and improve the lives of foster children. These groups strive to consider the best interest of each child and focus on keeping families together when possible. They provide invaluable resources to foster families as well as teachers, counselors, physicians, clergy, and others who work closely with children in the foster care system.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize and honor the contributions of all public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities dedicated to finding homes for foster children and assisting foster families in securing their future success.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 789, as amended.

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. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

ORIGINAL SAINT-GAUDENS DOUBLE EAGLE ULTRA-HIGH RELIEF PALLADIUM BULLION COIN ACT

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5614) to authorize the production of Saint-Gaudens Double Eagle