

even not so poor neighborhoods have a better opportunity and use their hard-earned and hard-given dollars in other areas.

□ 1415

So I support this resolution. I hope that the American public understands that this is a great way of causing these products not to go into landfills 3, 4, 5 years earlier than they otherwise would by making them available to those who can use them.

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. I want to thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in my desire to get through my prepared remarks a moment ago, I failed to recognize and thank the minority side for its work on this bill.

I certainly appreciate you, Mr. ISSA, and all that you have done on the committee and particularly your staff. You've been very helpful.

Also, I want to go on record in support of your comments that is not new equipment that's just sitting in a warehouse unused. It's equipment that has outlived its lifetime here on Capitol Hill and in other places but certainly can be used by smaller communities. So I want to associate myself with your remarks.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the sponsor, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, for his work on the bill, as well as the various Members that helped to move this bill forward. We also got helpful input from the Committee on Science and Technology.

Chairman WAXMAN and Chairman GORDON exchanged letters regarding committee jurisdiction, and I will include these letters in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,

Washington, DC, May 9, 2008.

Hon. HENRY A. WAXMAN,  
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Science and Technology in H.R. 752, the Federal Electronic Equipment Donation Act of 2007. The Committee on Science and Technology has jurisdictional interest in this bill based on the Committee's history of jurisdiction over the Stevenson-Wylder Technology Transfer Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-480). The Committee on Science and Technology was the sole House Committee of jurisdiction over the Stevenson-Wylder Technology Transfer Act of 1980 and has maintained jurisdiction over the law ever since. H.R. 752 makes specific mention of the Stevenson-Wylder Technology Transfer Act of 1980 and creates a program with overlapping objectives to those found in that act.

The Committee on Science and Technology acknowledges the importance of H.R. 752 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously. Therefore, while we have a valid claim to jurisdiction over this bill, I agree

not to request a sequential referral. This, of course, is conditional on our mutual understanding that nothing in this legislation or my decision to forgo a sequential referral waives, reduces, or otherwise affects the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science and Technology, and that a copy of this letter and of your response will be included in the Congressional Record when the bill is considered on the House Floor.

The Committee on Science and Technology also expects that you will support our request to be conferees during any House-Senate conference on this, or any similar legislation. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,  
Chairman.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND  
GOVERNMENT REFORM,

Washington, DC, May 9, 2008.

Hon. BART GORDON,  
Chairman, Committee on Science and Technology, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 752, the Federal Electronic Equipment Donation Act of 2008, which the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform reported, as amended, on April 9, 2008.

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this legislation and I recognize that the bill, as reported, contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science and Technology. I agree that your inaction with respect to this bill does not prejudice the Science and Technology Committee's interests and prerogatives regarding this bill or similar legislation.

I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during consideration on the House floor of H.R. 752.

Sincerely,

HENRY A. WAXMAN,  
Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that the Federal Government spends a lot of money on computers and we owe it to our taxpayers to get as much use out of them as we can. H.R. 752 will help us do just that. And as you just heard from the sponsor, these are pieces of equipment that no longer are being used but they certainly have great use.

So I support this measure and urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SERRANO). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 752, 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. ISSA. 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.

#### FEDERAL REAL PROPERTY DISPOSAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2008

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5787) to amend title 40, United States Code, to enhance authorities with regard to real property that has yet to be reported excess, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5787

*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 "Federal Real Property Disposal Enhancement Act of 2008".

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) In January 2003, the Government Accountability Office identified Federal real property as a high-risk area, citing excess property as a long-standing problem.

(2) The magnitude of the problem with excess Federal real property continues to put the government at risk for lost dollars and missed opportunities.

(3) The Administration has stated its goal is to reduce the size of the Federal real property inventory by 5 percent, or \$15 billion, by disposing of unneeded assets by 2015.

(4) The Federal inventory includes many properties that are no longer relevant to agencies' missions and agencies are spending billions of dollars to maintain these unneeded properties.

(5) The costs of preparing a property for transfer or sale continue to hamper some agencies' efforts to address their unneeded properties and serve as a disincentive to disposal because, in the short-term, it can be more beneficial economically to maintain a property that is not being used than to dispose of it.

(6) Agencies should give greater attention to right-sizing their real property portfolios.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to reduce the Federal inventory of unneeded and costly property.

#### SEC. 3. DUTIES OF THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION AND EXECUTIVE AGENCIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 524 of title 40, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

#### "§ 524. Duties of the General Services Administration and executive agencies

"(a) DUTIES OF THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.—

"(1) GUIDANCE.—The Administrator shall issue guidance for the development and implementation of agency real property plans. Such guidance shall include recommendations on—

"(A) how to identify excess properties;

"(B) how to evaluate the costs and benefits involved with disposing of real property;

"(C) how to prioritize disposal decisions based on agency missions and anticipated future need for holdings; and

“(D) how best to dispose of those properties identified as excess to the needs of the agency.

“(2) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Administrator shall submit an annual report, for each of the first 5 years after 2008, to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, based on data submitted from all executive agencies, detailing executive agency efforts to reduce their real property assets.

“(3) ASSISTANCE.—The Administrator shall assist executive agencies in the identification and disposal of excess real property.

“(b) DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE AGENCIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each executive agency shall—

“(A) maintain adequate inventory controls and accountability systems for property under its control;

“(B) continuously survey property under its control to identify excess property;

“(C) promptly report excess property to the Administrator;

“(D) perform the care and handling of excess property; and

“(E) transfer or dispose of excess property as promptly as possible in accordance with authority delegated and regulations prescribed by the Administrator.

“(2) SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO REAL PROPERTY.—With respect to real property, each executive agency shall—

“(A) develop and implement a real property plan in order to identify properties to declare as excess using the guidance issued under subsection (a)(1);

“(B) identify and categorize all real property owned, leased, or otherwise managed by the agency;

“(C) establish adequate goals and incentives that lead the agency to reduce excess real property in its inventory;

“(D) when appropriate, use the authorities in section 572(a)(2)(B) of this title in order to identify and prepare real property to be reported as excess.

“(3) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—Each executive agency, as far as practicable, shall—

“(A) reassign property to another activity within the agency when the property is no longer required for the purposes of the appropriation used to make the purchase;

“(B) transfer excess property under its control to other Federal agencies and to organizations specified in section 321(c)(2) of this title; and

“(C) obtain excess properties from other Federal agencies to meet mission needs before acquiring non-Federal property.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The item relating to section 524 in the table of sections at the beginning of chapter 5 of such title is amended to read as follows:

“524. Duties of the General Services Administration and executive agencies.”.

**SEC. 4. ENHANCED AUTHORITIES WITH REGARD TO PREPARING PROPERTIES TO BE REPORTED AS EXCESS.**

Section 572(a)(2) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (C) and (D), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph:

“(B) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY.—(i) From the fund described in paragraph (1), subject to clause (iv), the Administrator may obligate an amount to pay the direct and indirect costs related to identifying and preparing properties to be reported excess by another agency.

“(ii) The General Services Administration may be reimbursed from the proceeds of the sale of such properties for such costs.

“(iii) Net proceeds shall be dispersed pursuant to section 571 of this title.

“(iv) The authority under clause (i) to obligate funds to prepare properties to be reported excess does not include the authority to convey such properties by sale, lease, exchange, or otherwise, including through leaseback arrangements.

“(v) Nothing in this subparagraph is intended to affect subparagraph (D).”.

**SEC. 5. ENHANCED AUTHORITIES WITH REGARD TO REVERTED REAL PROPERTY.**

(a) AUTHORITY TO PAY EXPENSES RELATED TO REVERTED REAL PROPERTY.—Section 572(a)(2)(A) of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(iv) The direct and indirect costs associated with the reversion, custody, and disposal of reverted real property.”.

(b) REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO SALES OF REVERTED PROPERTY UNDER SECTION 550.—Section 550(b)(1) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting “(A)” after “(1) IN GENERAL.—”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: “If the official, in consultation with the Administrator, recommends reversion of the property, the Administrator shall take control of such property, and, subject to subparagraph (B), sell it at or above appraised fair market value for cash and not by lease, exchange, or leaseback arrangements.

“(B) Prior to sale, the Administrator shall make such property available to State and local governments and certain non-profit institutions or organizations pursuant to this section and sections 553 and 554 of this title.”.

(c) REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO SALES OF REVERTED PROPERTY UNDER SECTION 553.—Section 553(e) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting “(1)” after “THIS SECTION.—”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: “If the Administrator determines that reversion of the property is necessary to enforce compliance with the terms of the conveyance, the Administrator shall take control of such property and, subject to paragraph (2), sell it at or above appraised fair market value for cash and not by lease, exchange, or leaseback arrangements.

“(2) Prior to sale, the Administrator shall make such property available to State and local governments and certain non-profit institutions or organizations pursuant to this section and sections 550 and 554 of this title.”.

(d) REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO SALES OF REVERTED PROPERTY UNDER SECTION 554.—Section 554(f) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting “(1)” after “THIS SECTION.—”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: “If the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, recommends reversion of the property, the Administrator shall take control of such property and, subject to paragraph (2), sell it at or above appraised fair market value for cash and not by lease, exchange, or leaseback arrangements.

“(2) Prior to sale, the Administrator shall make such property available to State and local governments and certain non-profit institutions or organizations pursuant to this section and sections 550 and 553 of this title.”.

**SEC. 6. AGENCY RETENTION OF PROCEEDS.**

The text of section 571 of title 40, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(a) DEPOSIT OF PROCEEDS.—Net proceeds described in subsection (d) shall be deposited

into the appropriate real property account of the agency that had custody and accountability for the real property. Such funds shall be expended only as authorized in annual appropriations Acts and only for activities as described in section 524(b) of this title and disposal activities, including paying costs incurred by the General Services Administration for any disposal-related activity authorized by this title. Proceeds shall not be expended for activities or projects subject to the requirements of section 3307 of this title.

“(b) EFFECT ON OTHER SECTIONS.—Nothing in this section is intended to affect section 572(b) or 574 of this title.

“(c) DISPOSAL AGENCY FOR REVERTED PROPERTY.—For the purposes of this section, the General Services Administration, as the disposal agency, shall be treated as the agency with custody and accountability for properties which revert to the United States under sections 550, 553, and 554 of this title.

“(d) PROCEEDS.—The net proceeds referred to in subsection (a) are proceeds under this chapter from a—

“(1) transfer of excess property to a federal agency for agency use; or

“(2) sale, lease, or other disposition of surplus property.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

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

I stand in support of H.R. 5787, the Federal Real Property Disposal Enhancement Act, which is a sensible, bipartisan effort to address some of the problems with the current Federal property disposal process.

There are three key provisions in this bill. The first allows the General Services Administration to help pay the cost of other agencies' disposal activities. In particular, GSA will be able to help agencies pay costs with regard to properties that have yet to be declared excess. These costs include environmental cleanup, demolition, surveying, and life cycle costing.

Another key provision modifies existing law to make clear that when a property has been transferred to a non-profit organization or a State or local government for a public purpose and that public purpose is no longer being met, the property must revert to the Federal Government, which must dispose of it.

The final major provision allows all agencies to retain the proceeds from the sale of Federal surplus properties. These proceeds will be used for disposal activities such as developing and implementing a plan to identify and declare properties excess, appraisals, utilization studies, and life cycle planning. The Office of Management and

Budget has stated that allowing agencies to retain the proceeds will provide agencies with the funds necessary to cover upfront costs associated with disposals.

This bill does not waive any existing law regarding the screening process and therefore does not affect the access of homeless providers or State and local communities to these properties.

I want to commend Representatives MOORE and DUNCAN for introducing this bill. I also want to thank Chairman WAXMAN and Ranking Member DAVIS for their dedication to this issue for many years.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5787, the Federal Real Property Disposal Enhancement Act, which was introduced last month by Representatives DENNIS MOORE of Kansas and JOHN DUNCAN of Tennessee.

This legislation would expand the number of agencies allowed to retain the proceeds from the sale of surplus Federal real property and would expand the authority of the General Services. It is very clear that this is a good bill, and I support it. It is also very clear that it is a step in the right direction but does not get us to where we really need to be. In fact, this is simply the tip of the iceberg.

The Federal Government is the largest landowner in the country. As such, it is essential that the government manage its properties as efficiently and effectively as possible. More importantly, property which is no longer of use to the Federal Government should be removed from the inventory. Unfortunately, over the years Federal property disposal processes have become increasingly cumbersome and unwieldy, and agencies often decide it's easier to sit on property than to try to get rid of it. In fact, when we as a Congress have done rounds of BRAC, we have often had to do supplemental appropriations of dollars in order to give away property that has become surplus. In fact, OMB estimates a backlog of more than 21,000 properties in need of maintenance and repair carrying a price tag of more than \$18 billion.

Under Republican control, the Congress spent a considerable amount of time working, mostly on a bipartisan basis, to reform the Federal real property disposal system. The proposals we put forward for substantial changes provided real reform. Although H.R. 5787 does not contain the kind of substantive reform put forward in prior Congresses, it is nevertheless an improvement on the current system.

I therefore ask my colleagues to strongly support this legislation as a step in the right direction.

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, in closing, today we have handled a great many important resolutions on the floor and some laws. We've done this on a bipartisan basis.

As we finish our suspensions for the House Oversight and Reform Committee, I would simply ask my colleagues, the Speaker, to take note that this past week, prices rose once again on gasoline in America. Up 17 cents in a blink of the eye, up a dollar since this Congress switched hands.

It is very clear that we need to begin operating on a bipartisan basis to bring down the price of gas and diesel fuel. We can only do that if we work on as much of a bipartisan basis as we work on these resolutions.

So I would ask all of my colleagues to note that the real problem America cares about today is not the 100 years of the Congressional Club. It is not, in fact, Arnold Palmer's accomplishments. It is not even Frank Sinatra's doing it his way. It is, in fact, America's inability to cope with rising gas prices, staggering unemployment, and the inability to live in one's own home. I ask that my colleagues take note of that and that we work on a bipartisan basis to bring a real resolution to these problems.

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, it is wonderful to live in a democracy when we can recognize our athletes, when we can recognize our entertainers, when we can recognize all of our people, along with doing the people's work.

The idea of a democracy says anyone at the lower end of the social economic scale as well as those at the top need recognition. We need to work together across aisles, not to be hampered by games that can be played, but sincerely coming together as a body representing the 280 million Americans and those who are not quite citizens and to do their work without phony procedures blocking our ability to make progress.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5787, as amended, and commend Chairman WAXMAN for taking steps to address Federal excess and surplus property issues.

H.R. 5787 authorizes the Administrator of General Services to obligate funds to pay for a variety of services that must be conducted before a property can be declared excess to the needs of the reporting agency. These services include title searches, site remediation, site security, and other activities necessary for a property to be declared excess. Further, the bill authorizes the General Services Administration to be reimbursed by the agency for these expenses from the proceeds of the sale of the property. The net proceeds are retained by the donor agency and can be used only for disposal-related activities.

I want to thank Chairman WAXMAN for recognizing the concerns of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure regarding the eligible uses of these net proceeds, and for working to address these concerns. The committee was particularly concerned that agencies, using this new-found source of revenue, would engage in real property activities that

would otherwise need to go through the prospectus process and thus the jurisdiction of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The version of H.R. 5787 being considered today specifically addresses the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's concerns by prohibiting the use of proceeds for activities or projects subject to the prospectus process and other requirements of section 3307 title 40, United States Code.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 5787, as amended, and support placing the General Services Administration back in a leadership role for property disposal activities of the Federal Government.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5787, the Federal Real Property Disposal Enhancement Act. This is a bipartisan solution to address some of the deficiencies that exist in Federal real property management. I want to commend Representatives MOORE and DUNCAN for introducing this bill, and Ranking Member DAVIS for working with me over many years on property issues.

As GAO has indicated by placing Federal real property on its "high risk" list, problems abound. One such problem is that unneeded buildings are in the Federal inventory. The magnitude of the problem with excess Federal real property means that agencies are spending billions of dollars maintaining properties no longer relevant to agencies' missions.

The Federal Real Property Disposal Enhancement Act seeks to address some of the hurdles that agencies are facing regarding disposal of their unneeded property.

One key provision allows the General Services Administration to use its funds to prepare properties to be declared excess by other agencies. Agencies and GAO have testified that the cost of preparing a property for transfer or sale serves as a disincentive to disposal because, in the short term, it can be more beneficial economically to maintain a property that is not being used than to dispose of it. Basically, it is cheaper to pay to mow the grass and have a security guard than to do appraisals, surveys, and environmental studies.

Another key provision allows all agencies to retain 100 percent of the proceeds from sale. Most large landholding agencies already have this benefit. However, smaller ones, such as the Federal Communications Commission, which owns vacant towers, do not. After GSA obtained the authority to retain proceeds in 2005, its disposals increased.

In addition, the bill clarifies that when a piece of property has been given to a non-profit or State or local government for a public purpose and that public purpose ceases to exist, the federal government must revert the property and dispose of it. The bill also calls on GSA to issue guidance on disposing of excess properties and requires agencies to develop and implement plans to dispose of their excess property.

This is a commonsense measure and I am hopeful all members will be able to support it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5787, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. ISSA. 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.

#### NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1142) recognizing May 25, 2008, as National Missing Children's Day, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 1142

Whereas May 25, 2008, will be the 26th National Missing Children's Day;

Whereas National Missing Children's Day honors our Nation's obligation to locate and recover missing children by prompting parents, guardians, and other trusted-adult role models to make child safety an utmost priority;

Whereas in the United States nearly 800,000 children are reported missing a year, more than 58,000 children are abducted by non-family members, and more than 2,000 children are reported missing every day;

Whereas Congress' efforts to provide resources, training, and technical assistance has increased the capabilities of State and local law enforcement to find children and to return them home safely;

Whereas the 1979 disappearance of 6-year-old Etan Patz served as the impetus for the creation of National Missing Children's Day, first proclaimed in 1983; and

Whereas Etan's photo was distributed nationwide and appeared in media globally, and the powerful image came to represent the anguish of thousands of searching families: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes National Missing Children's Day and encourages all Americans to join together to plan events in communities across America to raise public awareness about the issue of missing children and the need to address this national problem,

(2) recognizes that one of the most important tools for law enforcement to use in the case of a missing child is an up-to-date, good quality photograph and urges all parents and guardians to follow this important precaution, and

(3) acknowledges that National Missing Children's Day should remind Americans not to forget the children who are still missing and not to waver in the effort to reunite them with their families.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during

which Members may revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H. Res. 1142 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H. Res. 1142, which recognizes May 25, 2008, as the 26th National Missing Children's Day and urges everyone to do what they can to prevent the tragedy of a missing child.

In the late seventies, a succession of high-profile missing children's cases helped heighten the awareness and underline the seriousness of child victimization.

□ 1430

When Etan Patz went missing on his way to school in 1979, the first major national media campaign surrounding a missing child took place. The considerable media attention and comprehensive search helped highlight the problem of child abduction nationwide.

Etan's case and others helped expose a flaw in the system. At that time, there was no national response system in place to coordinate State and local cooperation or a central mechanism to support searching families. In 1983, May 25 was proclaimed National Missing Children's Day, and a nationwide movement was born. May 25 was chosen because it is the anniversary of Etan's disappearance.

More than 2,000 children are reported missing every day, but strides have been made to change this disturbing statistic. Programs such as the AMBER Alert Program, which notifies law enforcement officials and the public of child abduction cases, have done a lot to help return missing children to their families. To date, 329 children have been recovered because of the AMBER Alert Program.

Each May, we reflect on missing children and renew our efforts to reunite those young people with their families. National Missing Children's Day is an opportunity to remind families of the importance of maintaining up-to-date photographs of their children and to encourage everyone to give their full attention to the photographs and posters of missing children. Anyone can be a hero and offer the tip that helps return children to their families.

Protecting young children is one of our Nation's top priorities. On May 25 we will pause to remember the children whose lives have been lost, celebrate those who have been reunited with their families, and renew our efforts to continuing searching for children that are still missing.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I express my support for National Missing Children's Day, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today as an original cosponsor of House Resolution 1142, recognizing May 25, 2008, as National Missing Children's Day. In 1983, President Ronald Reagan declared May 25 to be National Missing Children's Day. In doing so, he provided an annual reminder of our Nation's obligation to locate and recover missing children. National Missing Children's Day prompts parents, guardians, and other trusted adult role models to make child safety a priority.

It is tragic that every year thousands of children are abducted or go missing in our country. While more missing children come home safely today than ever before, there is still work to be done. Nearly 8,000 children are reported missing each year in the United States. More than 2,000 children are reported missing every day. Too many children do not make it home, and many more continue to be victimized by acts of violence. In fact, children are the most victimized segment of our society, and crimes committed against children of all ages are the most underreported of any victim category.

In 1979, the disappearance of 6-year-old Etan Patz served as the impetus for the creation of National Missing Children's Day. Etan's photo appeared in the media across the Nation and around the world. His image came to represent the anguish of thousands of families searching for their missing children. Today, local, State, and Federal law enforcement work diligently across the country in an effort to find children and reunite them with their families.

In December 2007, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2517, the reauthorization of the Missing and Exploited Children's Program. I am proud to be the lead Republican sponsor of that bill, and am hopeful that we will be able to complete the reauthorization this Congress.

Our efforts here in Congress provide resources, training, and technical assistance in order to assist in increasing the capabilities of State and local law enforcement to locate missing children. The recognition of May 25, 2008, as the 26th National Missing Children's Day serves to remind us that we still have work to do to reunite families, work that requires parents, families, neighbors, and law enforcement to come together to locate all missing children.

For this reason, I am proud to join my fellow cochair of the Congressional Missing and Exploited Children's Caucus, Mr. LAMPSON, in support of National Missing Children's Day, and thank him for introducing House Resolution 1142. I ask for my colleagues' support, and thank Mr. BISHOP for managing this bill.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res 1142, Recognizing May 25, 2008, as National Missing Children's Day. First, I would like to thank