

1998 to reauthorize the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2131

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

SECTION 1. REAUTHORIZATION OF UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.

Section 1334 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6553) is amended by striking "October 1, 2009" and inserting "October 1, 2010".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN) 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 to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. This legislation would extend by 1 year the mandate of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, a bipartisan panel created by Congress and appointed by the President that reports on the public diplomacy work of the State Department, the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and other United States Government agencies. The commission reports its findings and recommendations to the President, Congress and the Secretary of State. Its products provide a window into what works and what does not work in our public diplomacy efforts.

For example, the commission's 2008 report on the human resource dimension of public diplomacy has been used as a guide by both Congress and the new administration on ways that the recruitment and training of public diplomacy staff at the State Department can and should be improved.

Mr. Speaker, the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy serves a very useful purpose. We should reauthorize it for another year of operation, and I strongly urge my colleagues to support this legislation to do just that.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 2131, introduced by my good friend Ambassador Watson. In terms of commerce, culture, military power, and just about any other field of human endeavor, our Nation is a key actor in the complex world of the 21st century. Sometimes, however, our goals and our intentions

are misunderstood or are deliberately misinterpreted by those who mean us harm. People cannot fully understand American interests without understanding American ideals, economic and personal freedom, democracy and human rights; and people will not fully grasp those American ideals without having a sense of the diverse genius of the American people whose resolve, good will and generosity constitute the true heart of our Nation. We cannot take that knowledge for granted, Mr. Speaker. Showing the true face of America to the people of the world is the lofty aim of our U.S. public diplomacy efforts.

In the wrenching aftermath of the Second World War, Congress created the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy in 1948.

□ 1145

According to its current charter, the Commission "appraises U.S. Government activities intended to understand, inform and influence foreign publics."

For example, just last year, the Commission issued a 36-page report critiquing and making recommendations for personnel practices of the current Public Diplomacy bureaucracy in areas such as recruitment, training and integration into broader State Department operations.

This short bill before us today will keep the Commission's legislative authorization from expiring at the end of this month. This will give the Foreign Affairs Committee and this Congress another year to assess the work and the efficacy of the Commission and its relationship with our broader Public Diplomacy apparatus before undertaking a more comprehensive, longer-term reform effort.

I would like to again thank my colleague from California, Ambassador Watson, for introducing this measure, and I support its adoption by this House.

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I certainly thank the young lady.

Mr. FALCOMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2131, which amends the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 to reauthorize the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy through September 30, 2010.

The Advisory Commission is a bipartisan panel created by Congress and appointed by the President to formulate and recommend to the President, the Secretary of State, and Members of Congress policies and programs to carry out public diplomacy of the U.S. Government, and to assess the effectiveness of ongoing public diplomacy activities. Such programs and activities constitute our effort to understand, inform and influence foreign publics in support of U.S. foreign policy objectives.

Public diplomacy has never been more important to the security of our nation than it is today. Fortunately, President Obama enjoys a

wellspring of support overseas, offering the United States a chance to repair its image. According to a new survey released on September 9, 2009 by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, for example, European support for President Barack Obama's handling of foreign policy is currently at 77 percent, four times greater than that of George W. Bush when he left office. In the Asia Pacific region and throughout the rest of the world, support rates for our new President have climbed at similarly dramatic rates.

Yet, the challenges confronting U.S. public diplomacy are varied, and there is no easy means to address them. As Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Judith A. McHale, said in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during her nomination hearing, "An important lesson of recent years is that we must do a better job of thinking and planning strategically, with a clear mission and a steady eye on long-term global goals, accompanied by careful assessment of programs, personnel and expenditures. This will allow us to craft proactive, purposeful and integrated programs that further U.S. policy interests and resonate with foreign publics."

The Advisory Commission was created specifically to assist in devising such strategic plans and in providing objective criticism. It has done an excellent job in this regard and deserves to continue its work for another year, and this is why I am hopeful that my colleagues will join me in supporting H.R. 2131.

Ms. WATSON. 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. 2131, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REDUCING GLOBAL TRAFFIC DEATHS

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 74) supporting the goals and ideals of a decade of action for road safety with a global target to reduce by 50 percent the predicted increase in global road deaths between 2010 and 2020, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 74

Whereas according to the 2004 World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention, 40,000 people in the United States and 1,300,000 people globally die in road crashes each year;

Whereas another 20,000,000 to 50,000,000 people globally are injured each year as a result of speeding motor vehicles and the increased use of motor vehicles;

Whereas road crashes are the leading cause of death globally for young people between the ages of 10 and 24 years around the world;

Whereas the current estimated monetary cost of motor vehicle crashes worldwide is \$518,000,000,000 annually, representing between 3 and 5 percent of the gross domestic product of each nation;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, over 90 percent of motorist-related deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, motorist-related deaths and costs continue to rise in these countries due to a lack of appropriate road engineering and injury prevention programs in public health sectors;

Whereas the United States, other countries, and international organizations should promote the improvement of data collection and comparability, including by adopting the standard definition of a road death as “any person killed immediately or dying within 30 days as a result of a road traffic crash” as standard definitions of injury, and the facilitation of international cooperation to develop reliable data systems and analytical capability;

Whereas it is critical that the international community support collaborative action to enhance global road safety and reduce the risk of road crash death and injury around the world by fostering partnerships and cooperation between governments, private and public sectors, and within civil society, as well as relationships between the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and other national and international road safety authorities;

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution in 2005 designating the third Sunday of November as a day of remembrance for road crash victims and their families, and calling on nations globally to improve road safety;

Whereas the United States Congress passed H. Con. Res. 87, as well as S. Con. Res. 39, in the 110th Congress supporting the goals and ideals of a world day of remembrance for road crash victims;

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution in 2008 highlighting the impact of global road safety issues, encouraging nations to take action to reduce road crash risks across the world, and creating the first global high-level conference on road safety, to be hosted by the Russian Federation in Moscow in November 2009; and

Whereas the Ministerial Consultative Committee of the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Moscow has drafted a declaration to designate 2010–2020 as the “Decade of Action for Road Safety”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of a decade of action for road safety with a global target to reduce by 50 percent the predicted increase in global road deaths between 2010 and 2020;

(2) urges the Obama Administration and the Department of State, in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), to set ambitious road traffic casualty reduction targets for United States citizens traveling abroad and at home;

(3) encourages enhancement of global efforts, including international harmonization of road safety regulations and good practices, to improve road safety and reduce road crash deaths and injuries; and

(4) urges the Obama Administration to take a leadership role at the First Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Moscow and for the United States to work with nations around the world to achieve the goals

and ideals of a decade of action for road safety.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN) 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 to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. Road crashes are a worldwide epidemic that annually take the lives of 1.2 million people and that injure 50 million others.

While the Congress has admirably focused on the fight against infectious disease, such as HIV and AIDS and malaria, while it has improved access to clean drinking water and while it has focused on other critical global health issues, not enough attention has been paid to those whose lives have been lost in road accidents.

A road accident is the leading cause of death among young people around the world, 85 percent of which occur in low- and middle-income countries. Yet all too often, these road accidents could have been prevented by better driver and pedestrian education and by improved engineering. In many countries, safety precautions that we take for granted, such as sidewalks, guardrails and crosswalks, simply don't exist. Pedestrians cross streets at their peril, and drivers use roads without lane markings or traffic lights. With more drivers taking to the roads in developing countries, global road deaths are likely to increase in the decade to come.

The U.S. and the international community can prevent many of these accidents by promoting improved data collection techniques, by supporting collaborative efforts to reduce the risks of road crash deaths and by fostering partnerships and cooperation between governments, the private and public sectors and within civil society.

We have no excuse for not taking a more aggressive approach to preventing millions of deaths and injuries along the world's roads and highways. I urge my colleagues to join me in raising awareness of the importance of reducing global road deaths and injuries by supporting this resolution.

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

Ms. ROSLEHTINEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution 74 notes the importance of the goals and ideals of a decade of action

for road safety. As this measure reminds us, 40,000 people in the United States and 1.3 million people worldwide die in road crashes each year, and many more are injured. Road crashes are the leading cause of death globally for young people. In light of these facts, we ought to explore ways to do more to help prevent road crash-related deaths and injuries.

This resolution expresses support for the goals of a decade of action for road safety. It urges the Obama administration, the Department of State, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to set ambitious road traffic casualty reduction targets for American citizens. Finally, it urges the administration to work with nations around the world to achieve the goals and ideals of a decade of action for road safety.

I would like to thank my colleague and good friend from Florida (Mr. WEXLER) for introducing this important measure, which I am pleased to support.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the sponsor of the bill, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER).

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, as a co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Global Road Safety, I, along with the other co-Chairs, introduced House Concurrent Resolution 74 earlier this year to shed light on an epidemic too few in this country or around the world comprehend: the devastating toll of deaths and injuries from road crashes.

I want to especially thank Chairman BERMAN and Ranking Member ROSLEHTINEN for their extraordinary help in bringing this resolution to the floor as well as the several colleagues who joined with me in supporting this resolution.

According to the “World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention” study, which was produced in conjunction with the World Health Organization and the World Bank, every year road travel causes 1.3 million deaths and 50 million injuries. This is the equivalent of 10 jumbo jets crashing every day. Sadly, many of these deaths and injuries are preventable.

The upcoming Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Moscow, which was inspired by the passing of United Nations Resolution 62/244 on March 31, 2008, is the culmination of a 5-year effort by a global community of stakeholders from multilateral and bilateral institutions, from governmental and nongovernmental organizations and from academia and civil society to raise international awareness and to call for a global response commensurate with the magnitude of the worldwide road traffic injury and fatality epidemic.

The conference will work to establish new benchmarks for best practices and road traffic injury prevention. It will encourage regional casualty reduction targets, and it will provide a new framework for international cooperation on global road safety.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN of Maryland, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, and I, as co-Chairs of the Congressional Caucus on Global Road Safety, encourage the Obama administration to take a strong leadership role at this conference.

It is in this vein that I introduced this resolution which supports the goals and ideals of a decade of action for road safety with a global target to reduce by 50 percent the predicted increase in global road deaths between 2010 and 2020.

This resolution also urges the Obama administration and the Department of State, in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, to set ambitious road traffic casualty reduction targets for American citizens traveling abroad and to work with foreign governments and with international organizations to harmonize road safety regulations and good practices.

Finally, it urges the Obama administration to take a leadership role at the first Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Moscow in late November of this year, and it urges the United States to work with nations around the world to achieve the goals and ideals of a decade of action for road safety and to reduce the impact of this public health epidemic in the global community.

Mr. Speaker, road safety is a rapidly growing problem throughout the developed and developing worlds alike that respects no boundaries of geography, nationality, race, age, gender or socioeconomic status. Furthermore, it is a problem that uniquely spans many key areas of concern for Members of Congress and their constituents, not the least of which is the health and safety of American citizens both at home and abroad.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I would like to congratulate Mr. WEXLER for introducing this resolution to enhance global road safety and to reduce the risk of road crash deaths and injuries around the world by fostering partnerships in cooperation between governments, public and private sectors and within civil society. I support the measure.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 74, which supports the goals and ideals of a decade of action for road safety with a global target to reduce by 50 percent the predicted increase in global road deaths between 2010 and 2020. Road safety is a critical issue not only in my district and across the country, but in countries around the world.

As the Chair of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection, I believe that road safety is a critical component of protecting the nation. I fought for the building of infrastructure for safe roads in my district and I believe that this fight should be extended on a national and a global scale. According to the World Health Organization, WHO, the rise in both fatalities from motor vehicle deaths and subsequent costs is caused by the lack of ap-

propriate road engineering and safety promotion in the public health sector.

My home State of Texas is afflicted by the scourge of road fatalities. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2008, there were 3,382 deaths across the state with 1,552 of those traffic fatalities occurring in urban areas such as my district in Houston, Texas. In 2007 there were 209 road deaths in Houston, Texas, killing nearly 10 people for every 100,000. According to the 2004 World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention, 40,000 people die each year in road crashes in the United States alone.

Across the globe, 1.3 million people die in road crashes each year. Another 20 to 50 million people across the globe are injured in motor vehicle accidents, often as a result of speeding. Road crashes are the number one killer of young people between the ages of 10 and 24 world-wide. Road crashes not only bring tragedy and devastation to the lives of the victims and their families, they are also extremely costly. The estimated monetary cost of motor vehicle crashes is nearly \$520 billion, or roughly 3 to 5 percent of the cumulative gross domestic product of the world.

The tragedy of road accidents is not only the economic loss, pain and suffering, and loss of life but also the knowledge that road crashes can be prevented. I applaud the efforts of the Ministerial Consultative Committee, which drafted a declaration for the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Moscow to designate 2010–2020 as the “Decade for Action on Road Safety.” I hope that this conference will succeed in increasing the global awareness on road safety and generate meaningful action against road fatalities.

Road safety is an international effort that almost everyone can support. More than 90 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities occur in low- and middle-income countries. I believe the efforts to raise awareness for the need for road safety and strong action to help reduce motor vehicle fatalities will help our standing in those countries that need it the most. I strongly urge passage of this important Resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 74, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENCOURAGING MEMBERSHIP IN THE SERVICEMEMBERS OPPORTUNITY COLLEGES CONSORTIUM

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 491) encouraging each institution of higher education in the country to seek membership in the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 491

Whereas in order to enhance their military effectiveness and to achieve their educational, vocational, and career goals, servicemembers should share in the same postsecondary educational opportunities that are available to other citizens;

Whereas to enhance access to undergraduate educational opportunities for servicemembers, institutions should maintain a necessary flexibility of programs and procedures, particularly in admissions, credit transfer, and recognition of other applicable learning, including that gained in the military, in scheduling and format of courses, and in academic residency requirements to offset servicemembers' mobility, isolation from campuses, and part-time student status;

Whereas the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium, which was created in 1972 to provide educational opportunities to servicemembers who had trouble completing college degrees because of their frequent relocations, today includes more than 1,800 colleges and universities among its members;

Whereas the SOC Consortium is a vehicle to help coordinate voluntary postsecondary educational opportunities for servicemembers by advocating for the flexibility needed to improve access to and availability of educational programs for servicemembers, helping the military and higher education communities understand and respond to each other's resources, limits, and requirements for meeting the education and training needs of servicemembers, and strengthening the working relationships among military and higher education representatives;

Whereas each year, hundreds of thousands of servicemembers and their family members enroll in associate, bachelor, and graduate level degree programs offered by SOC Consortium members on school campuses, military installations, and armories within the United States and overseas;

Whereas SOC Consortium member institutions provide flexibility to servicemembers, their families, and veterans seeking college degrees and, in turn, these institutions benefit from the enrollment of mature, highly motivated adult students who are making use of tuition assistance or Montgomery GI Bill benefits to pay their education costs; and

Whereas in gratitude and respect for their service to the United States, all institutions of higher education in the country should strive to provide our servicemembers with the tools and opportunities they need to achieve their educational, vocational, and career goals: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) encourages each institution of higher education in the country to seek membership in the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium; and

(2) recognizes the institutions of higher education that are currently members of the SOC Consortium.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNYDER). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Hawaii.