

205 and ensure that implementation does not negatively impact children's access to the program.

I also further request that the Secretary provide the Committee on Education and Labor and the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee in the Senate, annual reports describing implementation and an assessment of any consequences or impact from implementation. These reports should also include any recommendations for administrative or legislative adjustments to the policy, if necessary.

PROTECTING STUDENTS PRIVACY AND REDUCING STIGMA OF PARTICIPATION IN THE CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The school environment has an important influence on children's behavior and their choices, which can strongly impact their health and wellbeing. The cafeteria and food service setting, such as the display of foods, the integration of reimbursable school meals with foods sold outside of the reimbursable meal programs, and methods of payment can result in the unintentional identification of children by their household income status, or in social stigma for receiving reimbursable meals.

Children should be able to participate in the child nutrition programs with dignity and without consequence of social stigma. Currently, the Richard. B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires that school food authorities ensure children eligible for free or reduced price school meals are not overtly identified as low-income by their participation in the school meal programs. I am concerned, however, that the current guidance to school districts to ensure that children participating in the school meal programs are not overtly identified is not keeping up with the modern school food environment.

Section 143 of this legislation requires the Secretary to review local policies on meal charges and the provision of alternate meals for compliance with requirements for preventing overt identification. I urge the Secretary to also include in the review an examination of the design of the school foodservice area, the methods for conducting payment transactions, and policies for providing reimbursable meals to children from households with outstanding debt to identify ways in which these practices may result in a negative social or nutritional impact on children.

There are increasing examples of schools implementing policies to provide alternate reimbursable meals for children that lack sufficient resources to pay for the meal. I understand the critical importance of balancing school district and school foodservice budgets, and many schools are not in a position to cover the additional cost of offering meals at no charge to children who are not eligible for free reimbursable meals. However, I believe it is important for schools to establish thoughtful policies to address circumstances in which children lack sufficient resources to pay for school meals to ensure that these policies do not stigmatize children, and to ensure that children are not forced to go hungry because of situations outside of their control. For example, if a school has a policy to provide a different meal to children that lack sufficient resources to pay for a reimbursable meal, this practice can identify the child for having insufficient resources and can result in social stigma.

As part of this review, the Secretary should also identify ways in which the modern school food environment may inadvertently stigmatize

children or fail to protect their privacy. For example, there is concern that when school foodservice areas separate lines for children with cash for non-reimbursable food and meals and children selecting reimbursable meals into other lines, that children selecting a reimbursable meal may be identified as low-income or otherwise differentiated from children paying cash for food.

In addition to the review and follow up actions required under provision 143 of this legislation, I urge the Secretary to provide schools with technical assistance and guidance to prevent overt identification. Furthermore, I urge the Secretary to reinforce policies regarding meal charges and alternate meals with guidance to States and school districts regarding appropriate efforts to determine whether children of households in arrears for school meal program payments may be eligible for free or reduced price school meals. Finally, in addition to enhanced technical assistance and guidance, I urge the Secretary to enhance oversight of schools' compliance with requirements to prevent overt identification to ensure schools are taking the necessary steps to protect the privacy of children participating in the school meal programs.

CONCLUSION

I feel strongly that these provisions are critical to the robust reforms to improve access to the child nutrition programs to end child hunger, to improve the quality of these programs to curb childhood obesity, and to better protect the Federal investment.

I look forward to working with the Secretary upon passage of this legislation to ensure effective implementation of this important legislation.

Today, I am pleased to support the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

THE AMERICAN DREAM ACT

HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 8, 2010

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly urge my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, to vote for the American Dream Act. This legislation provides conditional non-immigrant status to young individuals of college age who are eager to contribute to our nation's workforce, economy, and Armed Forces.

I personally want to thank the Coalition for Educational Opportunity at the University of Texas—Pan American, and the thousands of students, civil rights groups, and prominent education, business, and religious leaders who have fought tirelessly to pass the DREAM Act. In my congressional district, I want to recognize Alex Garrido and Dora Martinez, two courageous UTPA college students, who fasted for one week to express their support for the DREAM Act.

I am extremely grateful to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, the former Secretary of State Colin Powell, Carlos Gutierrez, former Secretary of Commerce, and many chancellors and many university presidents for underscoring the urgency of passing the DREAM Act.

As Subcommittee chairman for Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and Competitiveness,

I believe that our nation should encourage all students to succeed in school, particularly those students who are working hard and serving as role models to their peers. In the Rio Grande Valley of deep South Texas and across the country, DREAM act students are exceptional young men and women. Despite facing difficult circumstances, these students have excelled in school, and become valedictorians, AP scholars, and distinguished student leaders.

Our nation cannot afford to turn away these talented youth. In order to remain competitive in the global economy, our country must train a new generation of highly skilled STEM professionals—scientists, engineers, and mathematicians—to bolster scientific discovery and spur the technological innovation that our nation desperately needs. Above all, these students will help our nation meet its college completion goals.

Our Armed Forces need courageous service men and women to ensure our Nation's military readiness. Our schools need great teachers to help us close the achievement gap.

I urge my colleagues to vote for the DREAM Act and give these deserving students a chance to make meaningful contributions to our Nation's workforce, economy, military and civic life.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 8, 2010

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, December 7, 2010 I missed rollcall votes 608, 609, 610. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on those rollcall votes.

IN RECOGNITION OF SHERIFF JOSEPH SPICUZZO

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 8, 2010

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sheriff Joseph Spicuzzo, a life long resident of Central New Jersey and an outstanding member of the community. Throughout his tenure, Sheriff Spicuzzo has contributed to labor organizations, made innovative improvements to the Sheriff's Department operations and enthusiastically dedicated his time to charitable organizations. Sheriff Spicuzzo will retire from his position after dedicating thirty years of service to the Middlesex County Sheriff's office. Today, I applaud Sheriff Spicuzzo, as his accomplishments should serve as an inspiration to us all.

Sheriff Spicuzzo has a long and accomplished political career. From 1976 to 1980, Mr. Spicuzzo served as Mayor of the Borough of Spotswood, New Jersey. In April 1980, Mr. Spicuzzo was appointed Middlesex County Sheriff by Governor Brendan Byrne and completed an unexpired term. Since his appointment, Sheriff Spicuzzo has earned the respect and affection of his colleagues and constituents. He worked particularly well with the