

the Framework, and the United Nations Special Envoy, MONUSCO, and relevant international bodies and governments to develop, implement, and enforce a comprehensive peace process for the region;

(3) notes that the adoption of the Framework, the appointment of Mary Robinson as United Nations Special Envoy to the Great Lakes, and the expanded MONUSCO mandate provide an opportunity to make meaningful and sustained progress toward ending the recurrent cycles of violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially in eastern Congo;

(4) urges the signatories of the Framework and the international community to engage and consult with representatives of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and civil society representatives engaged in the ongoing effort to convene an inclusive national forum and dialogue;

(5) urges the President to appoint a Special Envoy to the Great Lakes in the near-term in order to represent the United States in international and regional efforts to end the conflict and secure sustainable peace, stability, and safety for the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by—

(A) working with United Nations Special Envoy Mary Robinson and the broader international community to promote a transparent and inclusive process to implement the regional and national commitments under the Framework, including the development of clear benchmarks for progress and appropriate follow-on measures;

(B) strengthening international efforts to mobilize and support justice for victims and accountability for perpetrators of sexual and gender based violence and other human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(C) expanding efforts to develop conflict-free and responsible mining and supply chains for the region's vast mineral resources, in coordination with other government, private industry, and international and local organizations;

(D) coordinating with international and regional partners to expand unhindered access to life-saving humanitarian assistance to populations in need, particularly displaced persons and conflict-affected communities;

(E) pressing for fulfillment of the commitment of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as other regional actors, to ending the threat posed by the M23, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), and other armed groups in the Great Lakes region, and to facilitate enhanced coordination of regional efforts to counter these groups; and

(F) mobilizing and facilitating United States and international support for electoral reforms in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the goal of encouraging free, fair, and credible provincial and local elections in the near-term, and presidential elections in 2016;

(6) calls on the President to support the creation of a World Bank Fund for the Great Lakes Region, as part of a coordinated international investment and development strategy aimed at deepening regional economic integration and stability and leveraging reform;

(7) calls on the President, in close coordination with international and regional partners, to work with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to develop and implement recommendations to improve accountability for serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including by considering imposition of sanctions authorized under section 1284 of the National Defense Authorization

Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Public Law 112-239; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note);

(8) calls on governments of the Great Lakes region of Africa to immediately halt and prevent any and all forms of support to non-state armed groups, including support provided by individuals independent of government policy;

(9) calls on all relevant nations, including destination and transit countries, to increase cooperation on ending the illicit trade in conflict minerals, wildlife, and wildlife parts, which continues to fuel and fund violence and to deprive citizens of economic opportunity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the broader region;

(10) calls on the signatories of the Framework to cooperate in the arrest and prosecution of those responsible for violating international humanitarian law and for serious human rights violations, including gender-based violence;

(11) calls on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to engage in meaningful and inclusive electoral reforms, prepare and hold impartially administered local and provincial elections as soon as technically possible, continue to participate in ongoing efforts to provide a platform for inclusive dialogue within the Democratic Republic of the Congo to address critical internal political issues, and strengthen processes of state institution building;

(12) calls on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in coordination with the international community, to undertake significant security sector reform, which is a necessary component for lasting stability, and renewed disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) efforts that ensure that any rebel troops, especially commanders, responsible for human rights violations are held accountable and not reintegrated into the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC); and

(13) urges the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to improve efforts to protect civilians from armed groups, in cooperation with MONUSCO and the African Union's Regional Cooperation Initiative on the LRA.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 145—PROMOTING MINORITY HEALTH AWARENESS AND SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH IN APRIL 2013 TO BRING ATTENTION TO THE HEALTH DISPARITIES FACED BY MINORITY POPULATIONS SUCH AS AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES, ASIANS, BLACKS OR AFRICAN AMERICANS, HISPANICS OR LATINOS, AND NATIVE HAWAIIANS AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDERS**

Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

**S. RES. 145**

Whereas in 2011, the Department of Health and Human Services released the "National Stakeholder Strategy for Achieving Health Equity" and the "Disparities action Plan" to reduce health care disparities in the United States;

Whereas a recent analysis estimates that the economy of the United States loses an estimated \$309,000,000,000 a year due to the direct and indirect costs of health disparities;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services has identified 6 main cat-

egories in which racial and ethnic minorities experience the most disparate access to health care and health outcomes, including infant mortality, cancer screening and management, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, HIV and AIDS infection, and immunizations;

Whereas African-American women are more than twice as likely to die of cervical cancer than White women and are more likely to die of breast cancer than women of any other racial or ethnic group;

Whereas the rate of death from coronary heart disease is 30 percent higher among African Americans than among Whites;

Whereas the death rate from stroke is 50 percent higher among African Americans than among Whites;

Whereas in 2012, as compared to non-Hispanic Whites living in Hawaii, Native Hawaiians had more than twice the rate of medically-diagnosed diabetes and were 5.7 times more likely to die of diabetes;

Whereas compared to non-Hispanic White men, African American men are 9.5 times more likely to die of AIDS and Hispanic men are 2.5 times more likely to die of AIDS;

Whereas in 2010, 84 percent of children born with HIV infection belonged to minority groups;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services has identified diseases of the heart, malignant neoplasm, unintentional injuries, diabetes, and cerebrovascular disease as some of the leading causes of death among American Indians and Alaska Natives;

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives die at higher rates than other people in the United States from tuberculosis, diabetes, unintentional injuries, and suicide; and

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives have a life expectancy that is 5.2 years shorter than the life expectancy of the overall population of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate supports the goals and ideals of National Minority Health Month in April 2013 to bring attention to the severe health disparities faced by minority populations such as American Indians and Alaska Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, and Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 146—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF MAY 12 THROUGH MAY 18, 2013, AS "NATIONAL POLICE WEEK"**

Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. COONS, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. HATCH, Mr. BURR, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

**S. RES. 146**

Whereas, in 1962, John Fitzgerald Kennedy proclaimed May 15 to be "Peace Officers Memorial Day", and designated the calendar week in which May 15 falls as "National Police Week";

Whereas law enforcement officers are charged with pursuing justice and protecting communities in the United States;

Whereas State and local police officers, sheriffs, and other law enforcement officers across the United States serve with dignity and integrity;

Whereas law enforcement officers serve as first responders to natural disasters such as Hurricane Isaac and Hurricane Sandy;

Whereas law enforcement officers serve as first responders to terrorist attacks such as

the bombings at the Boston Marathon in Boston, Massachusetts, and to accidents such as the fertilizer plant explosion in West, Texas;

Whereas law enforcement officers selflessly risk their personal safety in the interest of public safety;

Whereas Peace Officers Memorial Day honors law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty;

Whereas Peace Officers Memorial Day this year honors 143 law enforcement officers recently killed in the line of duty, including Randall L. Benoit, Brandon Joseph Nielson, Jeremy Michael Triche, Ricky Ray Issac, Jr., Howard Evans Jr., Raymundo Dominguez, Steven C. D. Green Sr., David W. Riddlesperger, Scott J. Ward, William H. Coleman, James D. Lister, David W. Wargo Jr., Barbara A. Ester, Robert L. Paris Jr., Kenyon M. Youngstrom, Jeremy S. Bitner, James J. Davies, Leide W. DeFusco, Celena C. Hollis, Mary K. Ricard, Matthew R. Tyner, William H. Dyer III, Michael K. Erickson, Barbara A. Pill, Christopher A. Schaub, Bruce E. St. Laurent, Ruben H. Thomas III, David A. White, Sean L. Callahan, Robert W. Crapse Sr., Elgin L. Daniel, Richard J. Halford, Shawn A. Smiley, Larry L. Stell, Gail D. Thomas, Garret C. Davis, Eric C. Fontes, Chad M. Morimoto, Nikkii Bostic-Jones, Kyle W. Deatherine, Lamont C. Reid, Timothy A. Betts, Britney R. Meux, Robert L. Atherly, Davis S. Gogian, Herbert D. Proffitt, Carl A. Rakes, Mark A. Taulbee, Charles B. Licato, Adrian A. Morris, William D. Talbert, Forrest E. Taylor, Teresa L. Testerman, Kevin E. Ambrose, Peter J. Kneeland, Jose Torres, Ryan Tvelia, Joseph T. Candie, Patrick J. O'Rourke, Thomas E. Decker, Michael J. Walter, William M. Mudd, Christopher R. Parsons, George F. Ross Sr., Tracy A. Hardin, Denny Lawrence, Michael P. Maloney, James G. Hoopes III, Christopher W. Reeves, Robert A. Potter, Amanda D. Anna, Fermin S. Archer Jr., Michael J. Chiapperini, Arthur Lopez, Joseph P. Olivieri Jr., Christopher M. Pupo, Bobby G. DeMuth Jr., Jeremiah M. Goodson Jr., Dwayne C. Hester, William R. Mast Jr., Edward A. Pounds, Randall S. Thomas, William L. Wright, Jason E. Gresko, Frank D. Mancini, William C. Coen, Brian E. Hayden, Jeffrey M. McCoy, Blake T. Coble, Bradley M. Fox, Avery E. Freeman, Brian J. Lorenzo, Moses Walker Jr., Maxwell R. Dorley, Sandra E. Rogers, David C. Gann, Martoiya V. Lang, Justin D. Maples, Javier Arana Jr., Brian D. Bachmann, Angel Garcia, Paul Hernandez, Joshua S. Mitchell, Jonathan K. Molina, Edrees Mukhtar, Jimmie D. Norman, Jamie D. Padron, Michael R. Smith, Joshua S. Williams, Aaron R. Beesley, Jard D. Francom, Morton M. Ford III, Andrew D. Fox, Michael C. Walzier, Chris Yung, Tony V. Radulescu, Marshall L. Bailey, Michael T. May, Eric M. Workman, Sergio Aleman, Jennifer L. Sebena, Margaret A. Anderson, Merrill A. Bruguier, Leopoldo Cavazos Jr., David R. Delaney, James R. Dominguez, Terrell Horne III, Nicholas J. Ivie, Julio D. La Rosa, Preston B. Parnell, Jeffrey Ramirez, Abimael Castro-Bercoales, Pedro R. Cora-Rivera, Noel D. Cordero-Guzman, Francis A. Crespo-Mandry, Carlos R. Lozada Vergara, Isaac J. Pizarro-Piazarro, Wilfredo Ramos-Nieves, Ivan G. Romas-Matos, Victor M. Soto-Velez, and Colvin T. Georges; and

Whereas more than 35 law enforcement officers across the United States have made the ultimate sacrifice during the first 4 months of 2013, including Officer Sean Collier of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Police Department: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of May 12 through May 18, 2013 as “National Police Week”;

(2) expresses strong support for law enforcement officers across the United States for their efforts to build safer and more secure communities;

(3) recognizes the need to ensure that law enforcement officers have the equipment, training, and resources necessary to protect their health and safety while they are protecting the public;

(4) recognizes the members of the law enforcement community for their selfless acts of bravery;

(5) acknowledges that police officers and other law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice should be remembered and honored; and

(6) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Police Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the vital role of law enforcement officers in building safer and more secure communities across the United States.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 147—RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE CHALLENGES OF CHILDREN IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM, AND ENCOURAGING CONGRESS TO IMPLEMENT POLICY TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF CHILDREN IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM**

Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BEGICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. NELSON) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

**S. RES. 147**

Whereas National Foster Care Month was established more than 20 years ago to—

(1) bring foster care issues to the forefront of public consciousness;

(2) highlight the importance of permanency for every child; and

(3) recognize the essential role that foster parents, social workers, and advocates have in the lives of children in foster care throughout the United States;

Whereas all children deserve a safe, loving, and permanent home;

Whereas the primary goal of the foster care system is to ensure the safety and well-being of children while working to provide a safe, loving, and permanent home for each child;

Whereas approximately 400,000 children are living in foster care;

Whereas approximately 252,000 youth entered the foster care system in 2011, while more than 104,000 youth were eligible for and awaiting adoption at the end of 2011;

Whereas children of minority races and ethnicities are more likely to stay in the foster care system for longer periods of time and are less likely to be reunited with their biological families;

Whereas foster parents—

(1) are the front-line caregivers for children who cannot safely remain with their biological parents;

(2) provide physical care, emotional support, and education advocacy to the children in their care; and

(3) are the largest single source of families providing permanent homes for children transitioning from foster care to adoption;

Whereas children in foster care who are placed with relatives, compared to children

placed with nonrelatives, have more stability, including fewer changes in placements, have more positive perceptions of their placements, are more likely to be placed with their siblings, and demonstrate fewer behavioral problems;

Whereas some relative caregivers receive less financial assistance and support services than foster caregivers;

Whereas recent studies show foster children enrolled in Medicaid were prescribed antipsychotic medications at nearly 9 times the rate of other children receiving Medicaid;

Whereas youth in foster care are much more likely to face educational instability, with 65 percent of former foster children experiencing at least 7 school changes while in foster care;

Whereas an increased emphasis on prevention and reunification services is necessary to reduce the number of children who are forced to remain in the foster care system;

Whereas more than 26,200 youth “age out” of foster care annually without a legal permanent connection to an adult or family;

Whereas the number of youth who age out of foster care has increased during the past decade;

Whereas foster care is intended to be a temporary placement, but children remain in the foster care system for an average of 2 years;

Whereas children in foster care experience an average of 3 different placements, which often leads to disruption of routines and the need to change schools and move away from siblings, extended families, and familiar surroundings;

Whereas children entering foster care often confront the widespread misperception that children in foster care are disruptive, unruly, and dangerous, even though placement in foster care is based on the actions of a parent or guardian, not the child;

Whereas children who age out of foster care lack the security and support of a biological or adoptive family and frequently struggle to secure affordable housing, obtain health insurance, pursue higher education, and acquire adequate employment;

Whereas States, localities, and communities should be encouraged to invest resources in preventative and reunification services and postpermanency programs to ensure that more children in foster care are provided with safe, loving, and permanent placements;

Whereas Federal legislation during the past 3 decades, including the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-272), the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (Public Law 105-89), the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-351), and the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (Public Law 112-34) provided new investments and services to improve the outcomes of children in the foster care system;

Whereas May 2013 is an appropriate month to designate as “National Foster Care Month” to provide an opportunity to acknowledge the accomplishments of the child-welfare workforce, foster parents, the advocacy community, and mentors for their dedication, accomplishments, and positive impact on the lives of children; and

Whereas much remains to be done to ensure that all children have a safe, loving, nurturing, and permanent family, regardless of age or special needs: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of May 2013 as “National Foster Care Month”;

(2) recognizes National Foster Care Month as an opportunity to raise awareness about