

May 4, 2000

SUPPORTING A NATIONAL
CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2000

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 310, supporting a National Charter Schools Week. I commend my distinguished colleague from Indiana, Mr. ROEMER, for highlighting the charter school movement and urging the Congress and the Administration to demonstrate support for our nation's charter schools.

Mr. Speaker, from 1989 to 1999, the number of students enrolled in public schools increased by 6.7 million, and the U.S. Census projects that our nation's school-age population will continue to grow throughout the century. In fact, many states have seen double-digit increases in school-age population. As this population continues to grow, our commitment to finding new and innovative ways to meet the changing needs of educating our youth needs to grow as well.

Charter schools offer our communities the ability to enroll their children in schools that enjoy autonomy over its operation and freedom from regulations that other public schools must follow, but also are held accountable for improving student achievement. Nearly two-thirds of newly created charter schools seek to realize an alternative vision of schooling, and one-fourth were founded primarily to serve a special target population. Many charter schools also serve a large number of lower income students, minority populations and students with disabilities.

Not only does this resolution acknowledge the charter school movement's progress and future promise, but it also encourages the President to issue a proclamation to demonstrate support for charter schools and establishes a National Charter Schools Week. Our nation's 1700 charter schools and the 350,000 students who attend them deserve our support and recognition. I want to thank Mr. ROEMER for his continued leadership on this important education issue and your dedication to providing flexibility to our nation's schools.

HONORING EUGENE BRUNS

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2000

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today on behalf of the wonderful men and women of the Michigan State Police. Day after day, these brave people work to maintain safe streets for our children to live and play. On April 10, the Michigan State Police will recognize one of their own, as they gather to celebrate the retirement of Sergeant Eugene Herbert Bruns from State Police Lapeer Post #38.

Eugene Bruns was born in 1940 in Frankenmuth, Michigan, and graduated from Frankenmuth High in 1958. On March 9, 1964,

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Eugene enlisted in the Michigan State Police. He completed his requirements within 8 weeks and began his career at Warren Post #24. He was reassigned to East Lansing Post #11 in 1966, where he served as 1st District Recruiter. In March of 1972, Eugene was promoted to Detective Sergeant of Lapeer Post #38, serving the entire Thumb area of the state. He remained at the Post, accepting an assignment as Desk Sergeant in 1981, and has served there ever since.

During his 35-year tenure with the State Police, Eugene was the well-deserving recipient of numerous honors and citations, and his actions have benefited law enforcement officials from all over the country. In 1968, he was awarded for Meritorious Service for his work on a check fraud complaint that resulted in several arrests in Texas. A 1974 narcotics case recovered thousands of dollars of property, firearms, and drugs. And in 1978, a simple discovery of a stolen snowmobile led to the uncovering of a three state criminal ring. For his diligent work over the course of several decades, Lapeer Post #38 recognized Eugene in 1994 as Trooper of the Year.

In addition to being a member of the Michigan State Police Troopers Association, Eugene has become a vital part of the Lapeer community, as shown by his work with the Lions Club and Kiwanis Club of Lapeer. He has also expressed his dedication to his fellow Troopers by serving three two-year terms on the State Police Hardship Fund Committee.

Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress, I consider it my duty and my privilege to protect and defend human dignity and the quality of life for our citizens. I am extremely grateful to have a person like Eugene Bruns who shares these beliefs, and has made it his life's work to see this task achieved. I ask my colleagues in the 106th Congress to please join me in congratulating Eugene, and wishing him the very best in his retirement.

TEXAS HOME SCHOOL
APPRECIATION WEEK

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2000

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, as this is Texas Home School Appreciation week, I am pleased to take this opportunity to salute those Texas parents who have chosen to educate their children at home. While serving in Congress, I have had the opportunity to get to know many of the home schooling parents in my district. I am very impressed by the job these parents are doing in providing their children with a quality education. I have also found that home schooling parents are among the most committed activists in the cause of advancing individual liberty, constitutional government, and traditional values. I am sure my colleagues on the Education Committee would agree that the support of home schoolers was crucial in defeating the scheme to implement a national student test.

Home schooling is becoming a popular option for parents across the country. In Texas alone, there are approximately seventy five

thousand home schooling families educating an average of three children per household. Home schooling is producing some outstanding results. For example, according to a 1997 study the average home schooled student scores near the ninetieth percentile on standardized academic achievement tests in reading, mathematics, social studies, and science! Further proof of the success of home schooling is the fact that in recent years, self-identified home schoolers have scored well above the national average on both the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Test (ACT). These high scores are achieved by home schooling children, regardless of race, income-level, or gender.

Contrary to media-generated stereotypes portraying home schooled children as isolated from their peers, home schooled children participate in a wide variety of social, athletic, and extra-curricular activities. Home schooling parents have formed numerous organizations designed to provide their children ample opportunity to interact with other children. In fact, recent data indicates that almost 50% of home schooled children engage in extra-curricular activities such as group sports and music classes, while a third of home schooled children perform volunteer work in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, to be a home schooling parent takes a unique dedication to family and education. In many cases, home school families must forgo the second income of one parent, as well as incurring the costs of paying for textbooks, computers, and other school supplies. Home schooling parents must pay these expenses while, like all American families, struggling to pay state, local, and federal taxes.

In order to help home schoolers, and all parents, devote more of their resources to their children's education, I have introduced the Family Education Freedom Act (H.R. 935). This bill provides all parents a \$3,000 per child tax credit for K-12 education expenses. This bill would help home school parents to provide their children a first-class education in a loving home environment.

The Family Education Freedom Act will also benefit those parents who choose to send their children to public or private schools. Parents who choose to send their children to private school may use their tax credit to help cover the cost of tuition. Parents who choose to send their children to public schools may use their tax credit to help finance the purchase of educational tools such as computers or extracurricular activities like music programs. Parents may also use the credit to pay for tutoring and other special services for their children.

Mr. Speaker, the best way to improve education is to return control over education resources to the people who best know their children's unique needs: those children's parents. Congress should empower all parents, whether they choose to home school or send their child to a public or private school, with the means to control their child's education. That is why I believe the most important education bill introduced in this Congress is the Family Education Freedom Act.

In conclusion, I wish to once again commend the accomplishments of those parents