

There was no objection.

PERMISSION TO FILE CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2904, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

Mr. HOBSON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the managers on the part of the House have until midnight, October 16, 2001, to file a conference report on the bill (H.R. 2904) making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes.

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

There was no objection.

THE LION AND THE EAGLE STAND OUT AS BEST OF FRIENDS AND STRONG ALLIES

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, in the current crisis, dozens of nations have rushed to our side, not to defend America specifically, but to defend civilization. President Bush said, "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists." The world knows that is true.

But one nation stands out and their leader stands out, too. Tony Blair, the Prime Minister of Britain, has proven once again that the people of the United Kingdom are unwavering friends who will always stand with us when we are in need.

Our military men and women are facing danger today, risking their lives in the fight against terrorism. One nation's soldiers are fighting alongside them, Great Britain's. Prime Minister Blair recalled the time when Hitler was bombing London and America came to her aid. Today Britain is returning the favor.

Many nations have united to defend decency and civilization, and each is contributing in its own way; but the lion and the eagle stand out as best of friends and strong allies. Thank you, Britain. Together we will prevail.

HONORABLE DAVID TRIMBLE

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today having just come from a memorable luncheon where I and my colleagues, including the distinguished chairman of the Committee on International Relations, welcomed the Honorable David Trimble, a member of Parliament, in Washington, D.C.

David Trimble has served as leader of Northern Ireland's Ulster Unionist Party. It is one of the strongest of the parties that want continued ties to Great Britain, but it was David Trimble who led the charge for peace and was rightly recognized by the Nobel Committee with a Nobel Peace Prize in 1998.

Madam Speaker, he came today to give us sage advice that the boundaries of the world of terrorism have reached for 30 years from Northern Ireland and the Middle East into the very heart of America.

I will reflect later today on this floor about the advice that he gave my colleagues, but let me just reiterate the comments of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), who today looked the Right Honorable David Trimble in the eye and said in a momentous tone, "Stay engaged, David Trimble. It is men such as you that times such as these so richly require."

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. (995)(b)), amended by section 346(e) of Public Law 105-83, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the National Council on the Arts:

Mr. BALLENGER of North Carolina,  
Mr. MCKEON of California.

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that she will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS MAY DISPLAY "GOD BLESS AMERICA"

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 248) expressing the sense of the Congress that public schools may display the words "God Bless America" as an expression of support for the Nation.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 248

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that public schools may display the*

words "God Bless America" as an expression of support for the Nation.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 248.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BROWN), the distinguished author of this resolution.

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) for helping me bring this bill to the floor today.

I think it is very important that we bring this up today because while more than a month has passed since September 11 there is still a great deal of anxiety in America. The events of September 11 have affected us all, whether we lost a loved one or not. The freedoms that America took for granted before this date have been shaken. Now, more than ever, many people are searching for strength and solace.

Like the rest of my colleagues, I will never forget standing on the steps of the Capitol on the evening of the attack and singing "God Bless America."

I am a newcomer to Congress and I have not had a chance to know each and every Member of this body very well. However, that night I felt closer to each of my colleagues than at any other time. We were all together, not as Republicans and Democrats, but as Americans united in support of our Nation.

Madam Speaker, since that time, Congress has worked very hard to take necessary action to combat terrorism on many different fronts. But on September 11, as the damage was still being assessed, I think it was important for us to come together as a symbol of unity and sing "God Bless America."

When I learned that some schools are being challenged for showing this same type of support for our Nation, I was deeply troubled.

The case that was first brought to my attention is in Rocklin, California where the American Civil Liberties Union wrote a letter to Terry Thornton, the principal of Breen Elementary School, calling its display of "God Bless America" a "hurtful, divisive message."

I take exception to that statement and believe the message sent by the ACLU is extremely wrong-headed. I further commend Principal Thornton for standing up for the principles of this country by refusing to take down this sign.

Pride in America is higher than I have seen at any time in my lifetime, and it seems like actions such as this are trying to dampen the spirit in our country. To threaten a public school for showing the same type of patriotism that we showed on the Capitol steps is the opposite of what this country is all about.

I introduced this resolution because Congress needs to make it abundantly clear that the kind of message displayed on the marquee of Breen Elementary is part of what makes our country great.

As former President John Adams said, "It is religion and morality alone which can establish the principles upon which freedom can securely stand."

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to be mindful of these words and vote in favor of this resolution.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for offering this resolution. I rise in strong support of this resolution because it acknowledges the important role our schools play in times of crisis. The tragic events of September 11 have left a lifelong scar on our children.

Many have asked why would someone do such a thing. Many are worried for their parents that may be fighting to end terrorism. There are so many questions that need to be answered, and fears to be addressed, but our teachers and our schools have risen to the occasion.

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As a Representative from New York whose district was impacted by the terrorist acts of September 11, I have witnessed firsthand the remarkable job our teachers and school officials have exhibited to calm the fears of our children. In fact, you can find these exceptional acts of professionalism in schools throughout this great country.

Children of all ages, as well as many adults, still find it difficult to comprehend the full magnitude of so much destruction and loss of life. Many of these children lost a parent. Many lost a brother or a sister or a cousin. However, all of them want to know why. Our schools have risen to this challenge by allowing children to ask the difficult questions and answering them in a way that makes them feel safe and proud. Schools across the country have become more than educational institutions. They have become a healing ground that answers our children's questions, comforts them during this time of need, and instills a sense of

unity. I am proud to say our schools have answered this challenge with open arms.

Not only have our teachers answered the tough questions with compassion and understanding, they have instilled a new sense of patriotism in the minds of our children. The Pledge of Allegiance to this country as well as the Star-Spangled Banner that is sung before events outside of the classroom will continue to unite us as Americans. The words of these national themes are just as important now as they were 200 years ago.

I applaud our schools for their ability to help the children of this country understand there is no place for terrorism in this world and that the United States will do everything in its power to eliminate it.

I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, many of the original 13 colonies that became the United States of America were settled by men and women of deep religious convictions who crossed the Atlantic Ocean to practice their faith freely. It is therefore no surprise that a religious people rose in rebellion against Great Britain in 1776, and many American statesmen believed that religion was indispensable to the maintenance of republican institutions. Yet, when the first 10 amendments to the Constitution were ratified, religion was addressed in the first, with most Americans agreeing that the Federal Government should not choose one religion over another.

Today, in response to the devastation of September 11, a surge of civic pride is sweeping the Nation. As teachers recall lessons of history and democracy, children wear their patriotism to school in red, white, and blue. Others create and display banners proclaiming "God Bless America."

Unfortunately, instead of pulling us closer together, some believe that these acts, and the use of the words "God Bless America," are pushing us farther apart. I believe in the separation of church and state, and we should not ask a child to recite a prayer that is not his or her own. That said, the first amendment does not remove all traces of religion from the classroom and it does not expel God from the school yard. Students can pray, religious clubs can meet after school and religious materials may be read during free time.

Still, some have asked principals to remove "God Bless America" signs from their schools. I believe we should all take a step back and recognize that different people view these words in different ways. For some they hold a

deeply religious connotation. Yet for other Americans they are a patriotic expression, not a religious one.

In the aftermath of September 11, we are all healing, and none more slowly than our children. So long as schools are not erecting permanent religious symbols in a way that suggests advocacy of a particular religion, I believe our children can draw their own strength and meaning from these words and symbols. So let us take this expression as it is meant, much as we did when Republicans and Democrats burst into that song of the same name by Irving Berlin on the steps of the U.S. Capitol. More than anything, it was then, and it is now, an expression of pride and a slogan for peace.

I commend the gentleman from South Carolina for his resolution. I urge the support of it.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS).

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, right now this country is united like never before. The President has a 90 percent approval rating. His handling of the war has a 94 percent approval rating. Bipartisanship is the rule of the day in Congress, and the flag is flying everywhere.

One organization, however, it seems, has a problem with this patriotism. When Breen Elementary School in California put up a banner that says "God Bless America," the ACLU decided they had a problem with it. Get this. They said it was hurtful and divisive. I do not know what planet the ACLU is living on, but there is nothing hurtful or divisive about saying "God Bless America." September 11, that was hurtful. Saying "God Bless America" is anything but hurtful or divisive. It is unifying. In fact, that is the whole point of saying "God Bless America." We are all Americans. The American family has come together as a Nation. To some people, saying "God Bless America" is just a slogan. To some, a patriotic expression. To others, it is a prayer. But it means something to everyone. And, of course, it comes from that wonderful Irving Berlin song made so famous by Kate Smith. But it is not hurtful, and it is not divisive.

The ACLU should stop wasting America's time with threats of ridiculous lawsuits. I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution unanimously.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I will only say that I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution. In this time of crisis in this Nation, we have seen so many of our neighbors and friends come together. Again, we have to work together. Let us not lose the main focus here. We are Americans. We have to stand together. I support this resolution and ask my colleagues to as well.

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

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I would say in closing that I agree with the gentlewoman from New York. I agree with the sponsor of the resolution, the gentleman from South Carolina, and I think we agree with virtually all Americans who believe very strongly that this is something that helps in our schools and helps our children.

I encourage each and every one of us to support it.

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker, I am proud to support House Concurrent Resolution 248.

The terrorist attacks of September 11 and ongoing threats to our security have left us all searching for comfort. They have also brought us together in our support for our Nation and for those defending us and our values. I believe we need to encourage even more public displays of support for America. One way to do this is by supporting the use of the phrase "God Bless America," including the use of the phrase by schools. These words can provide the comfort communities need and show appropriate support for America.

This House concurrent resolution makes clear Congress' support for displaying the words "God Bless America" by public schools as an expression of support for the Nation. We would expect schools, especially in this time, to want to convey the national ideal of patriotism for this country. It is only appropriate that we support schools in their quest to exemplify this idea. We must support the expression of patriotism for the Nation by schools. I believe that the words "God Bless America," as used by this country's Founding Fathers, appropriately show this support.

I urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 248.

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Madam Speaker, I submit these remarks with shock, sadness, and disgust. In the wake of the horrific terrorist attacks September 11, Breen Elementary School—located in my district in my hometown of Rocklin, CA—displayed a sign supporting both the victims of the attacks and our troops overseas engaged in America's war on terrorism. The sign simply—yet poignantly—stated "God Bless America."

Incredulously, the American Civil Liberties Union decided that the sign was inappropriate, defiantly proclaiming that the words sent a "hurtful, divisive message." Apparently they are driven by the patently false perception that the sign somehow separates the line between church and state and is thus violative of the Constitution.

But Madam Speaker, this isn't about separation of church and state, this is about purging God and all things religious completely out of American life. The ACLU and those that fund it are waging a cynical crusade, a war against all those who find comfort and solace in our Lord, plain and simple.

How dare they try to stifle the spirit of Americans in these incredibly difficult times? How dare they hide behind the Constitution, perverting its meaning and twisting its words into a gag rule against the people it empow-

ers? How dare they parade around our country purporting to protect the rights of Americans who choose not to practice religion while simultaneously behaving like secularist thieves, tirelessly trying to steal the rights of those who wish to express their faith in God and country?

Madam Speaker, I urge the swift passage of this resolution, which expresses the sense of the Congress that public schools may display the words "God Bless America" as an expression of support for the Nation.

As stewards of the "People's House." we need to assure the citizens of our great Nation that their Congress stands behind them fully and unequivocally. That we support their right to express their support for those who have died in the horrible attacks and for those overseas, who are willing to give up their lives to preserve the right of all Americans to express themselves without fear or apprehension.

Shame on the ACLU, for trying to stifle the spirit of not only the citizens of my hometown, but for trying to intimidate all Americans who freely yearn to express their love for this great country.

Mr. DEMINT. Madam Speaker, I often rise in this House and speak about securing America's future. After the attacks of September 11, these words have taken on a whole new meaning.

Securing America's future involves everything from strengthening our military and economy to educating our children.

As we face this time of trial, we are reminded of the roots of our great nation and we are keenly aware of the values we hold dear.

We are aware that freedom is not free, that liberty comes at a price, that the sacrifices of our founders and countless Americans have helped secure our present freedoms.

Too many have fought too hard for too long for the principles of this nation to abandon them now.

So I rise today to wholeheartedly support H. Con. Res. 248, introduced by my colleague from South Carolina, Mr. BROWN.

This resolution expresses the sense of Congress that public schools may display the words "God Bless America" as an expression of support for the nation. It should shame every Member of Congress that a vote is even necessary to allow school children to ask God to bless our country.

This is America—the land of the free. "God" is not a banned word. Yet there are some who would tell our children that they cannot use that word as it might offend others.

Our schoolchildren deserve the right to pray, to assemble, and to freely acknowledge God.

As we educate our children on the principles of this nation, let us not forget that this nation was founded upon an acknowledgment of Almighty God as the giver of life and liberty.

Madam Speaker, in the past I have brought before the House of Representatives a proposal to help schools stand up for their students' freedom of religious expression and counter the chilling effect that misinformation and lawsuits can have on our schools.

I will introduce this Student Freedom of Religious Expression language again, and hope my colleagues will support the measure.

Right now, in my home District, there is a high school student petitioning for the right to

pray in school. I support him and believe he has that right.

Madam Speaker, I do not believe that schoolchildren must leave their religious beliefs outside the schoolhouse door.

I challenge the schoolchildren and educators across this nation to be thankful for the liberties this nation grants them, carry that thankfulness in their hearts, and be free to express their thanks and supplication to God at any hour of the day.

Madam Speaker, let no one rob us of the right to ask blessings from God on our great nation.

Again, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and close by saying Let Freedom Ring and God Bless America.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 248.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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.

#### RECOGNIZING HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF UNITED STATES-AUSTRALIAN RELATIONSHIP

Mr. HYDE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 217) recognizing the historic significance of the fiftieth anniversary of the alliance between Australia and the United States under the ANZUS Treaty, paying tribute to the United States-Australia relationship, reaffirming the importance of economic and security cooperation between the United States and Australia, and welcoming the state visit by Australian Prime Minister John Howard, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 217

Whereas the relationship between the United States and Australia extends beyond security cooperation and is based on common values, mutual respect, and a shared desire to see a world at peace in which all peoples can enjoy the benefits of democratic governance, fundamental human rights, and the prosperity that market-oriented economies bring;

Whereas the United States and Australia are jointly committed to combating terrorism around the world;

Whereas the United States and Australia share a wide range of common interests in Asia and the Pacific, such as growth and liberalization of international trade, regional