

are getting the proper inclusive education they need. As a member of the Congressional Arts Caucus, I find that learning through the arts inspires and motivates children to explore the world and their potential to contribute to it. The expertise acquired through music instruction, including problem solving skills, communication, and work ethic are imperative for success in this centuries workplaces.

As Chairperson and co-founder of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I am troubled by the increasing number of schools and school districts that are cutting their funding for music based education. In my district of Houston, TX, our Governor demand for a 7 percent budget cut in education. Budget cuts such as this negatively affect access to music education. Restricting school music programs places our students at a disadvantage that will adversely affect them later on. A study in the Journal of Research in Music Education found that of 811 minority students, 36 percent identified their music teachers as their role models. This alone indicates the importance of equal opportunity for music based education in all of our nation's schools.

Thanks to organizations such as Community Help In Music Education (CHIME), we are working to ensure every student in the United States should have an opportunity to reap the benefits of music education. In the words of the late President John F. Kennedy, "One of our greatest assets in this country are the talented boys and girls who devote their early lives to music . . . [Music] is a part of American life which I think is somewhat unheralded around the world."

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 45 as offered by my colleague, Mr. COOPER, to acknowledge the importance of music education in our schools. I thank Mr. COOPER for bringing this resolution to the floor today and for bringing this issue to the Congress' attention.

Every student in the United States should have the best education possible. Such an education should be founded on a broad-based curriculum that incorporates instruction in a range of subjects. This includes not only math, science, history and English, but also physical education, music and the arts. An extensive knowledge base gives our children the skills they need to succeed in and enhances their lives.

Music education has innumerable benefits to students, ranging from higher levels of academic performance to improved social and motor skills. School-based music instruction is fundamental in our continuing efforts to improve the education of America's children.

Music adds a vital dimension to the scholastic experience. In the pursuit of quality education in America, teachers aim to boost scores in math and reading tests. Recent studies show that music lessons for young children result in a significant increase in their IQ levels and can help children develop analytical and problem solving skills.

Music can open up doors for a child. It can be a medium for expression, a method for learning and it can open a young student's eyes to career possibilities, faraway cultures or simply allow them to reach the farthest depths of their imagination.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand with my colleagues in recognition of the importance of

school music programs and in support of this resolution. Music education must continue to be a part of American education.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 45, legislation recognizing the benefits and importance of school-based music education. I was pleased to join my colleagues in passing this bipartisan proposal yesterday in the House of Representatives.

The advantages of studying music are not confined within the artistic sphere. Music education not only allows children a chance to create and appreciate all types of music, but it has been proven once and again that an awareness of the structure of music can actually help children do better in school. There is a growing amount of evidence indicating that young children who are exposed to the fundamentals of music develop stronger abstract reasoning skills, which are crucial for a broad understanding of mathematics and the sciences.

However, many of the advantages of music education cannot be quantified or studied with tests. The creative thinking and self-esteem that emerge from music education are essential for a full and meaningful life. Participation in music education can motivate students to become active members of the education process. Thirty-six percent of minority students reported their music teacher as their role model; a much higher percentage than any other discipline. As a teacher, I recognize this bond between teacher and student as one of the most important aspects of education itself.

In addition, music celebrates two of the most important values of our Nation; diversity and unity. By studying different cultures through the harmony of music, students are able to recognize the values that we all share. No other discipline embodies this spirit more than music education.

Mr. Speaker, music education enhances intellectual development and enriches the academic environment for children of all ages, and as a result enriches our communities as well. I am proud to join with my colleagues in passing this bipartisan resolution in recognition of these facts.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KUHL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 45, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONGRATULATING JEWISH COMMUNITIES ON THEIR SEVEN YEAR COMPLETION OF THE 11TH CYCLE OF THE DAILY STUDY OF THE TALMUD

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the reso-

lution (H. Res. 124) congratulating Jewish communities on their seven year completion of the 11th cycle of the daily study of the Talmud.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 124

Whereas the 11th cycle of the daily learning of the 2,711 pages in the Babylonian Talmud, through the Daf Hayomi study program will culminate on March 1, 2005, the 20th day of Adar I 5765 in the Jewish calendar;

Whereas this will complete a formidable 7½ year educational and daily study cycle introduced in 1923 at Agudath Israel's first International Congress in Vienna by Polish Rabbi Meir Shapiro, whose purpose was "to enhance the sense of unity of Jews worldwide";

Whereas Jews throughout the world will be celebrating joyously in honor of the celebration, including 120,000 Jews in North America, and more than 50,000 in 3 major locations in the New York area will be technologically and spiritually linked to hundreds of similar celebrations throughout the world;

Whereas the 10th Daf Yomi cycle was completed on September 28, 1997 with 26,000 people at Madison Square Garden linked by satellite to dozens of communities around the world;

Whereas the teachers and students of the Talmud have displayed the remarkable ability to take individual efforts and combine them in striving toward a common vision and goal; and

Whereas this monumental achievement in study, dedication, perseverance, and persistence is a lesson for contemporary society and for people of good will everywhere: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives congratulates the students and teachers of the Daf Yomi program on the occasion of their celebration of the completion of the 11th cycle of the Daf Hayomi, and wishes them well on beginning the 12th cycle.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 124, the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

On behalf of the Committee on Government Reform, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 124. This legislation congratulates the people of Jewish faith across America and around the world on their completion of the eleventh cycle of the Babylonian Talmud. Thousands of Jews worldwide read a page a day of the 2,711-page Talmud for nearly 7½ years.

This incredible reading program, called Dafyomi, ends today, March 1,

2005, after beginning September 29, 1997.

It consists of the Mishnah, which was the original written version of the Oral Torah, and the Gemara which is essentially a commentary on the Mishnah. Together, these two intertwined texts form Talmud, which serves today as an explanation of the law as described in the five books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Simply put, it was written to help Jews better understand God's will.

It is called the Babylonian Talmud because, at the time of its composition in the 5th century A.D., the contributing rabbis and a significant portion of the Jewish population lived in Babylon, outside the bounds of the Roman Empire. The rabbis contemplated, discussed, argued and told stories to express their positions on the law. They recorded their thoughts, and the end product, the Gemara, accompanied the Mishnah and the two texts became known as the Babylonian Talmud.

Jews began reading Talmud in the current cycles in 1923. A Polish rabbi named Meir Shapiro intended to unite Jews all over the world by having them study the same page each day. For almost 82 years, Jews have done just that, and today marks the end of the 11th cycle of Rabbi Shapiro's vision.

Mr. Speaker, Talmud readers here in America can attend countless celebrations this evening. Tonight, they can also tune in to a simulcast of the worldwide commemoration of the 7½-year cycle completion.

I want to thank my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER) for introducing this meaningful resolution. I congratulate the students, the scholars and all people of Jewish faith who will complete this monumental undertaking today.

In southern Nevada, where I am from, we have the fastest growing Jewish community in the country. So I am proud to be here today to talk about this important occasion.

This is a terrific matter for the House to recognize and bring to light for all Americans one of the solemn rituals of Judaism.

It is also important to note that there is no rest for the devoted. As the resolution declares, we all wish our Talmud readers well with the twelfth cycle that begins, believe it or not, tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of H. Res. 124.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Nevada for bringing this resolution to the floor, and I am pleased to yield such time as he might consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), a cosponsor of this resolution.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join my colleague the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER) in sponsoring this resolution on the completion of the 11th cycle of the daily study of the Talmud.

Mr. Speaker, tossed into a stormy sea when his ship was wrecked, the great Talmudic sage, Rabbi Akiva, was given up for lost. This is how he later described his miraculous rescue to Rabbi Gamaliel. He said, "A daf," that is a wood plank, "from the ship suddenly appeared as a salvation, and I just let the waves pass over me."

When Rabbi Meir Shapiro, the rabbi of Lublin, Poland, initiated the programs for Jews all over the world to study the same Dafyomi, that is, daily page of Talmud, he explained the significance of this undertaking by paraphrasing Rabbi Akiva, "A daf is the instrument of our survival in the stormy seas of today. If we cling to it faithfully, all the waves of tribulation will but pass over us."

Mr. Speaker, the latest 7-year cycle of completion of the Talmud will occur in the first month of the Hebrew month of Adar, corresponding to March 1, 2005, which is today. This will complete a formidable 7½-year educational and daily study cycle introduced in 1923 at Agudath Israel's first international Congress in Vienna by Polish Rabbi Meir Shapiro "to enhance the sense of unity of Jews worldwide."

The entire Talmud is covered in 7½ years by those who keep to the prescribed daily pace of one page at a time. By studying the Talmud, groups and individuals throughout the world spend time learning the precious details of Jewish law and life. They are able to step back, to develop a sharply honed understanding of Jewish history and law. People study in every country and every city, in groups, alone, with friends and over the Internet.

□ 1500

CEOs and cab drivers, doctors and shop owners, of different ages and nationalities come together to learn the Talmud. Tens of thousands, mostly Orthodox Jews, around the globe are on the same page, literally. In the Boro Park section of Brooklyn, in my district, for example, about 200 fathers of young children gather each night at 10 p.m., after their children are asleep.

I am proud that about 50,000 scholars are expected to attend this year's event at Madison Square Garden, the Javitz Convention Center in Manhattan, and Continental Airlines Arena in New Jersey.

In addition, more than 25,000 other Jews in 33 locations, ranging from Mexico City to Melbourne, Australia, from Los Angeles to Tel Aviv, will be linked to these activities via satellite television.

I join in their joy and celebration. This monumental achievement in

study, dedication, perseverance, and persistence is a lesson for contemporary society and for people of good will everywhere.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the students and teachers of the Daf Yomi program on the occasion of their celebration of the completion of the 11th cycle of the Daf Hayomi, wish them well on the beginning of the 12th cycle, and urge the passage of this resolution.

And again I thank my friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER), for being the chief sponsor of this, and I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) for yielding me this time.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time at the moment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER), the sponsor of this resolution.

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois and the gentleman from Nevada for joining in commemorating what is truly a historic day, historic in many ways: historic in that this day arrives every 7 years, but also historic in that it is a celebration of the study of the Talmud, something that has gone back for over 1,500 years.

In celebration of Daf Yomi, what we have is the ultimate egalitarian religious observance. We have, as my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), just mentioned, Jews from all walks of life, whether they be cab drivers or whether they be the owners of the big office buildings of Manhattan or Mexico City or Israel or anywhere in between. This is an opportunity where daily there is not the reading of a page a day, there is the intense studying of a page a day. There is the opportunity to learn the true meaning of the Talmud and to pour over the lessons we can bring to our daily lives.

Today, on March 1, 2005, over 120,000 Jews from across North America will be joining together to celebrate the culmination of this, the 11th cycle. To give you a sense for what it means in my hometown of New York, Madison Square Garden will be filled, Nassau Coliseum will be filled, Continental Arena will be filled, the Javitz Center will be filled, all with folks who are studying, at the exact same time, the exact same final page of the Talmud. And also they will be learning the meanings. They will be learning what it means to our daily lives and why it is so important.

Since 1923, hundreds of thousands of Jews worldwide have participated in the study of a daily page as part of a program that helps strengthen Jewish unity and communities. Today's resolution has received bipartisan support.

I am grateful to acknowledge the chairman of the Government Reform Committee, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS); and his staff, Melissa Wojciak and Michael Layman; and the ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN); and his staff, Tanya Shand and Zahava Goldman; the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY); the minority leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI); and 56 Democrats and Republicans, with cosponsors from 23 States.

We have to understand that today, as was pointed out by the gentleman from Nevada, not only do we have the celebration of the culmination of the reading that lasts for 7 years, but immediately we begin to study the very next page starting the cycle again. This sense of renewal is something that brings the Jewish community together. It is a sense of renewal of our spirit, a sense of renewal of our values, and also it is hopefully the time that we renew our commitment to the next generation; that next year Daf Yomi will be even larger and more populated; we will need more stadia, more office buildings, and even more places to join in the celebration.

This is, of course, a tribute to not only Rav Shapiro, who, as was mentioned, at the first World Jewish Congress at the Agudath Israel in Vienna began this program; but it is frankly a tribute to the Agudath Israel movement throughout the world today.

We join in extending congratulations to all of the participants in this program. We join in acknowledging the work of the Agudath Israel of America in particular, and we join in wishing them all good luck, 120,000 students and teachers all across North America in over 40 United States cities. We in the United States Congress join and offer them congratulations, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close for our side.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to join with my colleagues, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER), the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER), and the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), in support of House Resolution 124, honoring Jewish students and teachers on their 7-year completion of the 11th cycle of the daily study of the Talmud.

Mr. Speaker, the Talmud is considered to be an authoritative record of rabbinic discussions on Jewish law, ethics, customs, legends, and stories. The Talmud is comprised of two components, the Mishnah and the Gemara. It expands on earlier writings in the Torah and it is the basis for all later codes of Jewish law and much of rabbinic literature.

Today, we celebrate the conclusion of the 11th cycle of the Daf Yomi, a Jew-

ish tradition that began over 80 years ago. Daf Yomi was created by Polish Rabbi Meir Shapiro in 1923. He wanted to create a way for Jews across the world to unite and study and pray. Daf Yomi does just that, and it also helps Jewish people to reconnect with their faith and to make it part of their daily lives. In order to complete the Daf Yomi, a person must study the Talmud each and every day for 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, I think that everyone, regardless of their faith and beliefs, can appreciate and respect the profound commitment people must make in order to complete such an impressive task. To celebrate this accomplishment, countless people around the world are expected to gather together and to study in unison in the same manner that those we honor today gathered to study.

In the United States alone, thousands of people are expected to celebrate the occasion. I think that the participants and teachers alike deserve a rousing applause from this body for their shared sense of purpose.

I stand in strong support of this resolution and again want to congratulate each and every person who will participate and all of those for whom it will have meaning.

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

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to strongly urge all my colleagues to support the adoption of H. Res. 124.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to show my strong support for the resolution and to congratulate the members of the Jewish community for completion of their 7-year study of the Talmud. I would like to thank Representatives ANTHONY WEINER and JERROLD NADLER for introducing this bill and I would also like to thank the majority and minority leadership for bringing it to the floor in such a timely manner and on the appropriate day.

Today marks the completion of 7 years of dedication, study, and communal learning. First introduced in 1927 at Agudath Israel's first international Congress in Vienna by Polish Rabbi Meir Shapiro "to enhance the sense of unity of Jews worldwide," this practice has become widespread among Jews around the world. It is estimated that in North America alone 120,000 members of the Jewish community will celebrate completion of their 7-year study on this day.

These individuals have demonstrated great determination, both spiritual and physical, in completing this task and they must be honored for such action. According to Daf Hayomi study program each individual will read one page of the 2,711 page Talmud a day. In completing this task they have demonstrated great perseverance and will.

The Talmud is a collection of Jewish laws, ethics, and stories that have been read for over 1500 years. The Completion of the 7-year study cycle demonstrates the commitment of the Jewish community to remain true to their history and origin and remain steadfast

in their beliefs. For this they truly deserve recognition of their work.

The effects of this communal act of study and learning serves to spiritually unify the Jewish community spread throughout the world and rekindle their sense of union. On this day Jews from around the world will unite in celebration at the completion of this daunting task. The 26,000 that are estimated to celebrate in Madison Square Garden is a testament to the unifying power of the Daf Hayomi study program.

This resolution expresses our veneration of this monumental achievement in study, dedication, perseverance, and persistence. Contemporary society and people of all creeds can appreciate it as a testament to the value of learning. I, once again, would like to thank the distinguished members for introducing this important resolution and voice my strong support.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 124.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

House Concurrent Resolution 5, by the yeas and nays.

House Concurrent Resolution 63, by the yeas and nays.

ACCEPTANCE OF STATUE OF SARAH WINNEMUCCA FOR NATIONAL STATUARY HALL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the