

proclamation, “recognizing the important contributions of charter schools,” as well as my good friends and colleagues, Mr. PLATTS and Mrs. MCCARTHY for bringing this resolution to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. CHRIS MURPHY.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from New York and the gentlemen from Pennsylvania and Louisiana for bringing this resolution before us.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution to recognize the contributions of charter schools to education. So often we talk about the crisis of America’s schools and our educational system, but it’s equally important to take some time to recognize the good that’s being done. That’s why I welcome this opportunity to acknowledge the impact that charter schools are making in our education system nationally.

In congratulating charter schools, I want to also acknowledge the work of all of our administrators and our educators in our public school system and our public charter school system as well. Noncharter public schools remain the bedrock of our educational system, and we need to make sure that we are doing everything here in Congress and at our State level to make sure that our public schools have the opportunity to succeed.

But charter schools are growing because, when done right, they’re working. They represent a network of committed and innovative administrators, teachers and parents whose great determination and resolve complement the public education system. This national network of 4,000 charter schools infuses hope and possibility into communities. In Connecticut alone, there are 16 charter schools educating over 2,500 students.

Charter schools are infused with an imagination. Moreover, these schools are effectively engaging students around innovative and aggressive curriculum. They are setting the bar high and they are getting results. As we consider solutions for improving math and science education and increasing the number of high school graduates and students matriculating to colleges and university, we should remember the contributions that charter schools are making to the education of our Nation’s children.

Again, Madam Speaker, I commend the tremendous dedication of all educators. Their unsung sacrifices are critical to ensuring the success of America’s youth today and the skill of tomorrow’s workforce.

I urge all Members to support this resolution.

Mr. PLATTS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to support House Resolution

344, congratulating charter schools and their students, parents, teachers and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education.

Charter schools are innovative public schools with a simple interest in providing a quality education to children in their communities. They explore new educational approaches, such as longer school days or extended school years, and are free from most rules and regulations governing conventional public schools.

These schools meet the student achievement and accountability requirements under No Child Left Behind in the same manner as traditional public schools and they often set higher individual goals to ensure that they are of high quality.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleagues from New York, Louisiana, Connecticut, elsewhere around the country in recognizing these innovative public schools, and I am proud to recognize this week as National Charter Schools Week.

I commend President Bush for his recent proclamation stating, quote, “recognizing the important contributions of charter schools,” as well on the executive branch side; and again urge a “yes” vote for this resolution.

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

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, again, I would like to thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) for introducing this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 344.

As you can tell, today we have been talking about the children of this Nation on so many of our different issues. And again, I am very happy to work with my colleague on the committee, Mr. PLATTS from Pennsylvania.

When we talk about our children and the future of the Nation, obviously, education is the most important thing. So, again, it has been a pleasure introducing these resolutions.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, as we celebrate charter schools I want to recognize the Youth Connection Charter School (YCCS) operating in my Congressional District. The Youth Connection Charter School (YCCS) has a unique mission and purpose. It has been said that education is the great equalizer—it is the key to success.

The mission of YCCS is to provide individuals who have dropped out of school an opportunity—to drop back in and receive a quality education. Since its creation in 1997, YCCS has graduated more than 5,700 students who had previously dropped out of traditional high schools. Just think, what would have happened to those students if YCCS was not available to them. They likely would have become another statistic.

Clearly, the data shows that students who drop out are more likely to be unemployed. In fact, the unemployment rate nationally for high school drop-outs was 29.8 percent in 200 (Dept. of Labor). We know that students who drop out are more likely to be candidates for prisons. A total of 75 percent of America’s

state prison inmates are high school drop-outs, with only 59 percent of America’s federal prison inmates completing high school (Harlow, 2003). We also know that high school drop-outs are more likely to be receiving public assistance and living in poverty. These negative consequences lead to the destruction of a community and country. Students who drop out are less likely to be married or see a doctor on a regular basis. The benefits of a high school education move society forward economically and socially. A person with a high school diploma is more likely to be employed, live longer, and become a productive part of society.

The impact of YCCS and its involvement as the only charter school in Illinois providing alternative educational services focused primarily on drop-outs can be seen throughout education. In 2005, YCCS placed in the upper third for school performance in reading by CPS in comparison to all of the other 76 high schools in the city of Chicago.

Conversely, we know that a quality education opens the doors of opportunity and provides hope for a brighter future. An investment in the education of young people who have dropped out of school saves our city and state taxpayers’ money. The Alliance for Excellent Education reports that a 1 percent increase in high school graduation rates would save approximately \$1.4 billion in incarceration costs yearly. Additionally, a 1-year increase in average education levels would reduce arrest rates by 11 percent.

I am pleased to honor the outstanding work of the Youth Connection Charter School.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 344.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 11 of rule X, clause 11 of rule I, and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the Speaker’s appointment of the following Member of the House to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence to fill the existing vacancy thereon:

Mr. GALLEGLY, California

COMMEMORATING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ABOLITION OF THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 272) commemorating the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade, as amended.