

sentencing has all the information he or she needs to impose a sentence commensurate with the crime committed and the culpability of the offender.

Therefore, I must oppose this bill and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Those who commit crimes against children deserve to be punished and repeat offenders most certainly deserve to face increased penalties.

Nevertheless, I oppose mandatory minimum sentencing and, therefore, I must oppose this legislation. I believe that judges are best suited to determine just and appropriate punishments in these matters.

Even conservative groups agree that expanding the imposition of mandatory minimum sentences is costly and unjust. Yet, without mandatory minimum sentences, individuals convicted of serious offenses would still receive appropriately lengthy sentences, but we should not create a one-size-fits-all policy approach.

For the foregoing reasons, I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 6847.

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

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Speaker, first, we need to make clear that this bill does not expand law to go after teenagers for sexting. Under present law, technically, such changes may be possible. However, we know of no instance where the Department of Justice has pursued such cases.

When these bills were initially passed, the press falsely claimed that they would make it possible for DOJ to go after teen sexting. This is completely reckless journalism. Apparently, these journalists did not participate in any sort of fact checking, which would have merely consisted of opening a U.S. Criminal Code book. They also continually cite State cases as examples of Federal prosecutors acting aggressively, which is similarly extremely misleading. If our friends across the aisle would like to draw our attention to any cases where the Federal Government prosecuted consensual teen sexting, we would be happy to look at them.

Last year, we offered to work on a provision to provide an affirmative defense in this chapter of the code, despite no evidence that it is necessary, but we were not taken up on our offer.

□ 1945

None of these bills, Mr. Speaker, create new mandatory minimum sentences. Instead, they modify the existing statutory framework to ensure the existing enhancements are applied equitably and to close certain loopholes.

Some of the conduct covered is modestly expanded, but that is done commensurate with the crime. These recidivism enhancements are for these predatory crimes, especially where the defendant has previously sexually abused a child, which is the case for the enhancement in 18 U.S.C. 3559(e).

Society's laws need to address the problems of the day and protect the

public, especially our children. Sex crimes against children are ubiquitous. Their number, as we heard in our child protection hearing last month, is growing.

Additionally, the offenses are becoming more depraved, and the victims are getting younger. There is no sign of slowing down, and present law does not appear to be keeping up with the numbers.

The gravity and growing prevalence of these crimes merit an appropriate societal response to have a proper deterrent effect. The enhancements provide this deterrent effect.

In addition, these child sex crimes are vastly underreported. In these sexual exploitation crimes, the victims are often very young and very impressionable. They are often scarred for life as a result of horrific abuse. The punishment must fit the crime, especially where it involves our children.

Again, my appeal to my colleagues is to consider this bill, not just as a Member of Congress, but, again, as a parent, a grandparent, an aunt, an uncle, and a friend. I urge my colleagues to adopt this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6847, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT CHILD SAFETY IS THE FIRST PRIORITY OF CUSTODY AND VISITATION ADJUDICATIONS

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 72) expressing the sense of Congress that child safety is the first priority of custody and visitation adjudications, and that State courts should improve adjudications of custody where family violence is alleged, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 72

Whereas approximately 15 million children are exposed each year to domestic violence and/or child abuse, which are often linked;

Whereas child sexual abuse is significantly under-documented, and under-addressed in the legal system;

Whereas child abuse is a major public health issue in the United States, with total lifetime estimated financial costs associated with just one year of confirmed cases of child maltreatment (including physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and neglect) amounting to approximately \$124 billion;

Whereas according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, federally

launched, funded and tracked longitudinal research into "adverse childhood experiences" (the ACEs study) has shown that "children who experience abuse and neglect are also at increased risk for adverse health effects and certain chronic diseases as adults, including heart disease, cancer, chronic lung disease, liver disease, obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and high levels of C-reactive protein";

Whereas research confirms that allegations of domestic violence, child abuse, and child sexual abuse are often discounted when raised in child custody litigation;

Whereas research shows that abusive parents are often granted custody or unprotected parenting time by courts, placing children at ongoing risk;

Whereas research confirms that a child's risk of abuse increases after a perpetrator of domestic violence separates from a domestic partner, even when the perpetrator has not previously abused the child;

Whereas researchers have documented a minimum of 653 children murdered in the United States since 2008 by a parent involved in a divorce, separation, custody, visitation, or child support proceeding, often after access was provided by family courts over the objections of a protective parent;

Whereas scientifically unsound theories are frequently applied to reject parents' and children's reports of abuse;

Whereas in cases involving allegations of family violence courts should rely on the assistance of third-party professionals only when they possess the proper experience or expertise for assessing family violence and trauma, and apply scientifically sound and evidence-based theories;

Whereas most States lack standards defining required expertise and experience for court-affiliated or appointed fee-paid professionals in custody litigation or the required contents of custody-related expert reports; and

Whereas custody litigation involving abuse allegations is sometimes prohibitively expensive, resulting in parental bankruptcy, as a result of court-mandated payments to appointed fee-paid professionals, in addition to attorneys' fees: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) child safety is the first priority of custody and parenting adjudications, and courts should resolve safety risks and claims of family violence first, as a fundamental consideration, before assessing other best interest factors;

(2) all evidence admitted in custody and parenting adjudications should be subject to evidentiary admissibility standards;

(3) evidence from court-affiliated or appointed fee-paid professionals regarding adult or child abuse allegations in custody cases should be admitted only when the professional possesses documented expertise and experience in the relevant types of abuse, trauma, and the behaviors of victims and perpetrators;

(4) States should define required standards of expertise and experience for appointed fee-paid professionals who provide evidence to the court on abuse, trauma and behaviors of victims and perpetrators, should specify requirements for the contents of such professional reports, and should require courts to find that any appointed professionals meet those standards;

(5) States should consider models under which court-appointed professionals are paid directly by the courts, with potential reimbursement by the parties after due consideration of the parties' financial circumstances; and

(6) Congress should schedule hearings on family courts' practices with regard to the objective, fair, and unbiased adjudication of children's safety and civil rights.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUDD). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUTHERFORD. 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. Con. Res. 72, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased we are voting today on this resolution, which expresses the sense of Congress that child safety should be the top priority of custody and visitation adjudications, and that State courts should improve adjudications of custody where family violence is alleged.

Custody adjudications are especially difficult cases, fraught with emotion and complex relationships. States must ensure that the judges presiding over these cases are trained to understand these dynamics and apply appropriate evidentiary standards to parties' evidence.

Most importantly, States should ensure that in these disputes, children's safety comes first.

We have seen tragedies happen throughout the United States where the courts failed the children involved in custody disputes. Over the past decade, the Center for Judicial Excellence has documented 653 child homicides across the United States by a parent involved in a conflict related to divorce, separation, custody, visitation, or child support.

Last year, Ana Estevez's 5-year-old son, Piqui, was murdered by her ex-husband. Despite her efforts to obtain sole custody of Piqui due to her ex-husband's history of abuse, her plea was rejected.

Her estranged husband picked up Piqui, as part of their joint custody arrangement, and took him to Disneyland. That was the last time Ms. Estevez saw her son.

His body was found 2 months later, and her estranged husband eventually confessed to the murder, a tragedy that should never have happened.

Today, we take a step in expressing to States that they must pay special attention to these cases. We hope States will heed this resolution and resolve to evaluate their family court systems and implement measures to put child safety first.

I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) for bringing this resolution before us. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the House concurrent resolution. I thank my colleague on the Judiciary Committee for his leadership.

I want to indicate that, first and foremost, this bipartisan resolution expresses the sense of Congress that child safety should be the top priority of any custody and parenting court adjudications, and that courts should resolve safety risks and claims of domestic violence first, before taking any other interest into consideration.

The resolution also underscores Congress' strong support for the use of scientific-based evidence in family court, including reliance on expert professionals with expertise in relevant types of abuse, trauma, and behaviors of victims and perpetrators by, among other things, establishing specific standards for the preparation of professional reports.

This resolution also encourages States to consider models through which such professional experts can be appointed and paid directly by the courts as needed, and expresses the sense of Congress that we hold hearings examining family court practices with regard to the fair adjudication of children's safety and civil rights.

I think many of us as Members of Congress who deal in family issues, and as the founder and co-chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, and being a student of the Family Protective Services—Child Protective Services, I have seen more than one case where a child is returned to a family and gets caught up in the unfortunate practices of that family situation, that home situation. Yes, they wind up losing their life, children as young as 1 and 2 and 3 years old, helpless, without being able to help themselves.

H. Con. Res. 72 acknowledges that the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has found that the United States has failed in its legal obligation to protect women and children from domestic violence.

It certainly seems appropriate, as we debate this, that I ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, and it is not too late, to join me in putting the Violence Against Women Act on the floor of the House with over 160 cosponsors that specifically address the question of domestic violence, domestic abuse. So many of our collaborating groups from all over the country, both conservative and otherwise, are arguing and advocating for the passage of the Violence Against Women Act before its expiration on September 30, 2018. It would be a complement to this sense of Congress.

In recognition of the fact that the problem of domestic violence is among

the most serious social problems in this country, the resolution makes a number of important findings in this regard. Child abuse, in and of itself, is a major public health issue. It costs billions of dollars annually and, unfortunately, the loss of children's lives.

But the cost of child abuse cannot be measured in simple monetary terms because, as a study by the Centers for Disease Control tells us, children who experience adverse childhood experiences are at a greater risk to develop certain chronic diseases like heart disease and cancer. The consequences for children who experience abuse and neglect are long-lasting, long-reaching, and cannot be measured easily.

As this resolution finds, child sexual abuse, too, as horrific as it is, is a matter that goes routinely underdocumented and underaddressed. Time and again, research confirms that allegations of domestic violence, child abuse, and child sexual abuse are often discounted when it comes to child custody litigation.

This is with family members or guardians of a particular child. Tragically, abusive parents are often granted custody or unprotected parenting time, which places children at constant risk. The risk of abuse to the child increases when a perpetrator of domestic violence separates from a domestic partner.

Most disturbing is the resolution's finding that documents a minimum of 568 murders of children in the United States in a 10-year period by a parent involved in divorce, separation, custody, visitation, or child support proceedings. In many of these instances, the family courts granted access to the child by the abusive parent over the objection of the protective parent.

Finally, this resolution recognizes the need for courts to appoint well-qualified professionals, at court expense, who will apply scientifically sound and evidence-based theories to assist in the adjudication of custody litigation. Because such assistance is not routinely provided, parents seeking to vindicate their rights in custody disputes often incur overwhelming debt and may even need to file for bankruptcy relief as a result. In the United States, this should be unacceptable.

For these reasons, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Con. Res. 72.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 72.

First and foremost, this bipartisan resolution expresses the sense of Congress that child safety should be the top priority of any custody and parenting court adjudications and that courts should resolve safety risks and claims of domestic violence first, before taking other interests into consideration.

The resolution also underscores Congress' strong support for the use of scientific-based evidence in family court, including reliance on expert professionals with expertise in relevant types of abuse, trauma, and behaviors of victims and perpetrators by, among other things, establishing specific standards for the preparation of professional reports.

This resolution also encourages States to consider models through which such professional experts can be appointed and paid directly by the courts, as needed.

And, it expresses the sense of Congress that we hold hearings examining family court practices with regards to the fair adjudication of children's safety and civil rights.

House Concurrent Resolution 72 acknowledges that the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has found that the United States has failed in its legal obligation to protect women and children from domestic violence.

In recognition of the fact that the problem of domestic violence is among the most serious social problems in this country, the resolution makes a number of important findings in this regard. Child abuse, in-and-of-itself, is a major public health issue—and it costs billions of dollars annually. But the “cost” of child abuse cannot be measured in simple monetary terms because, as a study by the Centers for Disease Control tells us, children who experience “adverse childhood experiences” are at greater risk to develop certain chronic diseases, like heart disease and cancer. The consequences for children who experience abuse and neglect are long-lasting and long-reaching and cannot be measured easily.

As this resolution finds, child sexual abuse, too, as horrific as it is, is a matter that goes routinely under-documented and under-addressed. But, time and again, research confirms that allegations of domestic violence, child abuse, and child sexual abuse are often discounted when it comes to child custody litigation. Tragically, abusive parents are often granted custody or unprotected parenting time, which places children at constant risk, and the risk of abuse to the child increases when a perpetrator of domestic violence separates from a domestic partner.

Most disturbing is the resolution's finding that documents a minimum of 568 murders of children in the United States in a 10-year period by a parent involved in divorce, separation, custody, visitation, or child support proceedings. In many of these instances, the family courts granted access to the child by the abusive parent, over the objection of the protective parent.

Finally, this resolution recognizes the need for courts to appoint well-qualified professionals, at court expense, who will apply scientifically sound and evidence-based theories, to assist in the adjudication of custody litigation. Because such assistance is not routinely provided, parents seeking to vindicate their rights in custody disputes often incur overwhelming debt and may even need to file for bankruptcy relief as a result. In the United States, this should be unacceptable.

For these reasons, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting House Concurrent Resolution 72.

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

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished gentleman, who spent his career not only as a sheriff, but a duly-elected constitutional Member in Florida, but also to the distinguished gentlewoman from Houston,

Texas, who has served as an attorney serving the people of Houston, Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to make sure that as we respectfully address this issue, H. Con. Res. 72, which urges States to look at improved family court proceedings of child custody cases, ensuring that child safety is a top priority, it makes clear that Congress will use its oversight authority to engage in this issue also.

We do not come at this issue lightly, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, the Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project has provided a great deal of information, not only to Members of Congress, but by visiting the Members, making sure that they understand that their work with the Center for Judicial Excellence and the Protective Parents Association of California have made sure that they saw these issues clearly and talked to Members of Congress about our ideas, not only as we fund Federal programs, but as we understand in our discussions with States that we prioritize and help them look at what is, seemingly, a national crisis.

This national crisis is about how our children are dealt with in the court system and looked at. Specifically, this is a concurrent resolution that urges States to develop family court procedures to resolve claims of abuse and family violence before making any other determination in the case, allowing courts to focus on these allegations affecting child safety independently.

□ 2000

What did I just say? Well, what I just said is many times in court proceedings where there is a family violence circumstance, where there is stress in a family, there are examples that either side might talk about what is in the best interest of the child.

And courts across this country, whether at their local court, whether a state court, we are asking them to understand that this national crisis deals with children that are being placed in a circumstance that might not be in their best interest, and it calls on States to prohibit the use of discredited or unscientific theories in their family courts. In other words, there are many times provisions in a court or a bias of a court to take one side or the other.

Finally, it highlights the problems that some litigants—these are people back in their own home States—face regarding mandatory fees, and Congress is asking the States to look at these.

Many times, as the distinguished gentlewoman from Houston talked about, there are fee structures which keep families from fully participating to protect their children because of the cost. This is an important issue.

Tragically, millions of children are impacted in the United States of America. They call it domestic violence or child abuse, but the bottom line is that the resulting harm is lasting to our

children. Physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, this trauma stays with our children for some period of time and many times it lasts for a lifetime.

It also imposes billions of dollars on society where these children need to be handled, dealt with, and worked through a system for them to understand what happened in their childhood would create some difficulties later in their life.

Simply put, we believe that family courts need better expertise. Better expertise not only in terms of the legal counsel that is involved, but perhaps outside professionals who would address these issues.

In my home State of Texas, we have had to reevaluate the circumstances, not just of divorce, but of domestic violence where a child is involved, trying to focus more directly on the needs of the child and then having that family, two sides for sure, who would come together to see what is in the best interest of that child.

Family courts need to address abuse, and once again, many times it is not uncommon for them to have to address these through the frailties of a system, frailties of people who give testimony, and perhaps theories that are not always in the best interest of the child that might be proposed in court.

So one story in particular has it of a young girl named Kyra who tragically lost her life at the age of 2 in 2016 while her family was going through the court system. The focus became the battle, not the child, and the child fell in between the processes and, unfortunately, the tragedy occurred because of this huge disagreement between the family to where her father brutally murdered her before setting the house on fire and killing himself.

The tragedy involved, rather than highlighting the differences between these two, of the safety of the child. And the safety of the child and of the mother is vitally important.

At least 653 child murders by a parent involved in a divorce, separation, custody, or visitation, child support have been documented in the United States over the last 10 years. That is a tragedy. That is a nightmare that is happening directly before us.

This is why we believe that listening to outside groups, such as the Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project and the Judicial Excellence Coalition have come to Congress to say, we would like for you to see what is happening back in your States, back in your communities, back where you are from, Members of Congress, and see if you can shine a spotlight on showing how important children and women are, not just in our society, but in the court system.

So what I would say is I would like to thank my colleagues, the gentleman who started this, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Congressman Pat Meehan, for his dedication to this issue, as well as my dear friend from New York, Congresswoman CAROLYN B. MALONEY,

for her leadership as she has joined me on so many issues where we deal with women's health and women's safety, children's health, children's safety, including disabled children and people who cannot protect themselves.

Mr. Speaker, whether you live in Florida, Texas, Pennsylvania, or wherever you might be in this country, it is important for us to understand that the focus on children's safety in court matters is essential to the Nation's health and support for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished gentleman and the chairman of the committee, Chairman GOODLATTE, for allowing this to come forth at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Florida for yielding me this time.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time to close.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me certainly thank Mr. SESSIONS, my colleague out of Texas, for his very important words and moving commentary. I thank Congressman RUTHERFORD for his service and commitment, and the other cosponsors of this legislation, because it really has more impact.

Let me conclude my remarks by acknowledging a tragedy in my district. As a hardworking mother was separating from her spouse, it had not yet gotten to the court, but it is evidence of what can happen. The remarks of the dad were, "Bring them over for me to see them one more time."

And even though the relationship between mom and dad was hostile, mom wanted to be cooperative, and brought them over and left them for a moment as she went to her small business.

The next call she got was the shrill of police and neighbors screaming, and his call to her, the parent's call, the father's call, and he said, "Now come over and see your two dead children, because I have killed them."

So this is constant throughout the Nation, and we need intervention and we need recognition of the tragedies that can happen.

So as I previously stated, I strongly support passage of H. Con. Res. 72. It is a sober acknowledgement of how family courts in the United States are failing to protect the very children they are sworn to protect in cases involving domestic violence, and obviously these cases have histories of domestic violence. But also as a legislative body, we have far more effective ways to deal with these problems. They can complement H. Con. Res. 72.

So I would like to, again, reinforce the bill that was introduced last July—this July, that I introduced, over 150 cosponsors, I believe. I introduced a robust bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

This VAWA reauthorization seeks to address the problem of domestic vio-

lence from a holistic perspective by attacking the problem from many different angles with resources, recognizing all the different components that are now before us. We need to reauthorize VAWA, not in any watered down fashion, and we need to do it in complement to H. Con. Res. 72. And if we hope to make any dent in this very serious problem and to protect women and children and men who are abused and victimized day in and day out, this is how we need to do it, pass bills like the concurrent resolution and also VAWA.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and join me in this bipartisan effort as well to pass VAWA.

As I previously stated, I strongly support passage of House Concurrent Resolution 72. It is a sober acknowledgement of how family courts in the United States are failing to protect the very children they are sworn to protect, in cases involving domestic violence.

But, as a legislative body, we have far more effective ways to deal with these problems than merely passing concurrent resolutions. Last July, I introduced a robust bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. This VAWA reauthorization seeks to address the problem of domestic violence from a holistic perspective, by attacking the problem from many different angles. We need to reauthorize VAWA—not in any watered-down fashion—if we hope to make any dent into this very serious problem and to protect women, children and men who are abused and victimized day in and day out.

I urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 72.

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

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I first want to thank the gentlewoman for her comments and for her hard work on this resolution. I also want to thank Chairman SESSIONS for bringing this forward today.

I want to encourage all of my colleagues here to vote in the affirmative for H. Con. Res. 72.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 72, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

KERRIE OROZCO FIRST RESPONDERS FAMILY SUPPORT ACT

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6580) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for expedited naturalization processes for the alien spouses of first responders who die as a result of their employ-

ment, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6580

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Kerrie Orozco First Responders Family Support Act".

SEC. 2. NATURALIZATION FOR IMMEDIATE RELATIVES OF FIRST RESPONDERS.

Section 319 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1430) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(f) IMMEDIATE RELATIVES OF FIRST RESPONDERS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Any person who is the surviving spouse, child, or parent of a United States citizen, whose citizen spouse, parent, or child dies as a result of injury or disease incurred in or aggravated by employment as a first responder, and who, in the case of a surviving spouse, was living in marital union with the citizen spouse at the time of his death, may be naturalized upon compliance with all the requirements of this title, except that no prior residence or specified physical presence within the United States shall be required.

"(2) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'first responder' means Federal, State, and local government fire, law enforcement, and emergency response personnel."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD) and the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUTHERFORD. 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 materials on H.R. 6580, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON), my home State.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD), our distinguished representative from Florida, my good friend, for yielding some time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6580, the Kerrie Orozco First Responders Act.

This legislation, named after a fallen Omaha police officer, Kerrie Orozco, is a first responders bill that will give our heroes peace of mind every day when they leave their home for work to keep us safe. This legislation is simple, common sense, and compassionate.

Under current law, the surviving family members of first responders who have pending immigration applications face delays in the naturalization process. This could weigh heavily on our