

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

MENSTRUAL EQUITY IN THE PEACE CORPS ACT

HON. GRACE MENG

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2020

Ms. MENG. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce the introduction of the Menstrual Equity in the Peace Corps Act.

On March 1st, we recognized the 59th Anniversary of the Peace Corps. Established by Executive Order 10924, issued by President John F. Kennedy, and authorized by Congress, Peace Corps has been an enduring symbol of peace and friendship between the U.S. and our global community. Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) sacrifice over two years of their time, working side by side with local leaders to combat some of the most pressing challenges of our generation. This is a transformational time for many of our volunteers—and I am particularly proud of the many constituents from my congressional district of New York's Sixth who have served abroad in Peace Corps.

At the same time, however, I have heard from many PCVs around the world who struggle to access and afford menstrual hygiene products. These current PCVs and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV) note how menstrual products are not readily available, or these items are far more expensive than they would be in the U.S. So many of these volunteers are also placed in very remote locations. In fact, for one RPCV who served in an indigenous island, she had to travel by a combination of cargo ship rides (10+ hours), plane ride(s), small boat ride, several hour hikes, and hitchhiking to get to and from the capital, where the Peace Corps Country Office is located. Ultimately, for some PCVs, not only is there a financial hurdle, but a volunteer may have to travel extremely far distances to access menstrual hygiene products.

There is also vast inconsistency in the provision of these products for the volunteers. Some Peace Corps Medical Officers provide these products for free to their respective PCVs, while others are left to purchase the products out of pocket. Other country offices provide an additional stipend to volunteers to purchase these products, while other volunteers wait to receive these items in their care packages from loved ones back home. I also heard a U.S. Peace Corps staff equate these products to mere razors and shaving cream—ultimately disregarding the medical necessity for these products.

To address this inequity, I am introducing a bill—the Menstrual Equity in the Peace Corps Act—to require the enactment of a comprehensive policy that makes available free menstrual hygiene products to PCVs, or increase stipends to allow for these expenses. Menstrual hygiene products are not luxury or toiletry items. These are medical necessities; a health right and human right. And this is a simple matter of equality.

Madam Speaker, today, PCVs serve in over 60 countries around the world. Nearly 65 percent of PCVs are women, and more than 90 percent of these volunteers are under the age of 50. PCVs are already making both financial and personal sacrifices in order to represent the United States abroad, and they are a critical part of U.S. development power. Peace Corps notes that 'nothing is more important than the health, safety, and security of every single volunteer.'

Indeed, for the health, safety, and security of these volunteers, I urge my colleagues to support the Menstrual Equity in the Peace Corps Act. I thank my colleagues who have already joined me in introducing this critical legislation, and I urge the House of Representatives to join me in passing this critical legislation.

HONORING KELSEY KRUSE AND DANE KRUSE AS IOWANS OF THE WEEK

HON. CYNTHIA AXNE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2020

Mrs. AXNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing two outstanding young Iowans, Dane and Kelsey Kruse from Silver City, Iowa. These two, brother and sister, are young farmers in Mills County continuing the family tradition on the farm. They were recently featured in a national advertising campaign that focused on the challenges young farmers face.

Dane and Kelsey, or the "Kruse Kids," are sixth-generation hog farmers that sell to Niman Ranch. Both in their early 20s, Dane and Kelsey are young faces in a profession where the average age is nearly 58. As Kelsey said, "It's becoming very difficult for younger people to get themselves started" in farming.

I know many of my colleagues agree on how important it is to support young farmers like Kelsey and Dane. Nothing is more critical to the future of Iowa's rural economy than young people returning home to their community and carrying on the family tradition. Too often we see young Iowans moving away from their communities to seek opportunity elsewhere.

Not only are the Kruse Kids helping their community by returning home after college, they are serving as incredible ambassadors for rural Iowa as the focus of national attention. Earlier this year, Dane and Kelsey joined other young farmers and participated in the Rose Parade on New Year's Day to kick off Chipotle's "Cultivate the Future of Farming" initiative.

The Kruse family hogs are raised naturally with plenty of room, fed a vegetarian diet, and are antibiotic free. As consumers want to know more about where their food comes from, the Kruse Kids, along with their father

Jeff, are proud to show off their farm and how they raise their Iowa hogs.

I'm proud to honor Dane and Kelsey as our Iowans of the Week. As Dane shared to millions in the commercial, farming isn't easy. But why does he do it? "You can say it is in my blood, you can say I'm crazy, I don't know, I just like farming."

I hope you all will join me in recognizing Dane and Kelsey Kruse, along with all other young farmers across the country, and continue to work to ensure more kids have the resources they need to continue the family tradition.

DENNIS CULNAN, SR.

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2020

Mr. NORCROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend the Mount Laurel, New Jersey resident Dennis Culnan, Sr. for his 75th Birthday.

On Saturday February 22, 2020, family and friends will gather to celebrate and honor Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. on his 75th Birthday. Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. was born on February 14, 1945 and grew up in Northeast Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Throughout his childhood he often encountered challenging and adverse circumstances as his family struggled to make ends meet. However, life changed after he first saw the love of his life, Joan Plocharska. At the age of 14, Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. met Joan while attending Father Judge High School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Joan, as Dennis describes, was sweet, shy and as delicate as a snowflake. Dennis and Joan dated on and off for several years and eventually married in 1966.

Following his graduation in 1964 Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. honorably enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. He quickly earned the rank of Lance corporal and proudly served his country before being medically discharged.

Thereafter he returned home and established himself as an award-winning investigative reporter, political writer and columnist for the Courier-Post of Cherry Hill, New Jersey, where he worked for nearly four decades. Furthermore, with his extensive experience in public relations and governmental affairs consulting, in 1993, Dennis founded the public affairs firm Phoenix Strategies, specializing in government relations, communications, lobbying and grassroots education.

During his time with the firm, Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. served in many capacities, including as the director of marketing and communications strategy for Siemens Transportation while AMTRAK was introducing high-speed rail from Washington, D.C. to Boston, Massachusetts. Recently he led New Jersey's consulting and marketing messaging for Spectra Energy's successful 1.2-billion-dollar energy

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