by approximately $2 million in an effort to provide health care to its patients in 1992. This additional cost brought St. Bernard's close to closing its doors.

The H–1A visa program expired on September 30, 1997. Currently, no program exists that would assist hospitals such as St. Bernard's in their efforts to retain qualified nurses. My legislation merely seeks to close a gap created by the expiration of the H–1A program.

H.R. 441 prescribes that any hospital which seeks to hire foreign nurses under these provisions must meet the following stringent criteria: number one, be located in a health professional shortage area; number two, have at least 190 acute-care beds; number three, have a Medicare population of 35 percent; and, number four, have a Medicaid population of at least 28 percent.

Mr. Speaker, these are stringent requirements. This bill needs the support of the Members of this body, and I encourage Members of this body to support this legislation and support H.R. 441.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to vote to concur to the Senate amendment to H.R. 441 that will enable the bill to go to the President's desk and become the law of the land.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend our colleague BOBBY RUSH for introducing this important bill and working over the last two years to ensure its enactment into law.

Two years ago, Representative RUSH and I were approached by St. Bernard Hospital and Health Care Center in Chicago. The hospital, which is the only source of health care for an entire impoverished section of the City of Chicago, was having great difficulty attracting sufficient American nurses. St. Bernard's and a number of other inner-city hospitals, perhaps because of the high crime rates in their neighborhoods, were having this problem. So were a number of rural hospitals. St. Bernard's felt that its only viable option to fully meet its nursing needs was to employ foreign nationals.

There isn't a nationwide nursing shortage in the United States. So, there does not appear to be the support to implement a broad-based nurse visa program. However, a narrowly crafted program to help out hospitals in need is eminently justified. This is exactly what H.R. 441 accomplishes. The bill would create a new temporary registered nurse visa program designated ''H–1C'' that would provide up to 500 visas a year and that would sunset in four years.

To be able to petition for an alien nurse, a hospital would have to meet four conditions. First, it would have to be located in a health professional shortage area as designated by the Department of Health and Human Services. Second, it would have to have at least 190 acute care beds. Third, a certain percentage of its patients would have to be Medicare patients. Fourth, a certain percentage of patients would have to be Medicaid patients.

H.R. 441 meets an undisputed need. Thus, it is not opposed by the American nurses association. I was pleased to move the bill through the Judiciary Committee, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 441.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING QUESTION OF PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of House Rule IX, I rise to give notice of my intent to present a question of privilege to the House. The form of the resolution is as follows and relates to maintaining antidumping and countervailing measures as relates to our trade laws. It calls on the President to abstain from renegotiating international agreements governing antidumping and countervailing measures.

We know the World Trade Organization is about to meet in Seattle, and whereas under Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, the Congress has the power and responsibility with regard to foreign commerce and the conduct of international trade negotiations;

Whereas the House of Representatives is deeply concerned that in connection with the World Trade Organization ministerial meeting to be held in Seattle, Washington, later this month, and the multilateral trade negotiations expected to follow, a few countries are seeking to circumvent the agreed list of negotiation topics and reopen the debate over the World Trade Organization's antidumping and anti subsidy rules;

Whereas the Congress has not approved new negotiations on antidumping or antisubsidy rules and we have clearly, but so far informally, signalled opposition to such negotiations;

Whereas strong antidumping and antisubsidy rules are a cornerstone of the liberal trade policy of the United States and are essential to the health of the manufacturing and farm sectors here in our country;

And whereas it has long been and remains the policy of the United States to support antidumping and antisubsidy laws and to defend those laws in international negotiations;

Whereas the current absence of official negotiating objectives on the statute books must not be allowed to undermine the Congress' constitutional role in charting the direction of U.S. trade policy;

Whereas, under present circumstances, launching a negotiation that includes antidumping and antisubsidy issues would affect the rights of the House and the integrity of its proceedings;

Whereas the WTO antidumping and antisubsidy rules concluded in the Uruguay Round have scarcely been tested since they entered into effect and certainly have not proven effective in view of our trade deficit;

Whereas opening these rules to renegotiation could only lead to weakening them, which would in turn lead to even greater abuse of the world's open markets, particularly that of the United States, which has become the greatest dump market in the world;

Whereas conversely, avoiding another decisive fight over these rules is the best way to promote progress on the other far more important issues facing the World Trade Organization Members;

Whereas it is therefore essential that negotiations on these antidumping and antisubsidy matters not be reopened under the auspices of the World Trade Organization or otherwise:

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the House of Representatives calls upon the President (1) not to participate in any international negotiation in which antidumping or antisubsidy rules are part of the negotiating agenda; (2) to refrain from submitting for Congressional approval agreements that require changes to the current antidumping and countervailing duty laws and enforcement policies of the United States; and (3) also calls upon the President to enforce the antidumping and countervailing duty laws vigorously in all pending and future cases.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within two legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentlewoman from Ohio will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution and the gentlewoman will be notified.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING QUESTION OF PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Rule IX, clause 1, I rise to give notice of my intent to present a question of privilege of the House.

Mr. Speaker, the question of privilege expresses the sense of the House that its integrity has been impuned because the antidumping provisions of the Trade and Tariff Act of 1930, Subtitle B of title VII, have not been enforced.

Therefore, the resolution calls upon the President to, number one, immediately obtain volunteer restraint agreements from Japan, Russia, the Ukraine, Korea and Brazil which limit those countries in July to June fiscal year 1999 to their exports calculated from fiscal year 1998.

Number two, to immediately impose a 1-year ban on imports of hot-rolled steel products and plate steel products that are the product of manufacture of Japan, Russia, the Ukraine, Korea or Brazil, if the President is unable to obtain such volunteer restraint agreements within 10 days.

Number three, to pursue with all tools at his disposal a more equitable sharing of the burden of accepting imports of finished steel products from Asia and the countries within the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Number four, to establish a task force to closely monitor the imports of steel.

Finally, to report to Congress by no later than January 5 with a comprehensive plan for responding to this import surge, including ways of limiting its deleterious effect on employment, prices and investment in the United States steel industry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously stated by the Chair, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Ohio will appear in the RECORD at this point, and the Speaker will later designate a time for its consideration and will at that point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of the privilege. The gentleman will be notified.

SENSE OF CONGRESS SUPPORTING PRAYER AT PUBLIC SCHOOL SPORTING EVENTS

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 199) expressing the sense of the Congress that prayers and invocations at public school sporting events contribute to the moral foundation of our Nation and urging the Supreme Court to uphold their constitutionality.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 199

Whereas prayers at public school sporting events are entirely consistent with our American heritage of seeking Divine guidance and protection in all of our undertakings;

Whereas sporting events provide a significant and long-lasting impact in character and values development among young people;

Whereas prayers and invocations have been demonstrated to positively affect the fair play and sportsmanlike behavior of both players and spectators at sporting events;

Whereas lower court rulings about prayer at sporting events have placed school and community leaders in the difficult position of choosing between conflicting values, rights, and laws;

Whereas congressional leaders have found value in beginning each legislative day with prayers; and

Whereas statements of belief in a Supreme Power and the virtue of seeking strength and protection from that Power are prevalent throughout our national history, currency, and rituals: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) prayers and invocations at public school sporting events are constitutional under the First Amendment to the Constitution; and

(2) the Supreme Court, accordingly, should uphold the constitutionality of such practices.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Conyers) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. 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. 199.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the sponsor of this resolution, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BONILLA)

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of a fall tradition we have in Texas. On weekends, Fridays and Saturdays high school stadiums fill up with people to watch high school football.

These are not just events, Mr. Speaker; they are traditions; communities, student bodies, parents, coming together to watch friendly competition and say hello to friends and neighbors. It is about sportsmanship, it is about brotherhood, it is about values.

Traditionally, before each game, voluntary nondenominational prayers have been held, primarily to wish the players an injury-free game and to wish everyone a safe trip home on the road that night.

This tradition has been threatened by a foolish decision in Federal Court. A parent in a town near Houston apparently felt suppressed by the prayer and filed suit. The 5th Circuit Court agreed, and banned voluntary prayer at sporting events.

I think this court decision is wrong. This resolution gives the U.S. Congress the chance to take a stand. Voluntary prayer should not be banned in States.

In this day and age when parents and communities search for answers in helping our young people, what is wrong with voluntary prayer before kick off? There are no mandates in this resolution. I ask my colleagues to join me in taking a stand. Let us tell the court it was wrong. Let us encourage it to reverse its decision and let the children pray.

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

Mr. Speaker, religious freedom has been one of the cornerstones of American democracy since the founding of our Nation, and, like most Members in the body, I remain committed to preserving religious freedom. However, there are serious reservations whether this resolution offers us the best means of protecting our citizens' religious liberties.

To begin with, we have had no deliberative process whatsoever on this complex issue. I was hoping that someone on the other side may enlighten me as to why this could never have come before a subcommittee or a committee for hearings and markup. There has been no opportunity to gauge the seriousness of the problem or determine whether this resolution is an appropriate or reasonable response.

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Secondly, the text of the resolution comes very close to not only protecting religious expression, but crossing over and violating the establishment clause. The Supreme Court has consistently held that the coercive mechanics of the State cannot be used to endorse any particular set of religious beliefs. I think we all know that. For public school sporting events, courts have been very generous and have allowed student-led prayers, but have drawn the line at coach-led prayers or using the mechanics of the State, out of fear of a coercive effect.

This resolution appears to go beyond this line, finding that organized and State-led prayer may be constitutional.

Finally, I am concerned that the resolution threatens to abridge our precious separation of powers. The Congress has had enough trouble doing its own business and passing the Nation's budget on time, let alone taking the time to tell the Supreme Court how to resolve highly complex and serious sensitive constitutional arguments.

Under the present constitutional structure of a Bill of Rights protected by an independent judiciary, the courts have done fine in sorting out these issues. Religion is alive and well in America. We have greater religious diversity and more religious observance than any country on the face of the Earth. I seriously question whether this sense of Congress can improve this situation.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to truly protect religious freedom in this country, please reject this well-meaning but flawed resolution.

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank my good friend and neighbor, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BONILLA), for introducing this important resolution. It is vitally important to express the sense of Congress that voluntary prayers before athletic contests are appropriate and even beneficial. This type of prayer is not an unconstitutional establishment of religion. Rather, it is an appropriate and constitutional exercise of our freedom of religion.

It is altogether appropriate before a hard-fought athletic contest to allow individuals involved to offer a prayer that acknowledges the presence of a supreme being, a reminder of the presence of a deity more powerful than the players on the field. Such a prayer can lead to better sportsmanship, fewer injuries, and could even uplift and inspire both prayers and spectators.

The offering of a prayer should not be feared. Those who do not wish to participate do not need to. However, we should not constrain the actions of those who do want to participate.