

those purposes are secondary to its primary function of advancing the Catholic faith. This is especially true in the case of Catholic schools which were founded and are operated with the explicit purpose of intergrating Catholic doctrine into K–12 education.

Therefore, even though Congress intends to honor the ways Catholic schools help fulfill a secular goal, the fact is Congress cannot honor Catholic schools without endorsing efforts to promulgate the Catholic faith. By singling out one sect over another, Congress is playing favors among religions. While this does not compare to the type of religious persecution experienced by many of the founders of this country, it is still an example of the type of federal favoritism among religions that the first amendment forbids.

What is the superintendent of a Baptist private school or a Pentecostal home schooler going to think when reading this resolution? That Congress does not think they provide children with an excellent education or that Congress does not deem their religious goals worthy of federal endorsement? In a free republic, the legislature should not be in the business of favoring one religion over another. I would also like to point out the irony of considering government favoritism of religion in the context of praising the Catholic schools, when early in this century Catholic schools were singled out for government-sanctioned discrimination because they were upholding the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Allowing Congress to single out certain religions for honors not only insults those citizens whose faith is not recognized by Congress, it also threatens the religious liberty of those honored by Congress. This is because when the federal government begins evaluating religious institutions, some religious institutions may be tempted to modify certain of their teachings in order to curry favor with political leaders. I will concede that religious institutions may not water down their faith in order to secure passage of "Sense of Congress resolutions," however, the belief that it is proper to judge religious institutions by how effectively they fulfill secular objectives is at the root of the proposals to entangle the federal government with state-approved religions by providing taxpayer dollars to religious organizations in order to preform various social services. Providing taxpayer money to churches creates the very real risk that a church may, for example, feel the need to downplay its teaching against abortion or euthanasia in order to maintain favor with a future pro-abortion administration and thus not lose its federal funding.

Of course, the idea that politicians should bestow favors on religions based on how well they fulfill the aims of the politicians is one that should be insulting to all believers no matter their faith. After all, despite what a few of my colleagues seem to think, Mr. Speaker, we in Congress are neither omnipotent nor divine.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I join the sponsors of H. Res. 28 in their admiration for the work of Catholic schools. However, I also have reservations about the language singling out the religious goals of one faith for praise.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker I rise in support of this measure to recognize the role Catholic Schools have played in the education of America's Children.

Last week over 8,200 Catholic elementary and secondary schools nationwide celebrated

their 27th annual Catholics Schools Week. This event was established to increase support for private Catholic schools and to recognize their accomplishments and contributions to the country.

"Catholic Schools Week" celebrates education that goes beyond preparation for a secular life; it is an education that prepares students for a Christian life. Parents who chose to send their children to Catholic Schools do so because they not only want their children to have an excellent education in reading, writing and arithmetic, they also want to them to have a Christian education.

Although public schools can prepare children for a secular life through a good education, they are constitutionally bound not to extent their role as educators into the area of religious education. I strongly urge parents who would like the benefits of public education and the rewards of faith based education to make a commitment to work with those religious communities that share their beliefs in the development of after school and weekend parochial programs.

This bill states that Congress supports the goals of Catholic Schools Week, an event sponsored by the National Catholic Education Association and the U.S. Catholic Conference, and congratulates Catholic schools, students, parents, and teachers for their contributions to education.

Catholic schools teach a diverse group of students, 24 percent of whom are minorities. Moreover, only three percent of Catholic high school drop out of school and 83 percent go on to attend college.

Finally, the resolution states that, by providing an intellectually stimulating environment rich in moral guidance, Catholic schools produce students and, ultimately, citizens who are strongly dedicated to their faith and communities.

I offer my heart felt thanks to the Catholic Schools across the nation for their dedication to excellence in the classroom as they prepare young people to achieve excellence in life. In closing I would like to extend a special thanks to the Catholic Schools in Houston like Saint Philips High School, and Saint Pius High School.

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support this resolution on Catholic education, and to share with my colleagues some of the rich history and achievements of Catholic schools in New Mexico.

The Catholic Church has had a presence in the American Southwest for over 400 years. Before public education was established in New Mexico, Catholic friars began teaching at local Indian pueblos. In the early 1800s, the Spanish government, cooperating with the Catholic Church, established schools in the territory of New Mexico.

Today New Mexico has 29 Catholic elementary schools and 4 secondary schools. Over 8,000 New Mexico children are enrolled in Catholic schools and the ethnic composition of the student body reflects the rich diversity of New Mexico (Hispanic 43%, Anglo 31%, American Indian 11%). I am very proud of New Mexico's Catholic schools and their students. Last year 324 students graduated from Catholic high schools in New Mexico. This is a 99% graduation rate and, of those, 99% went on to post-secondary education.

It's the dawn of a new century: It is a century in which knowledge is a commodity chil-

dren must have to succeed. Catholic schools across America are giving our children this opportunity.

Catholic schools have given New Mexico's children the wings they need to achieve their dreams. As Catholic schools nationwide celebrate Catholic school week, we thank them.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TIBERI) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 28.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

□ 1800

AFTER RECESS

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will now put the question on motions to suspend the rules on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today.

Votes will be taken in the following order: House Joint Resolution 7, by the yeas and nays, and House Resolution 28, by the yeas and nays.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.

RECOGNIZING 90TH BIRTHDAY OF RONALD REAGAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the joint resolution, House Joint Resolution 7.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by