

some of the most needy children will received it.

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

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. 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 Kentucky (Mr. LEWIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 586, as amended.

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. LEWIS of Kentucky. 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.

□ 1545

CONCERNING PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 428) concerning the participation of Taiwan in the World Health Organization.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. CONCERNING THE PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO).

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Good health is important to every citizen of the world and access to the highest standards of health information and services is necessary to improve the public health.

(2) Direct and unobstructed participation in international health cooperation forums and programs is beneficial for all parts of the world, especially with today's greater potential for the cross-border spread of various infectious diseases such as the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), tuberculosis, and malaria.

(3) Taiwan's population of 23,500,000 people is larger than that of ¾ of the member states already in the World Health Organization (WHO).

(4) Taiwan's achievements in the field of health are substantial, including one of the highest life expectancy levels in Asia, maternal and infant mortality rates comparable to those of western countries, the eradication of such infectious diseases as cholera, smallpox, and the plague, and the first to eradicate polio and provide children with hepatitis B vaccinations.

(5) The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and its Taiwan counterpart agencies have enjoyed close collaboration on a wide range of public health issues.

(6) In recent years Taiwan has expressed a willingness to assist financially and technically in international aid and health activities supported by the WHO.

(7) On January 14, 2001, an earthquake, registering between 7.6 and 7.9 on the Richter scale, struck El Salvador. In response, the Taiwanese government sent 2 rescue teams, consisting of 90 individuals specializing in firefighting, medi-

cine, and civil engineering. The Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs also donated \$200,000 in relief aid to the Salvadoran Government.

(8) The World Health Assembly has allowed observers to participate in the activities of the organization, including the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1974, the Order of Malta, and the Holy See in the early 1950's.

(9) The United States, in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review, declared its intention to support Taiwan's participation in appropriate international organizations.

(10) Public Law 106-137 required the Secretary of State to submit a report to the Congress on efforts by the executive branch to support Taiwan's participation in international organizations, in particular the WHO.

(11) In light of all benefits that Taiwan's participation in the WHO can bring to the state of health not only in Taiwan, but also regionally and globally, Taiwan and its 23,500,000 people should have appropriate and meaningful participation in the WHO.

(b) PLAN.—The Secretary of State is authorized—

(1) to initiate a United States plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual week-long summit of the World Health Assembly in May 2001 in Geneva, Switzerland; and

(2) to instruct the United States delegation to Geneva to implement that plan.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 14 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit a written report to the Congress in unclassified form containing the plan authorized under subsection (b).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARR of Georgia). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEACH. 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.R. 428.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support this legislation which would authorize the administration to initiate a plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization during the May 2001 World Health Assembly in Geneva.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) for sponsoring this resolution. It should be stressed that nothing in this bill implies a change in this country's one China policy, which has been based for over 30 years on three communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act. At the same time, however, care should be taken not to arbitrarily exclude the 23 million people of Taiwan from appropriate economic and humanitarian venues.

Mr. Speaker, the House previously passed this bill 407-0 on April 24. Today we are considering the legislation as amended by the Senate. We should support it for at least two reasons:

First, Taiwan's participation in the WHO will advance the cause of public

health worldwide. In January, Taiwan played an important role in providing relief to earthquake victims in El Salvador. By gaining observer status at the WHO, Taiwan will be able to participate more meaningfully in meeting its, and our, global health challenges in the future. Disease and national disasters know no borders.

Secondly, where sovereignty is not at issue, Taiwan's participation in international organizations makes common sense. Taiwan thrives economically and politically. Economically, Taiwan has raised the standard of living on a more equalitarian basis than any developing country over the past half century.

Politically, reminiscent of Sun Yat-Sen's call for staged democratic development, Taiwan has moved, particularly over the past two decades, to expand and refine representative democracy. Today it is a model for the world.

Mr. Speaker, the Senate has modified this bill to reflect the concerns of the senior Senator from the State of Utah, Mr. HATCH. The bill now authorizes rather than requires the Secretary of State to formulate and pursue a plan to win observer status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization. The administration supports this change, and I urge that the House do so as well.

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) for his good work on this issue. On May 20 of last year, Chen Shui-bian was sworn in as President of Taiwan. This was an historic event, the first major transfer of power between rival political parties in that nation's history.

Mature democracies like the United States take such political transitions for granted, but the peaceful exchange of power is a rare democratic legacy. Taiwan now shares this privilege. Taiwan has evolved into a stable, prosperous nation governed by the rule of law. Taiwan's 40-year journey toward democracy is a success story. We should acknowledge and reward that progress and celebrate it.

Mr. Speaker, to this end, I introduced H.R. 428, which would authorize our U.S. Department of State to initiate a plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan in this year's World Health Assembly. Ninety-two of my colleagues have cosponsored this bill fostering Taiwan's participation in the World Health Assembly. This is a modest step, but a meaningful one. Observer status in the WHA does not require statehood, in fact the PLO, the Order of Malta, the Vatican, and Rotary International all have observer status in Geneva at the WHA, but passing this bill will be a significant victory for every Taiwanese citizen and for every American who cares about human rights.

Children and families suffer from the effects of inadequate health care,

whether they live in Washington, Geneva, Beijing, or Taipei. In 1998, Taiwan suffered an outbreak of enterovirus 71, a potentially fatal disease that causes severe inflammation of muscle surrounding the brain, spinal cord, and heart. Infants and children are particularly vulnerable to this highly contagious virus. Unfortunately, the Taiwanese doctors treating enterovirus 71 did not have access to the medical resources of the WHO. By the time the outbreak was under control, 70 Taiwanese children had died. Had Taiwan been permitted to draw on WHO expertise, these children could very well still be alive.

But as Taiwan benefits from participation in the WHO, so does the rest of the world. Taiwan, with a highly developed health care system, has made great advances in science and technology. Inclusion in WHO would allow American health officials better access to Taiwanese information, as much as the other way around.

Mr. Speaker, our government's tacit support for the status quo, our unwillingness to fight for Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization, is not only short-sighted, it is unjustifiable. Infectious diseases do not respect politically driven distinctions or national borders. Infectious diseases travel. If there is TB in Taiwan, there will inevitably be TB in the U.S. If there is HIV/AIDS in South Africa, there will inevitably be HIV/AIDS in Brazil.

Mr. Speaker, global illnesses are just that, global. No country is immune when one country faces a public health crisis. Recently, the administration decided to sell four Kidd-class destroyers to Taiwan, despite threats from the People's Republic of China. If our commitment as a Nation is strong enough to justify supporting Taiwan's military defense with arms sales, it certainly is strong enough to justify supporting access to global health resources for Taiwan's 23.5 million people.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the strong support H.R. 428 has received from Members on both sides of the aisle, and look forward to the bill's passage today. I call on President Bush to do the right thing, to go to Geneva and fight for observer status for Taiwan at the World Health Assembly.

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

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 428. I thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) for their excellent work on this measure.

Mr. Speaker, the passage of this measure before the House will mark yet another triumph for the United States and Taiwan. For too long Taiwan has been denied the benefit of participation in the World Health Organization and a dialogue with its member nations concerning public health policy.

Unfortunately, this absence has prevented the people of Taiwan and the members of the World Health Organization from the experiences of an emerging leader in East Asia. I am pleased that we will correct this oversight today.

Mr. Speaker, we have a moral duty to ensure that our neighbors have access to the same lifesaving information and technology that we enjoy in the United States. As one of the world's most densely populated regions, Taiwan has been successful at controlling infectious diseases and matching the infant mortality rates of developed nations. Yet work remains in areas such as food safety and the control of illegal drugs.

Mr. Speaker, the World Health Organization can help Taiwan in those efforts. I am encouraged by the prospects for all the World Health Organization's members, and I look forward to increased participation by Taiwan in world health events. Ultimately, the real benefit of Taiwan's entry in the WHO will be the children of Taiwan who will have better access to immunizations and preventive care.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in this bipartisan effort in supporting this bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me stress that arguably the greatest issue in the world today may well be disease control. What the WHO symbolizes is a people-oriented concern for control of disease. Taiwan should not be precluded from expanding its capacity to meet its people's needs, nor precluded from assisting others in less sophisticated health care centers from receiving the support of Taiwanese doctors and health care delivery specialists.

Mr. Speaker, this is a common-sense bill. I urge support of it.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the House Resolution 428 to approve Taiwan participation in the World Health Organization.

Historically the United States and Taiwan have maintained good relationship. Ever since its establishment in 1912 we have had substantive diplomatic and commercial ties. On April 10, 1979, the House of Representatives have enacted Public Law 96-8, known as the Taiwan Relations Act. This Act played a very important role in shaping our policies toward Taiwan. It is considered as a representation of our best ideals to safeguard security and commercial interests in the area.

Taiwan with its population of approximately 20 million has solidly embraced the principles of a democratic society.

Its medical infrastructure is considered to be among the best in the world. According to a recent report, at the end of 1999, there were 152,385 medical personnel in Taiwan. There are currently 11 medical schools, 13 paramedical junior colleges, and 14 paramedical vocational schools.

Virtually all medical specialties known in the Western World are being practiced in Taiwan.

In view of our close diplomatic ties and excellent health care program in Taiwan, I support House Resolution 428 to allow Taiwan to participate in the World Health Organization.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 428 which authorizes the United States Secretary of State to initiate and implement a plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual summit of the World Health assembly (of the World Health Organization) this month in Geneva, Switzerland. Taiwan and its 23 million people should have appropriate and meaningful participation in the World Health Organization (WHO).

The WHO Constitution states that the "enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition." Yet today, Taiwan is excluded from participation in the WHO because of political pressure from the People's Republic of China.

This means that the people of Taiwan cannot share in the WHO's vital resources and expertise. Taiwanese physicians and health experts are not allowed to take part in WHO-organized forums and workshops regarding the latest techniques in the diagnosis, monitoring and control of diseases. Taiwanese doctors do not have access to WHO medical protocols and health standards.

This is simply not right. Diseases do not stop at national boundaries, and with today's high frequency of international travel, the possibility of transmitting infectious diseases is greater than ever. Good health is a basic right for every citizen of the world, and Taiwan should be granted membership in the WHO.

Despite its exclusion from the WHO, Taiwan has made some remarkable achievements in the field of health, including one of the highest life expectancy levels in Asia, maternal and infant mortality rates comparable to those of western countries, and the eradication of infectious diseases such as smallpox and the plague. Taiwan is the first Asian nation to be rid of polio and the first country in the world to provide children with free hepatitis B vaccinations.

Prior to 1972 and its loss of membership in the WHO, Taiwan sent specialists to serve on health projects in other members countries, and its experts held key positions in the WHO. In recent years, the Taiwanese government has expressed a willingness to assist financially or technically in WHO-supported international aid and health activities, but it has been unable to render such assistance because it is unable to participate in the international health organization.

Taiwan's population of 23 million people is larger than three-quarters of the member states already in the WHO. Clearly, Taiwan and the world community could benefit by its participation in the WHO. I believe the United States should actively support Taiwan's membership in the World Health Organization.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 428.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the initiative by the gentleman from Ohio, Congressman BROWN, concerning Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization. I commend our committee's distinguished chairman, Mr. HYDE and the ranking minority member, the gentleman from California, Mr. LANTOS and the subcommittee chairmen and ranking minority members of the International Operations and Human Rights

