

member, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER); and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) for their leadership on bringing this to us today.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, today we are considering H.R. 1925, the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act, which authorizes Federal assistance for programs that serve and protect runaway and homeless youth and missing and exploited children.

H.R. 1925 contains the reauthorization of both the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act and the Missing Children's Assistance Act. This legislation strengthens these programs in order to address the unique needs of these at-risk youth. With this bill, we will ensure the protection of runaway and homeless youth, keeping them off the streets and away from dangerous circumstances by providing both emergency shelter programs and long-term supportive assistance. Additionally, we continue to support the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and its efforts to locate and recover missing children and help prevent child abductions and sexual exploitation.

H.R. 1925 reauthorizes the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), and will continue to fund the Basic Center Program, the Transitional Living Program, and the Street Outreach Program. Grants are used to develop or strengthen community-based programs that are not part of the law enforcement, juvenile justice, and child welfare system. The Act has been successful in meeting the needs of runaway and homeless youth and in reuniting these youth with their families. There are, however, some specific improvements in H.R. 1925, including adjusting the funding allocation between the Basic Center Program and the Transitional Living Program to address the increased need for transitional services and enable more communities to serve the long-term needs of runaway and homeless youth. This legislation also clarifies that group homes in the Transitional Living Program may provide parenting youth and their children with a supportive and supervised living arrangement in which the pregnant or parenting youth learn parenting and other skills to promote their long-term economic independence and self-sufficiency in order to ensure the well-being of their children.

The Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act also addresses the needs of missing, abducted, and sexually exploited children by reauthorizing the Missing Children's Assistance Act. This legislation increases the authorization level of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children from \$10 million to \$20 million for each of the fiscal years 2004 through 2008, extending the authorization that was begun in the PROTECT Act, and extends the authorization of the remaining activities under the Act through 2008.

I would like to thank Congressman GINGREY for his leadership as the sponsor of this bill, Subcommittee Chairman HOEKSTRA for his guidance on this bill, as well as Mr. MILLER and Mr. HINOJOSA for working with us in a bipartisan manner from the very beginning of the process.

This legislation includes provisions worked out by Members on both sides of the aisle, and reauthorizes programs that should be

supported by the Congress. I would urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1925, the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act. For a program that is only funded at 90 million dollars it has had a large impact.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) programs provide funds to community-based, faith-based and public organizations to develop and expand comprehensive, cost-efficient, and effective management, shelter, housing and supports for youth in high-risk situations and their families. I am pleased this bill was completed in a bipartisan manner and will not prevent shelters from distributing contraception.

There continues to be a need for stable, residential environments that provide life skills supports for youth who are unable to live safely with their families, due to situations of child abuse, neglect, and parental substance abuse.

The current competitive grant mechanism for distributing RHYA funds to community-based, faith-based and public organizations is fundamentally sound and entirely appropriate given the relatively small size of the federal RHYA budget. Most state and local governments do not have the capacity at this time, given their budgetary problems, to absorb the burden of administering RHYA programs.

Congress established RHYA programs as low-cost, prevention and early intervention oriented program alternatives to State custodial child welfare, law enforcement, juvenile justice and mental health systems. The complimentary relationship between runaway and homeless youth serving programs and these various systems would be severely damaged if RHYA programs would be consolidated into any one of them.

The child welfare system in New Jersey is in crisis. Many youths slip through the cracks of the child welfare, juvenile justice and mental health systems. RHYA programs help provide supportive services, i.e., crisis intervention, counseling, housing, safety from the streets and other basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing.

RHYA funds help programs leverage state, local and private funding. Somerset Home, which serves some of my constituents, has a Transitional Living Program, a Basic Center Program and a Street Outreach Program. Federal funds represent \$450,000 of their \$2.5 million budget. The rest of the funding comes from state and local government with private funding from individuals, corporations, corporations and civic-minded groups comprising nearly \$400,000 of the operating budget.

Somerset Home's Outreach Program ensures rapid engagement with young people on the street in an effort to prevent physical and sexual assault, commercial sexual exploitation, disease, long term homelessness, and death.

The Basic Center Program provides funds for emergency shelters for young people unable to live safely with their families and services while conducting efforts to reunite youth with their families or arrange for their placement in alternative supervised settings.

The Transitional Living Program provides transitional housing and life skill supports to older homeless youth.

Somerset Home facilitates health promotion, pregnancy prevention, academic achievement, employment, reduction in sexual exploitation, and other positive factors for youth in high-risk situations.

These services provide a vital safety net that protects youth from further victimization and exploitation. These youth run to the street and find their way to RHYA funded programs due to circumstances in the one such as sexual abuse, physical abuse, substance abuse and other forms of domestic violence. These youths are victims of the unthinkable actions of parents or guardians, entrusted with their care that has violated this trust. Together we can help these youth through the difficult transition from a difficult adolescence to a productive and maybe even happy adulthood.

Mr. Speaker, the nation's runaway and homeless need this program and I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1925, 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. GINGREY. 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.

COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS FOR WINNING THE 2003 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I MEN'S ICE HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 217) commending the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers for Winning the 2003 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 217

Whereas on Saturday, April 12, 2003, the defending NCAA Division I Men's Ice Hockey champions, the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers, won the National Championship for the second straight year;

Whereas the University of Minnesota defeated the University of New Hampshire in the championship game by the score of 5-1, having defeated the University of Michigan 3-2 in overtime in the semifinals;

Whereas the Golden Gophers reached the 56th Annual Frozen Four by defeating Mercyhurst College 9-2 and Ferris State University 7-4;

Whereas the University of Minnesota received an automatic bid to the 2003 NCAA Division I Men's Ice Hockey National Championship Tournament by defeating Colorado College 4-2 in the Western Collegiate Hockey Association Tournament championship game;

Whereas the Golden Gophers became the first repeat NCAA Men's Ice Hockey champions in 31 years;

Whereas the University of Minnesota won their fifth NCAA Men's Ice Hockey title;

Whereas the team displayed academic excellence by maintaining an average grade point average above the university-wide average; and

Whereas all the team's players showed dedication throughout the season toward the goal of winning the National Championship; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers for winning the 2003 NCAA Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship;

(2) recognizes the achievements of all the team's players, coaches, and support staff, and invites them to the United States Capitol Building to be honored;

(3) requests that the President recognize the team's accomplishment, and invite them to the White House for a ceremony in their honor; and

(4) directs the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make available enrolled copies of this resolution to the University of Minnesota for appropriate display, and to transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to each coach and member of the 2003 NCAA Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship team.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 217.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 217. I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO), for bringing this resolution forward.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution recognizes the achievement of the University of Minnesota men's hockey team, the Golden Gophers, for their NCAA Division I championship. The Gophers are the first team in 31 years to win back-to-back championships. With this fifth NCAA title, they are tied for third place in all-time championship victories.

This national championship team is to be commended not only for its athletic success but also and perhaps more importantly for their academic record. In addition to their achievements on the ice, the Minnesota men's hockey team was able to maintain a higher grade point average than the overall student body. This is a testament to the dedication of the team, the leadership of Coach Don Lucia, and the support of family and friends. It is clear this team has a winning spirit and a commitment to excellence.

I extend my congratulations to each of the hardworking players of the Min-

nesota Golden Gophers men's hockey team, to Coach Lucia and to the University of Minnesota.

I am happy to join any colleagues in honoring the accomplishments of this team and wish them continued success. I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 217, congratulating the University of Minnesota for winning the NCAA Division I ice hockey championship. Last month the Golden Gophers captured the national championship for the second straight year. College fans, students, athletes, and the general public were treated to an exciting hockey season and championship tournament. I want to extend my hearty congratulations to Minnesota's head coach and their student athletes for a job well done.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to extend my congratulations to the University of New Hampshire and their student athletes for a great season.

Winning a championship has brought national acclaim to the University of Minnesota. I hope that the Minnesota fans and the University community treasures this moment for many years to come.

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

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) has 19 minutes remaining.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the respectable gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO).

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) for yielding me time, and commend my colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) who is handling the bill and the resolution on the majority side.

Mr. Speaker, Minnesota is a hockey State. I think we are the premiere hockey State in the country, and it has been a great year for hockey in Minnesota. Most recently, we have been excited about the, I suppose what you call, surprising success of the Wild in getting into the division championship in the NHL. But while they are new to our State, Golden Gophers have been playing hockey for 81 years. And that rich tradition we salute today as we congratulate them on winning a second consecutive NCAA championship.

But that is part of a rich tradition. This is their fifth national championship. In their 81 years, they have been in the NCAA Frozen Four Finals 18 times, 27 times to the NCAA tournaments. They have appeared in the national tournament for 13 consecutive years, an NCAA record; 12 conference

playoff championships; 10 conference championships. So they come with a rich, rich tradition of outstanding hockey. Five national championships.

It is a unique team, a unique school with a rich tradition of good hockey, good athletes, good scholars. So we are proud of them. We are proud. We also know that unless there is some unusual circumstances, like pro hockey, most of the team is going to be back next year. Clearly, if you were to pick a favorite today for the NCAA hockey championship a year from now, the Gophers would lead the way.

So to Coach Don Lucia, to all his staff, all his players, the University administration, we say a hearty congratulations on your great success these last 2 years. We congratulate you for a rich tradition of hockey in the hockey State of the United States. We are proud of you and we wish you well in the future.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Minnesota (Mr. SABO) for his remarks. He is right. Minnesota is the hockey capital of the world. He is right that we have been excited by not only NCAA hockey but by professional hockey. We are very proud of our Wild. But it is the Golden Gophers who we are here to commend today.

I am pleased as he is that we will see more of them again next year, and I am doubly excited by looking at my neighbors' kids, all of whom are in elementary school and look at their prowess that we will be a leader for a long time to come.

Again, my hearty congratulations to the team, to the Golden Gophers, to their coach.

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

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

I really enjoyed the remarks by my good friend, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE), and especially my friend, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO). And I want to just share with both of you that we believe in south Texas that it is such a great sport that the community of south Texas has a big hockey coliseum under construction soon to be completed, probably in the fall, September or October. And I wish to invite both of the gentlemen from Minnesota (Mr. SABO and Mr. KLINE) to come to the opening. We are going to have on the Texas-Mexico border visitors from Mexico who also want to be as supportive of hockey as we in America are supportive of soccer.

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So I want both gentlemen to know that they will be getting an invitation to that grand opening, and I hope that they will come and share in the excitement of bringing hockey to my great State of south Texas.

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

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume just to say thank you to my colleague from Texas and to commend him and the Great State of Texas for recognizing the great sport of hockey, and I appreciate the invitation. I hope that I have the opportunity to accept that invitation and join my colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO), for that visit. I hope that this occurs in February. I would be grateful for that consideration at least.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 217.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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ENHANCING COOPERATION AND SHARING OF RESOURCES BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1911) to amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance cooperation and the sharing of resources between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1911

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

SECTION 1. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT COMMITTEE.—(1) Chapter 3 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 320. Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee

“(a) JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—(1) There is established an interagency committee to be known as the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee (hereinafter in this section referred to as the ‘Committee’).

“(2) The Committee is composed of—

“(A) the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs and such other officers and employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may designate; and

“(B) the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and such other officers and employees of the Department of Defense as the Secretary of Defense may designate.

“(b) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.—(1) The Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Under Secretary of Defense shall determine the size and structure of the Committee, as well as the administrative and procedural guidelines for the operation of the Committee.

“(2) The two Departments shall supply appropriate staff and resources to provide ad-

ministrative support and services. Support for such purposes shall be provided at a level sufficient for the efficient operation of the Committee, including a subordinate Health Executive Committee, a subordinate Benefits Executive Committee, and such other committees or working groups as considered necessary by the Deputy Secretary and Under Secretary.

“(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—(1) The Committee shall recommend to the Secretaries strategic direction for the joint coordination and sharing efforts between and within the two Departments under section 8111 of this title and shall oversee implementation of those efforts.

“(2) The Committee shall submit to the two Secretaries and to Congress an annual report containing such recommendations as the Committee considers appropriate.

“(d) FUNCTIONS.—In order to enable the Committee to make recommendations in its annual report under subsection (c)(2), the Committee shall do the following:

“(1) Review existing policies, procedures, and practices relating to the coordination and sharing of resources between the two Departments.

“(2) Identify changes in policies, procedures, and practices that, in the judgment of the Committee, would promote mutually beneficial coordination, use, or exchange of use of services and resources of the two Departments, with the goal of improving the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of benefits and services to veterans, service members, military retirees and their families through an enhanced Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense partnership.

“(3) Identify and assess further opportunities for the coordination and collaboration between the Departments that, in the judgment of the Committee, would not adversely affect the range of services, the quality of care, or the established priorities for benefits provided by either Department.

“(4) Review the plans of both Departments for the acquisition of additional resources, especially new facilities and major equipment and technology, in order to assess the potential effect of such plans on further opportunities for the coordination and sharing of resources.

“(5) Review the implementation of activities designed to promote the coordination and sharing of resources between the Departments.”

(2) The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“320. Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—(1) Subsection (c) of section 8111 of such title is repealed.

(2) Such section is further amended—

(A) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “subsection (c)” and inserting “section 320 of this title”;

(B) in subsection (d)(1), by striking “Committee established in subsection (c)” and inserting “Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee”;

(C) in subsection (e)(1), by striking “Committee under subsection (c)(2)” and inserting “Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee with respect to health care resources”;

(D) in subsection (f)(2), by striking subparagraphs (B) and (C) and inserting the following:

“(B) The assessment of further opportunities identified by the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint

Executive Committee under subsection (d)(3) of section 320 of this title for the sharing of health-care resources between the two Departments.

“(C) Any recommendation made by that committee under subsection (c)(2) of that section during that fiscal year.”

(c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—Subsection (f) of such section is further amended by inserting “(Public Law 107-314)” in paragraphs (3), (4)(A), (4)(B), and (5) after “for Fiscal Year 2003”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—(1) If this Act is enacted before October 1, 2003—

(A) section 320 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on October 1, 2003; and

(B) the amendments made by subsections (b) and (c) shall take effect on October 1, 2003, immediately after the amendment made by section 721(a)(1) of the Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-314; 116 Stat. 2589).

(2) If this Act is enacted on or after October 1, 2003, the amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN).

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

(Mr. BOOZMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, for many years, the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense have been obligated by law to share health care resources. Congress enacted the original sharing law, Public Law 19-174, in 1982. Through a series of hearings and business meetings, our committee found that the law was being unevenly implemented and that much more could be done.

Congress recently reemphasized its commitment to this policy when it passed sections 721 to 726 of the Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2003. Although our committee found evidence that sharing is working very well in some locations, the two Departments have never made a strong commitment to sharing and planning future health care activities. There are many reasons that the two Departments have not shared as much as they could, but we have found in general that there was a lack of committed leadership to implementing the goals of sharing.

The original sharing legislation established a VA-DOD committee to review policies and practices related to sharing of health resources. This committee was charged with identifying new or potential opportunities and making recommendations to VA, DOD and Congress. Our oversight activities revealed the joint committee had not achieved its full potential, and we made a number of changes to the committee's charge last year.

The significance of H.R. 1911 is that it would expand the purposes for which the original joint committee was