

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, on May 1 of each year, child care providers and other early childhood professionals nationwide conduct awareness and education efforts highlighting the importance of good early childhood education for our Nation's young children.

In support of these actions, I have introduced H. Con. Res. 112, a bipartisan resolution in support of National Child Care Worthy Wage Day. This resolution is an effort to support these initiatives and to help develop greater public awareness in this area. Every day, approximately 13 million children are cared for outside the home so that their parents can work, including some who work in our congressional offices.

The committed individuals who nurture and teach these young children are undervalued, despite their important work. We know that children begin to learn at birth, and that the quality of care they receive will affect their language, development, math skills, behavior and general readiness for school. However, the inadequate level of wages for child care staff, roughly \$18,000 a year, has led to difficulties in attracting and retaining high quality early childhood caretakers and educators.

In addition to low wages, less than one-third of child care workers have health insurance, and even fewer have pensions. As a result, the turnover rate for child care providers is 30 percent a year. This high turnover rate interrupts consistent and stable relations that children need to have with their caregivers.

Please join me in recognizing the important work of child care providers and support the efforts to provide them with a worthy wage. The Nation's child care workforce and the families that depend on them deserve our support.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PLATTS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 112, supporting the goals and ideas of a National Child Care Worthy Wage Day. I would like to thank my colleague from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) for her leadership on this issue and for introducing the resolution we are considering here today.

Child care is an integral part of the daily routine of millions of families with young children. Working parents depend on child care so they can earn the income needed to support their families, as well as ensure that their children are well cared for in safe environments while they are working. As a result, approximately 63 percent of children under 5 years of age are in some type of regular child care environment each week.

High-quality child care, care that provides a stable, safe, stimulating environment, helps children enter school prepared to learn. Research has repeat-

edly shown that children who receive high-quality child care demonstrate greater mathematical ability, greater attention and thinking skills and fewer behavioral problems than children who receive low-quality care.

Quality care is directly linked to the quality of the educators, helping children to grow, learn and gain new skills is rewarding. However, it's very physically and emotionally taxing, as educators work long days, must be constantly alert, deal effectively with disruptive children, anticipate and prevent trouble, and provide firm but fair discipline. As a result, many child care workers leave the profession. The turnover rate in this industry is roughly 30 percent per year.

Compensation and additional training are important variables to ensure a high quality child care environment for our children. We need to attract and retain educators who have the caring, consistent relationships that are critical to children's development. I am pleased to commend our Nation's child care providers for their dedicated service to our Nation's children and their families.

I think it's important that we are taking time to recognize the critically important work of child care providers and the importance of doing better when it comes to their pay and benefits.

As a parent myself, my children, now second grade, fourth graders, went through a preschool program that was exceptional, it was certified. In that facility, we had both the preschool program and a very high-quality child care center as well. We saw the benefits to our children personally of that professional setting. An important part of being able to retain professional workers, staff, in those settings, is the pay and benefits.

When we look at the quality of these facilities, if we don't reduce that turnover rate, that 30 percent turnover rate, we will continue to be challenged to get somebody new in and get them up to speed. That impacts the quality of the care provided.

So I, again, commend the sponsor of the resolution for helping to raise national recognition and the importance of this issue, and urge a "yes" vote.

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

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

I want to thank the ranking member, Mr. PLATTS from Pennsylvania. Working with him on the committee has certainly been a joy. We do work very well together.

As the gentleman has said, passing H. Con. Res. 112 is extremely important. I stand by the words that my colleague has spoken. But I think that this Nation really has to start looking at how we prepare, certainly for the few future and for the global economy that we are all facing. Certainly having high-qualified teachers, day care workers to

make sure that our children are getting the best education they possibly can at the earliest age possible. We look at the other countries and see what they are doing. I have to say that many times we are shortchanging our children.

Madam Speaker, I am asking that our Members vote for H. Con. Res. 112.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 112.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam 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 question will be postponed.

COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA GATORS FOR THEIR HISTORIC WIN IN THE 2007 NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 298) to commend the University of Florida Gators for their historic win in the 2007 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Basketball Tournament.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 298

Whereas, on April 2, 2007, the University of Florida Gators defeated the Ohio State Buckeyes 84-75 in the final game of the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament in Atlanta, Georgia;

Whereas the Gators' became the first team since 1991-92 to win back-to-back national titles and just the 7th school ever to be repeat champions;

Whereas the Gators became the first team ever to repeat as champions with the same starting lineup;

Whereas Florida's overall athletic program has proven to be one of the best in the Nation, now having won 21 national champions in all sports combined;

Whereas the University of Florida remains the only program to hold both football and men's basketball championships at the same time and the first school in NCAA history to hold both the basketball and football championship titles in the same calendar year;

Whereas the Gators' head basketball coach Billy Donovan became the 12th coach to win multiple men's basketball championships and one of four active coaches to win multiple titles;

Whereas Donovan became the third youngest coach to win more than one NCAA title;

Whereas the Gators finished their season with an impressive record of 35-5, including

winning the final 10 games of the season, and have an 18-game win streak in the post-season, including sweeps at the Southeastern Conference tournaments the last two years and 12-0 in the NCAA Tournament;

Whereas the Gators contributed Corey Brewer, Al Horford, and Lee Humphrey to the All Tournament Team, joining Greg Oden and Mike Conley, Jr., of Ohio State;

Whereas each player, coach, trainer, manager, and staff member of the University of Florida Gators dedicated this season and their efforts to the common goal of repeating as NCAA men's basketball champions;

Whereas the Gators' players, coaches, and everyone associated with the men's basketball team represent the University and the State of Florida with exemplary sportsmanship and competitiveness; and

Whereas residents of Florida and Gator fans worldwide are to be commended for their longstanding support, perseverance, and pride in the team: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the University of Florida Gators for their historic win in the 2007 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Basketball Tournament;

(2) recognizes the achievements of the players, coaches, students, and support staff who were instrumental in the Gators' victory; and

(3) directs the Clerk of the House of Representatives to transmit a copy of this resolution to University of Florida President J. Bernard Machen and head coach Billy Donovan for appropriate display.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to H. Res. 298 into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Congressman STEARNS for introducing this resolution. I rise in support of House Resolution 298, a bill to commend the University of Florida Gators for their historical win in the 2007 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament.

On April 22 the Florida Gators defeated the Ohio State Buckeyes 84-75 in the final game of the Division I Men's Basketball Tournament in Atlanta, Georgia. The Gators became the first team since 1992 to win back-to-back national titles and just the seventh school ever to be repeat champions.

They were also the first team in history to complete this feat with the same starting lineup. The University of Florida's athletic program has proven

to be one of the best in the Nation, now having won 21 national championships in all sports combined. They are the only program to hold both football and men's basketball championships at the same time, and the first school in NCAA history to hold both the basketball and football championship titles in the same calendar year.

The Gators' basketball team was led by their great coach, Billy Donovan, who became the 12th coach to win multiple basketball championships and one of four active coaches to win multiple titles. On top of that, Donovan became the third youngest coach to win more than one NCAA title. Coach Donovan is also a native of the Fourth Congressional District, originally hailing from Rockville Centre, in my district on Long Island.

The Gators finished their season with an impressive record of 35-5, winning the final 10 games of the season. Every player, coach, trainer, manager and staff member of the University of Florida Gators dedicated this season and their efforts to the common goal of repeating as men's NCAA basketball champions, and did so with class and sportsmanship.

I urge my colleagues to show their support for the Florida Gators and vote for House Resolution 298.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PLATTS. Madam Speaker, I yield the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) as much time as he may consume.

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

Mr. STEARNS. Let me thank, first of all, my colleagues, for bringing this resolution to the floor. I certainly appreciate the gentlelady from New York, I believe, Long Island, for her gracious comments, to know that Billy Donovan also resided in her district. I think that is something that many of us did not know.

Madam Speaker, I do have a little feeling of modesty here and graciousness coming here again to the floor. It's almost like a great case of *déjàvu* again, because it seems like only a few months ago that I came to the floor to honor the University of Florida, which I represent, for winning the national football title.

Yet here I am again, feeling a great deal of humbleness, coming to the House floor to honor the Gators men's basketball team, as pointed out, for becoming the first team since 1991-1992 to win back-to-back national titles. Of course, I am honored to represent the University of Florida, because it's in my congressional district. As we say in Gainesville, "Go Gators." We do indeed hope for another championship.

With their win over the Ohio State Buckeyes on April 2, as mentioned, they became only the seventh school ever to repeat championships. In addition, Florida remains the only school in NCAA history to hold both the

men's basketball and football championship titles in the same year, which is an arduous feat, to say the least. This is quite an accomplishment, and one the entire university community should take a great deal of pride in, which they do.

Many of the so-called experts said that the Gators would not be able to repeat as champions. However, all throughout the season, Coach Billy Donovan kept his team focused and on track and eventually proved the pundits wrong. The Gators were chasing history, so to speak, and they would not be denied.

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The Gators finished their season with an impressive 35-5, winning the final 10 games of the season. Furthermore, my colleagues, they have an 18-game winning streak in the post-season, including sweeps at the Southeastern Conference tournament the last 2 years and a 12-0 in the NCAA tournament.

By winning the championship, Coach Donovan became the 12th coach to win multiple men's basketball championship and one of four active coaches to win multiple titles. He also became the third youngest coach to win more than one NCAA title.

Now, Florida's overall athletic program has proven to be one of the best in the Nation, now having won 21 national championships in all sports combined. Ten Gator athletic teams turned in top 10 finishes in 2005-2006. Florida is one of two schools to appear in the top 10 in each of the last 23 national all-sports ranking.

I appreciate your indulgence here as I brag a little bit more. Gator athletes excel in the classroom as well. UF boasts a 91 percent graduation rate among its athletes, making it only one of four programs in the national all-sports top 10 to achieve a graduation success rate above 90 percent. Furthermore, in the 2002-2003 season, UF placed a record of 193 student athletes on the SEC academic honor role, making six consecutive years UF placed 100 or more student athletes on the SEC honor role.

The University of Florida is more than just athletics. It ranks fifth among Kiplinger's top 10 colleges and is among the Nation's most academically diverse public universities. It is home to 16 colleges and more than 150 research centers and institutes. And during the 2005-2006 school year, they awarded a little over \$500 million in sponsored research to do such things as to find diverse research in health care, citrus production including the world's largest citrus research center.

In addition, my colleagues, more than 300,000 Gator alumni are located throughout the world. Famous alumni include two current NASA astronauts, actress Faye Dunaway, and home improvement expert Bob Vila. Just a little bragging there.

UF's faculty are among the best and most decorated in the world, winning

awards such as the Fields medal, two Pulitzer Prizes, NASA's top award for research, and the Smithsonian Institution's Conservation award. Along with the faculty, the Gator students are among the brightest. UF admitted about 1,049 international baccalaureate students for the 2004-2005 academic year, more than any other university in the world.

So the Florida men's basketball team are excellent representatives of both the university and the great State of Florida in their focus, their persistence, and unassailable desire to succeed. I take great pride, my colleagues, in representing the University of Florida in Congress and congratulate Coach Billy Donovan and the entire university on this great accomplishment and hope for the best for next year. Go Gators.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PLATTS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield as much time as the gentleman may consume to another distinguished member of the Florida delegation, Mr. KELLER.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Florida's men's basketball team on their second consecutive NCAA, Division I championship. On April 2 of this year, they joined only six other teams in NCAA history to win back-to-back championships. My congratulations also go out to Coach Billy Donovan, who has done a fine job with these young men, not only leading them to back-to-back championships but also for preparing them for what lies ahead in life.

The University of Florida is a fine institution with many standout athletes. My home State of Florida and I are tremendously proud of their accomplishments on and off the field. The University of Florida is the only Division I college in history to win the national championship in basketball and football in the same calendar year. In fact, between the Gator championships in basketball and football, I don't think there will be an athlete on campus who has not met the President by the time they graduate.

Now, so many of these Gator basketball and football will be heading off to the NBA and NFL where they will have to struggle to make due on their multimillion dollar salaries. The good news for many of these other schools is that a lot of the starters will be moving on. The bad news, of course, is I am hearing they are having their best recruiting classes ever in both football and basketball. Ohio State was such a worthy opponent both in football and basketball and handled themselves with so much class, much praise is warranted to the Buckeye fans as well. Congratulations on a job well done.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PLATTS. Madam Speaker, we have got a great group of very proud Floridians here today. I am pleased to yield again as much time as the gentleman may consume to the gentleman, Mr. BILIRAKIS, from Florida.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, it is with great Gator pride that I rise today to support this resolution honoring my alma mater, the University of Florida, on winning the 2007 NCAA men's basketball championship.

The Gators began this season looking to become the first team since 1992 to repeat as national champions. Everyone in the Gator nation anxiously anticipated this season's tip-off, as all five starters unselfishly returned to school in hopes of making history. And they did. They became the only team in history to repeat as champions with the same starting lineup.

Last year, this Gator team came from obscurity to win the championship. However, this year the Gators were expected to win, which made them a target for every school they played. These young men not only handled the pressure and scrutiny, but they used it to fuel another amazing title run through both the SEC and the NCAA tournament.

Madam Speaker, I believe that this basketball team represents the true embodiment of sportsmanship and teamwork. For the last 2 years, these young men won with class, not selfishness. The five starters gave up their very lucrative NBA contracts to return to the school they loved. How refreshing. In today's society, this an act that is remarkable. Believe it or not, it is remarkable. I want to commend all of them for their hard work and discipline.

I also want to recognize Coach Billy Donovan and all of his assistants for the tremendous job they have done over the years. We are very lucky to have them, and I am glad he stayed at the University of Florida.

Finally, I want to thank president Bernie Machen and athletic director Jeremy Foley, whose leadership made it possible for the Gators to be the only team in NCAA history to hold both the football and basketball titles simultaneously.

I wish the University of Florida the best of luck in continuing this remarkable trend. And on behalf of my entire family, including my sons Michael, Teddy, Manuel, and Nicholas, thanks for making our dream come true, Gators.

Madam Speaker, it truly is great to be a Florida Gator.

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

The Florida Gators team will certainly go down as one of the best teams in the history of college basketball. After winning back-to-back championships this year, Coach Billy Donovan said, "I sit up here very, very humbled, because I think I was fortunate enough over the last 2 years to coach a group

of guys that has to go down in history as one of the greatest teams of all time."

The love for the game and each other, the hustle and hard work that the players exemplified the past 2 years is something they certainly learned from their head coach, Billy Donovan. At the young age of 41, Coach Donovan is now in some elite company being one of only four active coaches to have won multiple championships.

I extend my heartiest congratulations to Head Coach Donovan, all of the hardworking players, their fans, and all members of the University of Florida family, including another distinguished graduate of the University of Florida who I would be in trouble with if I didn't mention when I go home tonight. My next oldest brother, Mark Platts, graduated in 1987 with a master's degree from the University of Florida.

I am happy to join with my chairwoman as well as my colleagues from Florida in honoring this exceptional team and all of its accomplishments and wish them continued success, unless they are playing my alma mater in the years to come.

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

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, again I encourage my colleagues to pass H. Res. 298. And congratulations again and certainly may they have a great future.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. HARMAN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 298.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. PLATTS. Madam 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 question will be postponed.

CONGRATULATING CHARTER SCHOOLS FOR THEIR ONGOING CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 344) congratulating charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 344

Whereas charter schools deliver high-quality education and challenge our students to reach their potential;