

plan that was passed in January of 2007, of this year, was either not the real plan or it is a failed plan and we need to be talking about a new plan.

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to thank the gentleman from Georgia for his compelling and expansive support of this resolution, and I urge its support.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1225, designating June as National Safety Month. After years of decline, the numbers of unintentional injuries and deaths in the United States have risen to unacceptable new heights. Deaths from motor vehicle collisions, poisoning from unintentional overdoses, and falls remain the three leading causes of preventable death in the United States. For example, in 2005, the Illinois Department of Public Health reported that accidents, both motor vehicle and other types of accidents, were the leading cause of death for persons ages 1 to 44 in Illinois. According to the 2008 edition of the National Safety Council's Injury Facts publication, the annual cost of unintentional injuries to Americans and their employers now exceeds \$650 billion.

To reduce the prevalence and severity of these injuries, Congress annually designates June as National Safety Month. By providing a public service campaign around the theme "Make A Difference," the National Safety Council promotes public awareness by highlighting the most significant causes for unintentional injuries and deaths in the workplace, on the road, and in the home and community. Equally important, the public campaign also stresses what Americans can do to prevent much of the needless suffering and expense associated with these accidents.

Each week of the month-long observance will focus on a unique safety issue. During the first week of June, the campaign focused on Emergency Preparedness. As a country we can make a difference by knowing how to perform CPR and acquiring Automated External Defibrillator training, both of which, if applied within minutes of a cardiac arrest, double the chances of survival. This week the campaign highlights the perils of distracted driving. According to a recent report by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, nearly 80 percent of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes involved some form of driver inattention within three seconds before the event. Next week, the campaign spotlights the escalating co-relation between the rise in the consumption of prescription medication and rise in overdose fatalities. During the last week of June, the campaign centers on the importance of fall prevention, highlighting tips for preventing falls in the workplace, as well as fall prevention tips for aging adults. The campaign will conclude on Monday, June 30th, with tips for Independence Day and summer safety. Summer is a time of increased rates of preventable injuries and death. As a country, we can make a difference by becoming more aware about safe practices. We must recognize our responsibility to implement interventions that make our world a safer place to live. I urge you to join me in supporting H. Res. 1225, designating June as National Safety Month and focusing individuals' and business leaders' attention on injury risks and preventions.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1225.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. YARMUTH. 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.

RECONNECTING HOMELESS YOUTH ACT OF 2008

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5524) to amend the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act to authorize appropriations, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5524

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Section 302 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) as paragraphs (4), (5), and (6), respectively, and

(2) inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

"(3) services to such young people should be developed and provided using a positive youth development approach that ensures the young person a sense of—

"(A) safety and structure;

"(B) belonging and membership;

"(C) self-worth and social contribution;

"(D) independence and control over one's life; and

"(E) closeness in interpersonal relationships;"

SEC. 3. GRANTS FOR CENTERS AND SERVICES.

Section 311 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5711) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)(B)(i) by inserting before the semicolon the following:

"provided for a continuous period not to exceed 15 days, except that such shelter may be provided for a continuous period not to exceed 21 days if the State where the center is located has an applicable State or local law or regulation that permits a length of stay in excess of such 15 days in compliance with licensure requirements for child and youth serving facilities";

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking "The" and inserting "(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) and to the extent that sufficient funds are available, the";

(ii) by striking "\$100,000" and inserting "\$150,000";

(iii) by striking "\$45,000" and inserting "\$70,000"; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

"(B) For fiscal years 2009 and 2010, the amount allotted under paragraph (1) with respect to a State for a fiscal year shall be not less than the amount allotted with respect to such State for fiscal year 2008.";

(B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4), and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

"(3) Whenever the Secretary determines that any part of the amount allotted under paragraph (1) with respect to a State will not be obligated before the end of the fiscal year, the Secretary shall reallocate such part under paragraph (1) with respect to the remaining States for obligation for such fiscal year.";

SEC. 4. BASIC CENTER GRANT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY.

Section 312(b) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5712(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (11) by striking "and" at the end,

(2) in paragraph (12) by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(13) shall develop an adequate emergency preparedness and management plan.";

SEC. 5. TRANSITIONAL LIVING GRANT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY.

Section 322(a) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 2714-2(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking "indirectly" the 1st place it appears and inserting "by contract", and

(B) by striking "and services" and inserting ", and to provide, directly or indirectly, services";

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking "except that a youth" and inserting the following:

"except that in the case of—

"(i) a youth";

(B) by inserting "such youth may" after "program," and

(C) by striking "period;" and inserting the following:

"period; and

"(ii) a program that is located in a State that has an applicable State or local law or regulation that permits a length of stay in excess of such 540-day period in compliance with licensure requirements for child and youth serving facilities, a youth may remain in such program throughout a continuous period not to exceed 635 days;"

(3) in paragraph (14) by striking "and" at the end,

(4) in paragraph (15) by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

"(16) to develop an adequate emergency preparedness and management plan.";

SEC. 6. RESEARCH, EVALUATION, DEMONSTRATION, AND SERVICE PROJECTS.

Section 343 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-23) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking "special consideration" and inserting "priority"; and

(ii) by striking "relating to" and inserting "focused on";

(B) in paragraph (8)—

(i) by inserting "quality" after "access to";

(ii) by striking "mental" and inserting "behavioral"; and

(iii) by striking "and" at the end,

(C) in paragraph (9) by striking the period at the end and inserting the following:

"including educational and workforce programs with outcomes such as decreasing the secondary school drop-out rate, increasing diploma or equivalent attainment rates, or

increasing placement and retention in post-secondary education or advanced workforce training; or”.

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(10) programs, including innovative programs, that assist youth in obtaining and maintaining safe and stable housing, and may include programs with supportive services that continue after program completion.”, and

(2) by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

“(c) In selecting among applicants for grants under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

“(1) give priority to applicants who have experience working with runaway youth or homeless youth; and

“(2) ensure that the applicants selected—

“(A) are geographically representative of different regions of the United States; and

“(B) carry out projects that serve diverse populations of runaway or homeless youth.”.

SEC. 7. ESTIMATE OF INCIDENCE AND PREVALENCE OF YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.

Part D of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-21-5714-24) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 345. PERIODIC ESTIMATE OF INCIDENCE AND PREVALENCE OF YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.

“(a) PERIODIC ESTIMATE.—Not later than 2 years after the effective date of this section, and at 5-year intervals thereafter, the Secretary, in coordination with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, shall prepare and submit to the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Judiciary of the Senate, and make public, a report—

“(1) by using the best quantitative and qualitative social science research method available, containing an estimate of the incidence and prevalence of runaway and homeless individuals who are less than 26 years of age and not less than 13 years of age; and

“(2) that includes with such estimate an assessment of the characteristics of such individuals.

“(b) CONTENT.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include—

“(1) the results of conducting a survey of, and direct interviews with, a representative sample of runaway and homeless individuals who are less than 26 years of age and not less than 13 years of age, to determine past and current—

“(A) socioeconomic characteristics of such individuals;

“(B) barriers to such individuals obtaining—

“(i) safe, quality, and affordable housing;

“(ii) comprehensive and affordable health insurance and health services; and

“(iii) incomes, public benefits, supportive services, and connections to caring adults; and

“(C) such other information that the Secretary determines, in consultation with States, units of local government, and national nongovernmental organizations concerned with homelessness, may be useful.

“(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—If the Secretary enters into any contract with a non-Federal entity for purposes of carrying out subsection (a), such entity shall be a nongovernmental organization, or an individual, determined by the Secretary to have appropriate expertise in quantitative and qualitative social science research.”.

SEC. 8. SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM.

Section 351(b) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-41(b)) is amended by inserting “public and” after “priority to”.

SEC. 9. NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH AWARENESS CAMPAIGN.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating part F as part G, and

(2) by inserting after part E the following:

“PART F—NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

“SEC. 361. NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH AWARENESS CAMPAIGN.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, directly or through grants or contracts, conduct a national homeless youth awareness campaign (referred to in this section as the ‘national awareness campaign’) in accordance with this section for purposes of—

“(1) increasing awareness of individuals of all ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and geographic locations, of the issues facing runaway and homeless youth, the resources available for these youth, and the tools available for the prevention of youth runaway and homeless situations; and

“(2) encouraging parents, guardians, educators, health care professionals, social service professionals, law enforcement officials, and other community members to seek to prevent runaway youth and youth homelessness by assisting youth in averting or resolving runaway and homeless situations.

“(b) USE OF FUNDS.—Funds made available to carry out this section for the national awareness campaign may be used only for the following:

“(1) The dissemination of educational information and materials through various media, including television, radio, the Internet and related technologies, and emerging technologies.

“(2) Partnerships, including outreach activities, with national organizations concerned with youth homelessness, community-based youth service organizations (including faith-based organizations), and government organizations related to the national awareness campaign.

“(3) In accordance with applicable laws and regulations, the development and placement of public service announcements in telecommunications media, including the Internet and related technologies and emerging technologies, that educate the public on the issues facing runaway and homeless youth (or youth considering running away) and on the opportunities that adults have to assist such youth.

“(4) Evaluation of the effectiveness of the national awareness campaign.

“(c) PROHIBITIONS.—None of the funds made available under subsection (b) may be obligated or expended for any of the following:

“(1) To supplant pro bono public service time donated by national or local broadcasting networks, advertising agencies, production companies, or other pro bono work for the national awareness campaign.

“(2) For partisan political purposes, or express advocacy in support of or to defeat any clearly identified candidate, clearly identified ballot initiative, or clearly identified legislative or regulatory proposal.

“(3) To fund advertising that features any elected officials, persons seeking elected office, cabinet level officials, or other Federal employees employed in positions in schedule C of part 213 of title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations (January 1, 2008), as amended from time to time.

“(4) To fund advertising that does not contain a primary message intended to educate the public on the issues facing runaway and homeless youth (or youth considering running away) or on the opportunities for adults to help such youth.

“(5) To fund advertising that solicits contributions to support the national awareness campaign.

“(d) FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY.—The Secretary shall perform—

“(1) audits and reviews of costs of the national awareness campaign pursuant to sec-

tion 304C of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (41 U.S.C. 254d); and

“(2) an audit to determine whether the costs of the national awareness campaign are allowable under section 306 of such Act (41 U.S.C. 256).

“(e) REPORT.—The Secretary shall include in each report submitted under section 382 a summary of the national awareness campaign that describes—

“(1) the activities undertaken by the national awareness campaign;

“(2) steps taken to ensure that the national awareness campaign operates in an effective and efficient manner consistent with the overall strategy and focus of the national awareness campaign; and

“(3) each grant made to, or contract entered into with, a particular corporation, partnership, or individual working on the national awareness campaign.”.

SEC. 10. DEFINITIONS.

Section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)(A)—

(A) in clause (i)—

(i) by striking “not more than” each place it appears and inserting “less than”, and

(ii) by inserting after “age” the last place it appears the following:

“, or until attaining a higher maximum age if the State where the center is located has an applicable State or local law or regulation that permits such higher maximum age in compliance with licensure requirements for child and youth serving facilities”, and

(B) in clause (ii) by striking “age;” and inserting the following:

“age and either—

“(I) less than 22 years of age; or

“(II) an age exceeding 22 years of age as of the expiration of the maximum period of stay permitted under section 322(a)(2)(ii) if such individual commences such stay before attaining 22 years of age;”, and

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (7) as paragraphs (5) through (8), respectively.

SEC. 11. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 388(a) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5751(a)) is amended—

(1) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

“(1) AUTHORIZATION.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title (other than parts E and F, and section 345) \$150,000,000 for fiscal year 2009 and such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.”.

(2) by amending paragraph (4) to read as follows:

“(4) PART E.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out part E \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2009 and such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.”, and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) PART F.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out part F \$3,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.

“(6) SECTION 345.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out section 345 such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.”.

SEC. 12. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 390. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.—Not later than 1 year after the effective date of this section, the Secretary

shall establish by rule performance standards applicable to public and nonprofit private entities and agencies that receive grants under sections 311, 321, and 351.

“(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.—The Secretary shall integrate performance standards established under subsection (a) into the Secretary’s processes for grant-making, monitoring, and evaluation for programs under sections 311, 321, and 351.

“(c) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult with representatives of public and private entities and agencies that receive grants under this title, statewide and regional nonprofit organizations (and combinations of such organizations) that receive grants under this title, and national nonprofit organizations concerned with youth homelessness in developing the performance standards required by subsection (a).

“(d) PUBLIC COMMENT.—The Secretary shall provide an opportunity for public comment concerning the establishment of the performance standards required by subsection (a) before issuing rules to establish such standards, and shall maintain an official record of such public comment.”

SEC. 13. GAO STUDY AND REPORT.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General shall conduct a study of, and make findings and recommendations relating to, the process for making grants under parts A, B, and E of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, with respect to—

(1) the written responses made by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to (and any other methods for communicating with) grant applicants who are do not receive a grant under part A, B, or E of such Act, to determine if the information provided in such responses to such applicants is conveyed clearly,

(2) the structure of the grant application and associated documents (including announcements that grants are available under such parts), to determine if such application is structured so that the applicant has a clear understanding of what is required in each provision to successfully complete the application, including a clear explanation of terminology required to be used by the applicant throughout the document,

(3) the peer review process (if any) used to review grant applications (including the selection of peer reviewers) and the oversight of the peer review process by employees of the Department of Health and Human Services, as well as the extent to which such employees make funding determinations based on the comments and scores of the individuals who perform peer reviews,

(4) the typical time frame and the process used by such employees, including employee responsibilities, for responding to applicants and the efforts taken to communicate with applicants when there is a delay of decisions on applications or when funds to carry out this title are not appropriated before the beginning of the then current fiscal year, and

(5) the plans for and implementation of, where practicable, the new training and technical assistance programs and their effect on the grant application process.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit a report to the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Judiciary of the Senate, containing a summary of the results of the study conducted under subsection (a), together with the findings and recommendations made by the Comptroller General based on such results.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend and insert extraneous material on H.R. 5524 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. YARMUTH. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act, which I introduced earlier this year. This legislation will reauthorize the sole source of Federal funding for at least 1 million young people who find themselves homeless or unaccompanied each year. Some of those children are born homeless, but most run away to escape mental, emotional or physical abuse. More than a third of them are victims of sexual abuse in the home.

Although they escape terrible conditions at home, for most, what is waiting for them on the street is no better. These youths are raped or assaulted at rates two to three times the national average, they are seven more times likely to contract HIV, and a third of them attempt suicide. For these young people, hope is a distant concept and the future is little more than a dead end.

The situation is bleak, but the solutions are within our grasp. My hometown of Louisville, thanks to organizations like Safe Place and Boys Haven, has set the standard for helping homeless youth find a home, get an education and rediscover their futures.

I invited Rusty Booker to testify before the Education and Labor Committee last year. Rusty, a fellow Louisvillian, ran away from an abusive home at the age of 12 and went through five different foster homes before finding his path at Safe Place. Rusty showed us that we have the answers, we have the tools to eliminate childhood homelessness and disconnection, but only if we choose to use them.

That is the opportunity we have before us today, because despite the tremendous work of our service organizations, the funds and personnel to accommodate the basic needs of our Nation’s runaway and homeless youth are far short of meeting the demand and the required infrastructure is simply not in place. We need to do more than just contain these children while we have them. We must set them on a path to adulthood, prepared for the workplace and ready for the world, without dragging the dead weight of a history of neglect.

The Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act will refocus our resources and give America a real shot at eradicating youth homelessness forever. Thanks to the groundwork laid in Louisville, the

Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act won’t simply extend the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act until 2013. It will provide significant improvements and much-needed expansions.

Addressing the critical funding shortfall, this legislation will dramatically increase the reauthorization for Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funding to \$150 million per year, ensuring that the resources are in place for community-serving organizations to reach every child in need.

The bill will also increase the basic center program allotments for small States, make public entities eligible for street outreach program funds, establish grantee performance standards, and finally create a process for developing a national runaway and homeless youth research and evaluation agenda.

The progress that we have made in the past year is significant. In fiscal year 2007, 740,000 young people were helped by our HYA programs. But more significant will be the advances down the road. As we work to restore faith in this Nation’s future, we must build an America where every child has a chance to learn, succeed, and at the very least have a place to call home.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation, which will offer a chance and a childhood to millions of our most vulnerable citizens.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the lead Republican sponsor of H.R. 5524, the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008. I am pleased to be here with my good friend the gentleman from Kentucky, Congressman JOHN YARMUTH, as we consider this important bill reauthorizing and strengthening the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program, set to expire this year.

Mr. Speaker, each year, between 1 and 3 million children in the United States find themselves on their own and on the street. Throughout our Nation, local shelters, like NCO Youth & Family Services and Aunt Martha’s in my district rely on Federal support to keep these children safe and off the streets.

Congress first enacted the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act in 1974 and has regularly reauthorized it to ensure a basic level of support for unaccompanied youth. To meet the needs of these children, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act authorizes three major programs: The Basic Center Program, the Transitional Living Program and the Street Outreach Program.

The Basic Center Program, or BCP, provides youth with emergency short-term shelter, food, clothing, counseling and referrals for health care. The BCP seeks to reunite young people with their families whenever possible or to locate appropriate alternative placements. In 2006, BCP grantees served more than 48,000 youth.

The Transitional Living Program, or TLP, assists older homeless youth in

developing skills and resources to promote their independence and prevent future dependency on social services. In 2006, TLP grantees provided services to more than 3,600 youth.

The Street Outreach Program provides emergency shelter and related services to young people who have been or are at the risk of being sexually abused or exploited. The goal of these efforts is to inform young people about services that can help them find suitable housing and address the problems that lead them to be on the street.

□ 1630

In 2006, the Street Outreach Program served over 619,000 youth. The bill before us today reauthorizes the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act through fiscal year 2013. Under the bill, the Department of Health and Human Services would establish grantee performance standards and provide a periodic estimate of the incidence of youth homelessness.

H.R. 5524 also creates a National Homeless Youth Awareness Campaign that will focus on increasing awareness about the issues facing runaway and homeless youth and the tools available for preventing runaway and homeless youth situations.

While the prevalence of homelessness is difficult to measure, it is estimated that about 5 to nearly 8 percent of youth experience homelessness each year. More can and must be done. The Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act will strengthen Federal efforts to keep our children safe and off the street.

I would like to take a moment to share the story of one of these kids, Dennis, a constituent of mine, whose life changed as a result of one of these programs strengthened in this bill, the Transitional Living Program. As a senior in high school, Dennis began to isolate himself from family and friends. He was diagnosed with a bipolar disorder, and even though he was prescribed medicine, he didn't take it. According to Dennis, he felt "walled off to a point where it just crushes in on you, it was like someone turned off the switch. It was very, very difficult to see joy."

After months of bitterly fighting with his parents, Dennis packed up his car and ran away. He stayed on the couch of friends and family for the remainder of his senior year in high school and continued to deteriorate.

Fortunately, that year, Dennis learned of the NCO Youth and Family Services Transitional Living Program, and he decided to use it for housing. He needed a place to stay. But the program was not just housing, it taught him to manage his disorder, as well as training and managing, budget, cooking and cleaning, monitoring his credit, applying for a job, securing transportation and locating an apartment.

The program helped Dennis secure a job, giving him the hope and determination to make something of himself. After successful completion of the

Transitional Living Program, where is he now? Well, Dennis is an Army private serving honorably in Kuwait.

According to Dennis, without the program, he would be half dead now. He says, "If I hadn't come to NCO, I think I wouldn't have made it."

Because of the stories like this and the success that we have seen, I am really proud to join Mr. YARMUTH, my fellow sponsor, in support of this bill. This bill is about helping homeless children, and I strongly support it and urge its passage.

We need to start thinking about how to help families facing the prospect of homelessness because they are being squeezed by high energy prices, rising prices for gasoline needed to get to and from a job, for the food needed to feed their families and even for natural gas to keep their homes warm in the winter and for electricity needed to keep them cool in the summer, we are putting enormous pressure on the American families that can least afford it.

In addition to helping homeless kids, this Congress must take action to increase the supply of oil, reduce the price of gasoline and support the development of advanced energy technologies and alternatives to oil and gas.

Just this past weekend, the national average price of gasoline hit \$4 a gallon for the first time. Well, I can assure you that for my constituents in the Chicago area, \$4 for gas would be moving in the right direction. We have been paying well over \$4 a gallon for weeks.

While I urge my colleagues to support this bill today, I also urge this House to take action to address the high price of energy generally and gasoline in particular, which, if left unchecked, will certainly increase the ranks of homelessness in the U.S.

With that, I thank my colleague, Mr. YARMUTH, for working with me to produce the bipartisan bill we are considering today.

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I have the great honor of yielding as much time as he may consume to my colleague on the Education and Labor Committee, Mr. HINOJOSA, from Texas.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5524, the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act.

I would like to thank my two good friends, Representative JOHN YARMUTH from Kentucky and Representative JUDY BIGGERT from Illinois, for their strong leadership on this important legislation to my district in south Texas and to the whole Nation.

An estimated 2.8 million youth under the age of 17 experience a homeless situation each year. Many more young adults under the age of 24 find themselves without a place to call home.

Our Nation's homeless youth are exposed to some of the harshest elements imaginable. They are exposed to the harsh elements of hot and cold weath-

er. These homeless youth are exposed to the harsh elements of crime, of abuse and exploitation on the street. They are vulnerable to illness and physical trauma.

These homeless youth are deprived of the protective and nurturing elements that come with a home and a strong supportive family. They are robbed of the supports necessary for a productive adulthood. The Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act will reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, which provides support to youth through basic centers and shelters, transitional living programs and street outreach. This is the only Federal law targeted solely to unaccompanied youth.

I am very proud to be an original co-sponsor of this legislation and would like to thank the authors for including many of the provisions to improve the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act from legislation I introduced last summer. H.R. 3409, the Place to Call Home Act, is included in this bill.

Homelessness among our Nation's youth will persist until all sectors of society, including the Congress, declare that a safe place to live and a connection to permanent and loving families and communities are basic needs we will ensure for all young people. This legislation is one significant step in that direction.

I strongly urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 5524, the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, does the gentleman from Kentucky have any further speakers?

Mr. YARMUTH. We are prepared to close if you are prepared to close.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me just thank, again, the gentleman from Kentucky and the gentleman from Texas for their work on this bill and also the staffs on both side of the aisle from the Education and Labor Committee for all of their work.

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, with that, I strongly urge my colleagues to pass this important legislation that for more than 1 million young people each year could mean the difference between continuing to live on the streets without hope and finding a path to independent adulthood that begins with a place to call home.

I want to thank Chairman MILLER, Chairwoman MCCARTHY, and especially Representative BIGGERT for her hard work and dedication to this issue.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of H.R. 5524, The Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act.

This bill reauthorizes the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, which is under the jurisdiction of the subcommittee which I chair, the Healthy Families and Communities Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor. Mr. YARMUTH, the bill's sponsor, is on my subcommittee and it was a pleasure to work with him on this reauthorization. Each

member of my subcommittee is both passionate and committed to improving the lives of our Nation's children. In this case, Mr. YARMUTH is seeking to assist some of our Nation's most vulnerable youth, those who run away from home or who have no home.

It is a travesty that this situation exists in our Nation—that children find themselves in situations where they need to leave their home for any number of reasons—they are thrown out, have been abused, and face other challenges at home. Worse yet, too many of our Nation's foster care youth find themselves released from the system at or around age 18 and are left to fend for themselves without guidance or little to no assistance, and they become part of the over one million runaway or homeless youth in our Nation. These resilient youth seek caring adults, stability, and the ability to see their future as different from their present situation.

This reauthorization improves the basic central programs, street outreach programs, and the transitional living program. As we heard in a hearing in my subcommittee, it is just too easy to look away and dismiss the problem or accept that it is inevitable that there will be homeless youth. We see it, acknowledge it, and do nothing about it. However, if we dismiss or tolerate the problem of runaway and homeless youth, I think that we can easily expect that we will see these youth in other social systems where they may stay for the rest of their lives. Helping these youth in the here and now is both intervention and prevention. We must maintain a long-term vision for our Nation's youth. Investing in all children at an early age is clearly necessary, but we also must attend to our older youth who face challenges that neither you nor I have experienced as teenagers and young people.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. YARMUTH has worked very hard with the community that works with runaway and homeless youth to create a strong reauthorization of these programs. He has included the development and implementation of performance standards to be used in the grant making process, to better allow the Family and Youth Services Bureau of the Department of Health and Human Services to evaluate each program and fund the best of the best. You see, these programs are good, and the competition is strong for any funding that is available.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes on H.R. 5524, the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act today. It is an investment in our Nation's most vulnerable youth and in all of America's young people. They seek caring adults and opportunities to improve their lives at home and their futures. If we help these youth now, we prevent them from entering into child welfare and juvenile justice systems, each path fraught with challenges. I think that we can all come together to change the lives of children for the better.

Mr. YARMUTH. 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. YARMUTH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5524, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

JOSH MILLER HEARTS ACT

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4926) to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to establish a grant program for automated external defibrillators in schools, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4926

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Josh Miller Helping Everyone Access Responsive Treatment in Schools Act of 2008" or the "Josh Miller HEARTS Act".

SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM FOR AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Education shall carry out a program under which the Secretary makes grants to local educational agencies, to be used by the local educational agencies for one or both of the following:

(1) To purchase automated external defibrillators for use in elementary and secondary schools served by the local educational agency.

(2) To provide training to enable elementary and secondary schools served by the local educational agency to meet the requirements of subsection (d)(1), but only if automated external defibrillators are already in use at such schools or are acquired through this program.

(b) ELIGIBILITY.—

(1) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a local educational agency shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such form, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(2) ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS.—To be eligible to receive an automated external defibrillator through a grant under this section, a school may be any public or private school served by the local educational agency, except that an Internet- or computer-based community school is not eligible.

(c) MATCHING FUNDS REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this section, the local educational agency must provide matching funds from non-Federal sources equal to not less than 25 percent of the amount of the grant.

(2) WAIVER.—The Secretary shall waive the requirement of paragraph (1) for a local educational agency if the number of children counted under section 1124(c)(1)(A) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6333(c)(1)(A)) is 20 percent or more of the total number of children aged 5 to 17, inclusive, served by the local educational agency.

(d) TRAINING AND COORDINATION REQUIRED.—A local educational agency that receives a grant under this section shall demonstrate that, for each elementary and secondary school at which the automated external defibrillators are to be used—

(1) there are at least 5 individuals at the school who—

(A) are employees or volunteers at the school;

(B) are at least 18 years of age; and

(C) have successfully completed training, with the expectation that the certification

shall be maintained, in the use of automated external defibrillators and in cardio pulmonary resuscitation, conducted by the American Heart Association, the American Red Cross, the National Safety Council, or another nationally recognized organization offering training programs of similar caliber;

(2) local paramedics and other emergency services personnel are notified where on school grounds the automated external defibrillators are to be located; and

(3) the automated external defibrillator will be integrated into the school's emergency response plan or procedures.

(e) PRIORITY.—In making grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to schools—

(1) that do not already have an automated external defibrillator on school grounds;

(2) at which a significant number of students, staff, and visitors are present on school grounds during a typical day;

(3) with respect to which the average time required for emergency medical services (as defined in section 330J of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c-15(f))) to reach the school is greater than the average time for emergency medical services to reach other public facilities in the community; and

(4) that have not received funds under the Rural Access to Emergency Devices Act (42 U.S.C. 254c note).

(f) ESEA DEFINITIONS.—The terms used in this section shall have the meanings given to such terms in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2013.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. KUHLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend and insert extraneous material on H.R. 4926 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4926, the Josh Miller HEARTS Act. This is a bill that will save countless lives at a relatively low cost to taxpayers.

According to the American Heart Association, more than 200,000 Americans die of sudden cardiac arrest each year. Even more disturbing is the fact that 50,000 of these deaths could have been prevented with the use of an automated external defibrillator, or AED.

AEDs are portable devices used to restart the heart after sudden cardiac arrest. Studies have shown that these devices, which are required in Federal buildings and on airplanes, can be safely used by anyone, including children. Defibrillators talk the user through the lifesaving process and do not deliver a shock unless the heartbeat analyzed through the machine is in need of it.