

and enriching the lives of youths. Mr. Reemstma graduated from Sioux Falls College in 1967 and took his first job at Melcher-Dallas. In 1970 he took a science teaching position at O.B. Laing Middle School in Algona, where he remained until his retirement. He actually hated science classes while growing up but began to enjoy science during his senior year high school biology class. During his time as a teacher, he especially enjoyed taking Washington, DC, trips with students. In addition to teaching, Mr. Reemstma is the music director at First Presbyterian Church in Algona and the president of the Water's Edge Nature Center Foundation. In all, Mr. Reemstma has helped shape the lives of thousands of students.

Mr. Reemstma's leadership will be missed, but he leaves a lasting impact on the Algona community and everyone he has been involved with. I consider it an honor to represent Mr. Walter Reemstma in the United States Congress, and I wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE  
OF CONNECTING FOSTER YOUTH  
TO THE WORKFORCE THROUGH  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

SPEECH OF

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 29, 2008*

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1332, "Recognizing the importance of connecting foster youth to the workforce through internship programs, and encouraging employers to increase employment of former foster youth". First, I would like to thank my distinguished colleague, DENNIS CARDOZA of California, for introducing this important piece of legislation. This resolution will recognize the significance of creating links between foster youth and the workplace through internship opportunities while also urging employers to pursue former foster youth. The creation of internship and employment opportunities for current and former foster youths has the potential to dramatically shape the lives of thousands for the better. I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this act.

There are over 500,000 children and youth in foster care. As the youth age out of the system, 50 percent become homeless within the first 18 months of emancipation. Less than half of these youth are employed 2.5–4 years after leaving the system. Only 38 percent remain employed for over a year. Former foster care youth are twice as likely to have children in foster care. This problem is systemic, yet through opportunities and internships we can break this cycle of impoverishment and failure.

This bill is an appeal to our Nation's employers to help us address this issue by providing internships for disadvantaged foster youth, and by providing employment once they "age-out" of the foster care system. Such action will instill knowledge and work-ethic. These experiences will open up a new world of opportunity to a group that was struggling, not due to a lack of inherent qualifications, but rather due to the misfortunes of their upbringing.

This resolution will express the desire of Congress to address the problems of foster care youth, and this resolution will express Congress' widespread support of partnerships and initiatives between businesses and foster care programs, to help better prepare foster care youth for the working world.

This resolution seeks to benefit the over 500,000 foster care children and youth by providing them with the opportunity to further themselves through educational and work experiences. As these experiences accrue, they will present the foster youth with an idea of the opportunities latent within their world, and will hopefully inspire them to move forward in pursuit of job and educational opportunities.

As of 2003 there were 26,133 children in the Texas foster care system. Since then, the number has only risen. For many of these children the future will include stints in jail, poverty, and homelessness, yet strong action on the part of businesses and foster care programs in creating internships and partnerships may save many from this fate, leading them to secure jobs and successful lives. I have often concerned myself with issues regarding the safety and success of our future, our Nation's children. By preventing toxic lead levels in houses, by ensuring the safety of children in schools, and by encouraging businesses to form partnerships with foster care, we take small, but significant, steps toward guaranteeing the well-being of our children and the security our Nation's future. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

EMPLOYEE VERIFICATION  
AMENDMENT ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. DAVID DREIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 30, 2008*

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the extension of the e-verify program, which I have supported since it was initially created under the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996. Since that time we have continued our fight to strengthen our immigration laws.

Unfortunately when we had the debate in 1996 my colleagues did not approve an amendment to make our Social Security card counterfeit-proof. Since that time, I have worked with my colleagues in a bi-partisan way to ensure that we improve our employment verification system and Social Security cards so that neither is susceptible to fraud. To achieve this goal I have introduced H.R. 98, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Social Security Protection Act with my colleague from Texas, the distinguished chair of the House Intelligence Committee and former Border Patrol Agent SILVESTRE REYES. This bill would go a long way to address the employment magnet that draws illegal immigrants to the United States.

It is important to note that the bill before us commissions further studies on the e-verify program. We know from a 2005 GAO study on e-verify that the system is still susceptible to fraud and cannot identify when multiple people are using the same Social Security number. The raids conducted of Swift Meatpacking plants in 2006 showed the ease with which

fraudulent Social Security numbers were used to gain unlawful employment. Swift was an e-verify participant and yet was found to have been employing several hundred illegal immigrants.

While I support this measure to extend the program, I hope very much that we can have a more open debate on the need to prevent fraud in our employment verification system. Only when we address the need to improve the security of the Social Security card and employment verification system will we be able crack down on the employment magnet that draws people to this country illegally.

CONGRATULATING ALBANIA AND  
CROATIA ON BEING INVITED TO  
BEGIN ACCESSION TALKS WITH  
THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY  
ORGANIZATION

SPEECH OF

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 30, 2008*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, as we now consider and certainly will adopt House Resolution 1266, congratulating Albania and Croatia on being invited to begin accession talks with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and expressing support for continuing to enlarge the alliance, I would like to express my support for these countries as they move forward.

As Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I convened a hearing on NATO enlargement in early March, where we examined the respective NATO prospects not only of Albania and Croatia but also of Macedonia, Georgia and Ukraine. While some of these countries must still contend with outstanding issues, whether of their own making or not, I strongly support their NATO aspirations and encourage them to move forward as well.

I am well aware of the many hurdles Albania has faced in recovering from decades of extremely repressive communist rule. Albania has also had to confront an often undeservedly negative image in the rest of Europe. Receiving its invitation at the Bucharest summit in April, therefore, was an amazing achievement of which every Albanian citizen, regardless of their political affiliation, should be proud. It is my hope, however, that the sense of accomplishment will encourage the country's leaders to continue the transition to a state based on democratic norms and the rule of law, especially as Albania prepares for elections next year and continues its investigation of the March tragedy at Gerdec.

Croatia also has had to address many challenges prior to receiving its invitation, although in its case those challenges related to the very violent conflicts associated with Yugoslavia's demise in the 1990s. It was clear that Croatia always had the potential to recover quickly, and it fortunately did just that.

The challenges Albania and Croatia have faced, in my view, will ultimately make them better allies. Their citizens have an appreciation of freedom and a desire for protecting freedom that many living in more established democracies may have lost. And as countries who can recall their dependence on European security structures to help them in their times