

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. 99.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE OBSERVANCE OF NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 337) supporting the observance of National Child Abuse Prevention Month, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 337

Whereas, according to the most recent annual estimates, State and local child protective services investigated nearly 5,800,000 children in the United States who were reported to be abused or neglected in 2007;

Whereas, according to the most recent annual estimates, 1,760 children died in the United States in 2007 from abuse and neglect;

Whereas, according to the most recent annual estimates, 794,000 children in the United States were confirmed by protective services as being victims of child maltreatment in 2007;

Whereas 59 percent of the children were classified as victims of child neglect;

Whereas 4.2 percent of the children were classified as victims of psychological maltreatment;

Whereas 7.6 percent of the children were classified as victims of sexual abuse;

Whereas 10.8 percent of the children were classified as victims of physical abuse;

Whereas 1 percent of the children were classified as victims of medical maltreatment;

Whereas 13.1 percent of the children were classified as victims of multiple maltreatments;

Whereas more than three-quarters of the children who died due to child abuse and neglect were younger than four years old;

Whereas these figures represent only reported cases of abuse, many cases are not reported to police or social services;

Whereas child abuse and neglect have great long-term costs for children, families, and society which timely and effective community-based prevention services can reduce, improving the lives and prospects of thousands of children and families; and

Whereas observing National Child Abuse Prevention Month during the month of April provides a special opportunity to raise awareness about the serious threat that child abuse and neglect poses to our Nation's children: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the observance of National Child Abuse Prevention Month in order to increase awareness of child maltreatment and encourage individuals and communities to support children and families;

(2) recognizes and applauds the national and community organizations for their work in promoting awareness about child maltreatment including identifying risk factors and developing prevention strategies; and

(3) urges families and individuals to report abuse or get help by calling the National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-Child (1-800-422-4453).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend and insert extraneous material on House Resolution 337 into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands?

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 337, which increases awareness of child maltreatment and urges communities to support children and families. Every April, the President issues a proclamation for National Child Abuse Prevention Month, and at the same time, he releases the previous year's data on child abuse and neglect. Last year's data was very unsettling.

In 2007, State and local child protective services investigated nearly 5.8 million cases of child abuse or neglect. Out of these cases, protective services confirmed that 794,000 children were victims of maltreatment in 2007. Of the nearly 800,000 cases in 2007, 59 percent of them were classified as child neglect, 4.2 percent of cases involved psychological mistreatment, 7.6 percent involved sexual abuse, 10.8 percent of the victims suffered physical abuse, and 13.1 percent of the children suffered from multiple mistreatments.

The reports of child deaths from abuse and neglect are even more startling. An estimated 1,760 children died in 2007 as a result of abuse and neglect. Of these children who died, a disturbing 75 percent were under the age of four. Over half of the child fatalities were a year or younger. These statistics, of course, are only cases of child maltreatment which have been reported to police or social services.

This month is a time not only to spread awareness of maltreatment, but also to recognize those organizations dedicated to preventing child abuse and neglect.

I would like to thank Representative GRANGER for bringing this bill to the floor. I urge my colleagues to take this serious issue into consideration and to support this measure and set aside time to create awareness of child maltreatment.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume and rise today in support of H. Res. 337, recognizing the month of April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Recognizing Child Abuse Prevention Month allows us to help to raise awareness of the tragic circumstances of abuse and neglect that many of our Nation's children face every day. Recognizing this month also highlights the importance of the prevention and awareness of child abuse, so that children can live safely and securely, free from abuse.

It is important that each of us knows how we can help prevent and stop ongoing child abuse. Understanding the causes of child abuse, learning to identify the warning signs that a child is being abused, reporting any known or suspected case of child abuse, being a friend to a child or parent in need and alerting others to the problem are all ways adults and other children can help prevent, and stop, child abuse.

Child abuse may include physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. In many cases, children are the victims of multiple forms of abuse. In 2007, approximately 794,000 children were found to be victims of some form of child maltreatment.

Child abuse prevention not only protects the Nation's children from years of physical, mental and emotional scars, it also lessens the costs associated with child abuse and enables funding to be used to assist children in other ways.

In 2007, child abuse had an estimated total annual cost of almost \$104 billion in direct and indirect costs.

In 1974, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act was enacted to address the issue of child abuse and neglect in this country and to underscore the importance of assisting children in abusive situations. Through this act, States receive grants to help with their child protective service functions, improve investigation and prosecution of child maltreatment, and to assist community-based family resource and support services.

April was first declared Child Abuse Prevention Month by presidential proclamation in 1985 by President Reagan. Since then, in the month of April, child abuse and neglect awareness and prevention efforts are promoted throughout the country.

As members of school systems, neighborhoods, families and communities, all of us can help to prevent child abuse and neglect. Child Abuse Prevention Month provides us with an opportunity to work together to keep children safe and to lend families the support that they need to raise happy children in a safe and secure home.

This is why I stand in support of this resolution and ask for my colleagues' support.

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

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, first of all I want to thank the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands for yielding and also salute him for his leadership on this important resolution, which is something as a Nation we just cannot stop in terms of all efforts to make sure that we eradicate child abuse.

But my purpose for standing up, Madam Speaker, is to speak in support of a resolution which was earlier discussed, H. Res. 344, recognizing the great accomplishment of the UConn Women Huskies.

My excuse for speaking out of order is actually I just left the White House, where our country's number one basketball fan, President Barack Obama, welcomed the Women Huskies, and again in a wonderful ceremony recognized the incredible achievement of an undefeated season and a national championship.

Madam Speaker, Vince Lombardi, the great football coach for the Green Bay Packers, said, "Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection, we may catch excellence."

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Those incredibly wise words maybe didn't even anticipate what was accomplished this year by the UConn women who, as I said earlier, went 39-0, won a national championship, did not win a game by less than double digits from the entire season, from start to finish, and led by a coach, Geno Auriemma, who, again, is somebody who is right in the Lombardi tradition, and secured his sixth national championship, something that, as a Hall of Fame coach, we're almost getting to expect too easily and take too much for granted in the State of Connecticut.

But aside from the great athletic accomplishment of these young women, I want to also acknowledge the fact that Maya Moore, who is the Naismith All-American Player of the country, is also someone who is an outstanding student, has received academic awards for her great work as an undergraduate. And she, along with Renee Montgomery, who's also graduating this year, again, is someone who excelled, not only on the basketball court, but also in the classroom.

Speaking of perfection, in the 24 years of the UConn women's basketball program, they have had a 100 percent graduation rate for the women who have been part of that team. And in many respects, at a time when, unfortunately, college athletics has been somewhat dominated by the power and might of money and big money, the fact that we have a program which truly embodies the ideal of student athletes, like the UConn women's basketball team, is something that not only the State of Connecticut but really our whole country can be proud of.

As a parent of a young, 14-year-old daughter, to be able to turn on the TV for sports or ESPN News Center and say, this is not just a guy show, it's

also about women who can go out and excel at sports, they have provided a role model that, I think, has transformed athletics, again, for our whole country, for boys and girls, for young men and young women. And we are so proud of this team in the State of Connecticut. And it's a special day with them being recognized at the White House. And I certainly hope that, as a body today, we will recognize their accomplishment by adopting H. Res. 344.

And, again, I thank the Speaker and the gentleman for allowing me to speak out of turn and share these remarks which are so important to the people back home.

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of my resolution recognizing the observance of April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

I'd like to thank my colleagues JANICE SCHAKOWSKY of Illinois, GWEN MOORE of Wisconsin, JOE COURTNEY of Rhode Island, and JIM McDERMOTT of Washington for their support and for their work on child welfare issues.

Child abuse and neglect is a serious issue that affects thousands of American families. Every 11 seconds a child in the United States is reported as abused or neglected.

Last year 5,800 children were confirmed victims of child abuse in my home county of Tarrant County, Texas. Tragically, nine of those cases ended in death as a result of abuse or neglect.

I think of children like Darlene Diles who spent the first seventeen days of her life in her mother's care before an injury on January 30 left her with severe brain damage.

Darlene's nineteen-year-old mother told doctors that she accidentally dropped her daughter on the kitchen floor. But doctors found no skull fracture or swelling consistent with a fall. Instead, they said Darlene's internal head injuries were consistent with being shaken.

The thirty-five-day-old infant died after her father decided to allow doctors to take her off life support.

Seven-month-old David Coronado Jr. was admitted to Children's Medical Center in Dallas with forty-two separate skeletal injuries, damage, to his brain and spinal cord, and numerous skin injuries that included human bite marks. David was recently removed from life support, but his prognosis remains uncertain.

Children like David and Darlene deserve so much better.

Observing National Child Abuse Prevention Month Provides us with the opportunity to highlight their stories, which demonstrate the importance of doing more to prevent child abuse and maltreatment.

Increasing public awareness of how important it is to ensure the safety and welfare of children led to the passage of the first federal child protection legislation—the child abuse prevention and treatment act in 1974.

In the thirty-five years since, advocacy groups across the country have been hard at work to raise awareness regarding child maltreatment.

And social workers and child protective service workers across the country have dedicated countless hours to children who have been abused and neglected.

One such dedicated child protective services employee in Texas is Debbie Pendergrass.

Debbie admits to "fretting virtually nonstop about her charges." She provides the one constant for the children she works with who often get moved around from one foster home to another.

When Debbie visited a toddler born to a thirteen-year-old girl in foster care, Tarrant County foster parents James and Glenda Pell praised her professionalism. The Pells said there have been times during six years and a dozen foster children when they couldn't reach their CPS worker. But with Debbie, they have someone who responds quickly and moves the bureaucratic machinery forward.

In Texas, and in states across this country, child protective service caseworkers face an increasing workload.

In 2007, state and local protective services investigated nearly 5.8 million children who were reported as abused or neglected. The Texas Department of Child Protective Services where Debbie works as a caseworker has improved its caseload, but still needs to hire more caseworkers.

In a recent eighteen-month period, Texas workers who are responsible for visiting abused children saw only seventy-four percent of their children monthly. Federal law requires that at least ninety-five percent be seen monthly. But there are only so many hours in a day.

As the stresses on American families increase in the current economy, we need to work together to ensure that resources are available to provide families with support so that more children do not become victims of maltreatment.

And child protective services across the country need funding so that they can continue the work that they do to protect our most vulnerable children.

Observing National Child Abuse Prevention Month provides us with the opportunity to shine a light on an issue that continues to affect too many children and families.

It also provides us with the opportunity to thank the social workers, teachers, physicians, nurses, and community organizations for their work providing safe places for children. Groups like Prevent Child Abuse Texas, the Alliance for Children in Fort Worth, which is working to "break the cycle of abuse one child at a time." And groups like CASA of Tarrant County, which matches guardian ad litem with children to provide a voice for children in court.

These groups are working to prevent child abuse and neglect throughout Texas and I commend them for their efforts and important work.

The statistics on child abuse and maltreatment are alarming. Child Abuse and maltreatment is a topic few want to discuss, but most of us want to see the cycle of abuse end. By talking about this issue, I hope we can encourage parents to reach out and get the help they need in order to provide a safe and healthy place for their children.

I strongly encourage families and individuals to report abuse or get help by calling the national child abuse hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD.

Thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SABLAN. Does the gentleman from Wisconsin have any other speakers?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has yielded back the remainder of his time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 337.

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. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION ACT OF 2009

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1746) to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to reauthorize the pre-disaster mitigation program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1746

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 "Pre-Disaster Mitigation Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. PRE-DISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION.

(a) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—Section 203(f) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133(f)) is amended to read as follows:

“(f) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall award financial assistance under this section on a competitive basis and in accordance with the criteria in subsection (g).

“(2) MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM AMOUNTS.—In providing financial assistance under this section, the President shall ensure that the amount of financial assistance made available to a State (including amounts made available to local governments of the State) for a fiscal year—

“(A) is not less than the lesser of—

“(i) \$575,000; or

“(ii) the amount that is equal to one percent of the total funds appropriated to carry out this section for the fiscal year; and

“(B) does not exceed the amount that is equal to 15 percent of the total funds appropriated to carry out this section for the fiscal year.”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 203(m) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5133(m)) is amended to read as follows:

“(m) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$250,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2010, 2011, and 2012.”.

(c) REFERENCES.—Section 203 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5133) is amended—

(1) in the section heading by striking “PRE-DISASTER” and inserting “PRE-DISASTER”;

(2) in the heading for subsection (i) by striking “PRE-DISASTER” and inserting “PRE-DISASTER”;

(3) by striking “Predisaster” each place it appears and inserting “Pre-Disaster”; and

(4) by striking “predisaster” each place it appears and inserting “pre-disaster”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 1746.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I want to thank the gentleman from Texas for generously managing on the Republican side. Thank you for your participation. And I want to welcome, Madam Speaker, the gentleman, once again to our committee. It's his first term in Congress, first term on our committee, and it's good to have his participation. Appreciate it very much.

I was delayed getting here to the floor because of a number of meetings, but the most particularly, and sort of fitting was a session with James Lee Witt, former administrator of FEMA, who did a superb job during his tenure at FEMA, and who actually initiated Project Impact, which was the predecessor of the legislation, or the predecessor idea for the legislation we bring to the floor today. It was called then Project Impact. And it was the idea of administrator James Lee Witt, after his experience with a number of tragedies that could have been prevented or substantially mitigated, that is, the effect of the natural disaster could substantially have been mitigated if cities, counties, States, local agencies, had taken a few practical steps that would be far lower cost in initial impact than the broader costs of a natural disaster, whether an earthquake, a flood, hurricane, or other tragedy.

Over 100 communities actually participated in Project Impact. One of the most significant beneficiaries of Project Impact was the City of Seattle, which was awarded a grant of \$50 million for very specific actions to take in Seattle to strengthen buildings, strengthen bridges, strengthen portions of the Alaska Way Viaduct, a portion of Highway 5 that goes through the City of Seattle and is a focal point of a great deal of maritime activity and trucking and passenger vehicle activity.

For a \$50 million investment, they put all of the strengthening activities in place, and a year later, the earth-

quake struck Seattle. And the Mayor of Seattle, I think it was Mayor Nichols at the time, said, if we had not made this investment, it would have cost the people of Seattle \$500 million to repair the damage that the earthquake would have caused had they not made this very small investment. The irony of the event and of the announcement is that was also the day that the Bush administration chose to terminate Project Impact.

I have experience in my district of pre-disaster mitigation, when, in 1999, hurricane-like force winds blew through the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, a wilderness area on the U.S./Canadian border in my district that stretches nearly 110 miles along the Canadian border. They're called a derecho, D-E-R-E-C-H-O, derecho, from the Spanish. Straight line winds, 15 miles across, 40 miles in length, at 100 miles an hour, blew down 26 million trees.

The U.S. Forest Service did a computer analysis of all previous forest fires, and calculating with the amount of fuel on the ground, that when a lightning strike would hit that blowndown, drying out timber, it would create a fireball 50,000 feet into the air.

Action had to be taken in the areas outside the wilderness to protect homes and resort facilities and outfitter facilities, and within the boundary waters to do controlled burns, because timber harvesting is not allowed within a wilderness area.

We turned to James Lee Witt and FEMA for pre-disaster mitigation funding to support homes, to install sprinkler systems, and resorts to install sprinkler systems. Four years later, a fire known in the area as the Ham Lake fire, broke out. The local volunteer fire department, attempting to respond, found that their pumper truck was inoperative. They could have put the fire out in that little area, but they were unable to. It gathered force and burned 76,000 acres, half in the U.S. and half in Canada.

The homes that were spared were those that had installed the sprinkler systems from the FEMA pre-disaster mitigation program. The ones that didn't have the sprinkler systems, or who didn't maintain them, were burned; 148 structures in all burned, and 135 were saved.

This legislation will establish the pre-disaster mitigation program out into the future because, while the previous Project Impact was terminated, Congress, under the previous Republican years, re-established, reinstated Project Impact as pre-disaster mitigation, and the authority will sunset on September 30. So with bipartisan support, we bring this legislation to the floor to extend the program.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

First of all, I'd like to thank our chairman for his kind words, and more importantly, for your leadership on