

Pacific American community and a topic close to my heart: organ donation. April was "Donate Life Month," and my colleague, Mr. COSTA, one of the co-chairs of the Congressional Organ and Tissue Caucus, spoke eloquently about the need for everyone, particularly those in ethnic minority communities, to become organ donors and to inform their families of this important decision.

Organ and tissue donation is a topic that requires specific, culturally sensitive information to be provided to the Asian Pacific American community in order to get past the fear and cultural stigma associated with donation.

According to the Department of Health and Human Service's Office of Minority Health, the need for transplants is unusually high among some ethnic minorities. Some diseases of the kidney, heart, lung, pancreas, and liver that can lead to organ failure are found more frequently in ethnic minority populations than in the general population. For example, Asian and Pacific Islanders, along with African Americans and Hispanics, are three times more likely than Caucasians to suffer from kidney disease. Some of these diseases are best treated through transplantation; others can only be treated through transplantation.

Successful transplantation is often enhanced by using organs from members of the same racial and ethnic group. Generally, people are genetically more similar to people of their own ethnicity or race than to people of other races. Therefore, matches are more likely and timelier when donors and potential recipients are members of the same ethnic background.

Minority patients may have to wait longer for matched kidneys and therefore maybe be sicker at the time of transplant or may die waiting. Currently there are 7,108 Asian Pacific Americans on organ donor waiting lists. While Asians represent 6.4 percent of the current wait list, only 3.1 percent of organs donated in 2008 came from Asians. With more donated organs from minorities, matches will be found more quickly and the waiting time will be reduced.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to recognize the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans around the country who are addressing this problem. I am deeply grateful for people like Cammy Lee, who started the Cammy Lee Leukemia Foundation to help find matches for bone marrow transplants, and Dr. Samuel So of the Stanford Asian Liver Center and the Jade Ribbon Campaign, whose work addresses the high incidence of hepatitis B and liver cancer in Asians and Asian Americans through education and treatment.

Together as a country we recognize Asian Pacific American Heritage month, and together we can help increase the rate of organ and tissue donation within the Asian Pacific American community, as well as other ethnic minority communities.

INTRODUCING THE FAIR FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS ACT

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 6, 2009

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the Fair Funding for Schools

Act, which reauthorizes and improves the Impact Aid program. Impact Aid benefits millions of American students attending elementary and secondary schools in every state in the country. Through this program, the federal government does the right thing by reimbursing local school districts for lost tax revenue due to federal lands within the borders of their districts and the number of military-connected students in the district.

The majority of public school funding in America comes from local property taxes. Unfortunately, this vital funding stream is drastically reduced in school districts where the federal government controls part of the land in the district. For instance, the many U.S. military bases located in Hawaii take up a vast amount of space and house large populations, but these bases do not generate local property taxes. In other states, large national parks and forests, federal prisons, and Indian lands all similarly decrease local property tax revenue. Left uncorrected, this loss of revenue would leave the children living in these areas with a second class education, funded by substantially fewer dollars than their peers living in areas with no federally impacted land.

In 1950, Congress recognized the need to address this inequity and created Impact Aid, a program by which we provide additional federal dollars to school districts feeling this financial strain.

Impact Aid is one of the most effective programs run by the Department of Education because it sends money directly to local school districts with very few strings attached. Just like the property tax revenue it replaces, Impact Aid dollars can be used to fund the most essential needs identified by the school district—textbooks, computers, utilities, and salaries, for instance. Many districts rely heavily on this money, and without it their students would be shortchanged. Therefore, we must reauthorize this program.

Even great programs need to be tweaked every so often, and this Fair Funding for Schools Act makes necessary changes in Impact Aid. The bill addresses the effects of military base realignment and troop redeployment by allowing Impact Aid payments to be calculated using current student counts instead of prior year data. This change will allow districts receiving an influx of new military families to receive their Impact Aid dollars in a timely manner.

The Impact Aid law also has become overly complicated during its 59-year history. This bill simplifies the law by eliminating some outdated provisions that added unnecessary complications. It also maintains the program's traditional focus on need, whereby payments to school districts are calculated based on the percentage of the budget lost due to federal actions and on the number of federally connected children in a district.

Madam Speaker, this is a vitally important bill for Hawaii and for many school districts across the country. The students most impacted are often from families serving in our military. Given the sacrifices we ask of military families, they deserve nothing less than the best education for their children. This bill will take us in that direction, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE LONGWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 6, 2009

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the founding of Longwood School District, which unites four central Long Island hamlets under a single purpose: providing a top quality education to the children of our community.

The first recorded area schoolhouse was established in Coram, New York, in 1811, nearly a century after permanent European settlement in the area known as "The Plains" due to its inland location. Division of the area into separate school districts soon followed, and schoolhouses for primary education proliferated. In 1959, local school boards moved to consolidate the schools in order to better serve area students, selecting the name of Longwood from a centrally-located estate.

For the past 50 years, Longwood School District has educated students from the communities in my district of Coram, Middle Island, Yaphank, East Yaphank, Shirley, Ridge, Lake Panamoka, Gordon Heights and portions of Medford, Miller Place and Shoreham. The district has grown to include four primary schools: Charles E. Walters, Coram, Ridge and West Middle Island, with students graduating to Longwood Middle School, Junior High School and High School.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the families served by the dedicated teachers, administrators, and staff of the school district, I congratulate Longwood on reaching this important milestone and offer best wishes for continued success in the classroom, on the playing fields, and in post-secondary pursuits.

CONGRATULATING CHICAGO COMMUNITY LOAN FUND, A 2009 RECIPIENT OF THE MACARTHUR AWARD FOR CREATIVE & EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONS

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 6, 2009

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Chicago Community Loan Fund (CCLF) on receiving the 2009 MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

I would also like to commend the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, another exemplary Chicago institution, for its ongoing investments in knowledge, the arts, public policy, conservation, and justice. Their grants support diverse areas with critical needs. For example, other recipients of the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions included groups working on natural resource conservation in the Caribbean, defense of human rights in the Don Region of Russia, and the promotion of equal justice and the rule of law in Nigeria.

CCLF is one of three U.S. organizations, and just eight worldwide, to receive the prestigious award, which recognizes implementing