

growth well. She holds a BSN and MSN degrees from Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, New York and Georgetown University, in Washington D.C., respectively. She has distinguished herself as a competent Nurse Manager and Administrator for over three decades, in the Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Washington D.C. areas. In 1981, she joined the United States Army Nurses Corps, served as a Captain, active duty and in reserve.

At home, Constance has raised her four children to love and respect everyone especially their elders. She encouraged them to have positive outlooks in life and motivation to do "as much as they can" with care and dignity. It could not be otherwise since this has been an inheritance from her parents: John who died at the age of 114 and Imogene, at age 82. Faithful to that motto, she has been involved in many other activities such as a mediator at the Safe Horizon Brooklyn Mediation Center, as a Board Member of the Community Board 5 and as the Chair for Education and Training for Tashia's Life, a lupus foundation.

She was miraculously rescued from the September 11, 2001 disaster at World Trade Center. This encounter made her redefine her mission on earth, realizing that God had saved her life for some special purpose. She serves the Lord at St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Canarsie, Brooklyn, where she functions as a Lay Ecumenical Minister, as well as a Vestry.

Throughout her career, Mrs. Hay-Alleyne has received numerous awards and recognitions including: being featured in "Who's Who?" in Nursing in Cambridge.

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SPEECH OF

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RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 6, 2009*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, on any given day there are nearly a half million children in our nation's foster care system. These children have endured more pain and suffering in their short lives than many of us could ever imagine. Not only do they experience the physical and emotional trauma that is connected to their mistreatment, but they also face the grief of being separated from their siblings, extended family, friends, and their community. The foster care system serves as a safe sanctuary for these young people and provides services and support to help ease their suffering. It is in the foster care system that children find the help they need to address their pain, and where families can receive the services they need to safely restore their bond with their children. And when it is not possible to safely reunify a child with their parents, it is through the foster care system that a child finds a permanent home with a relative caregiver or an adoptive family.

The month of May is National Foster Care Month. It provides the nation with an opportunity to acknowledge the wonderful contributions of the countless men and women who dedicate their lives to assisting children and families, such as case workers and administrators, child and family advocates, research-

ers, volunteers, and community organizations such as the Child Welfare Organizing Project, which is doing fantastic work in my district. National Foster Care Month provides us with an opportunity to commend those individuals and families who open up their homes and lives to our most vulnerable children by becoming a foster parent. Foster parents step in to serve as a surrogate mom and dad to children when their parents are not there to comfort and care for them. Their services are invaluable in helping these children overcome their grief and move forward in their lives.

National Foster Care Month also provides us with an opportunity to evaluate our foster care system. Congress made great strides last fall in passing comprehensive, bipartisan legislation that strengthened the child welfare system. The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act provided new resources to the system and included policy changes aimed at improving the outcomes of children in care. The legislation has significantly improved the lives of foster children by facilitating their connection to extended family, supporting grandparents and other relative caregivers who care for these children, providing support to older youth in their transition to adulthood, ensuring the health care and educational needs of every child are met, ending the discriminatory practices against Native American children who are under the supervision of tribal governments, enhancing federal training assistance for child welfare workers and court personnel, and strengthening the federal adoption assistance program. The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act represented the most significant reform in the child welfare system in over a decade. I am proud of the bipartisan work that the Committee on Ways and Means did in developing the underlying legislation that led to the comprehensive bill. Nevertheless, there is still a great deal of work that needs to be done.

Despite the success of last fall's legislation, Congress needs to remain committed to further strengthening the foster care system and addressing some of the problems that have plagued it for years. Children of color are disproportionately over-represented in foster care. African American and Native American children are removed from their homes and placed in foster care at much higher rates than their white peers. Tragically, once they are removed from their homes, they are more likely to remain in the system for longer periods of time. This problem transcends urban areas and occurs across our nation, affecting not only New York, Michigan and Illinois, but States such as Iowa, Washington State and Minnesota. Many of the provisions included in the Fostering Connections the Success and Increasing Adoptions Act will help to begin to address this problem, yet more reform is still needed.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating National Foster Care Month by saluting the people who come to the aid of our most vulnerable children and families, as well as the men and women who are, or were formerly in, the foster care system. These individuals represent some of our bravest men and women who have overcome a level of grief and suffering that some will never experience in their lifetime. Yet, these remarkable people go on to lead successful lives, often exceeding their wildest expectations. Many of them now volun-

teer their time and expertise to efforts to improve the lives of those children who are currently in the system, championing their cause in State legislatures and throughout the halls of Congress. I salute these fine men and women for the example that they set for all Americans.

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RECOGNIZING ZUNI ELEMENTARY'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

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**HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 2009*

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Zuni Elementary School in Scottsdale, Arizona. Zuni, first opened its doors to students in the fall of 1989. This fall, Zuni will merge with another nearby school to become Redbird Elementary.

In its two decade existence, Zuni earned many awards of distinction, most notably the Honor Council Excellence Award from the American Student Council Association and the National Association of Elementary School Principals. Zuni earned this award every year since 1993, a remarkable accomplishment. Since 2005, Zuni has received the Arizona Department of Education's highest ranking of "Excelling School."

In addition to its educational successes, Zuni's philanthropic efforts have been an inspiration to our community. Over the past 12 years, Zuni Elementary raised over \$106,000 as part of the Jump Rope for Heart campaign that supports heart disease and stroke research by the American Heart Association.

As a former teacher, I personally understand the importance of building a strong educational foundation during elementary school. I would like to congratulate the Zuni Coyotes—teachers, students, and parents—on this exceptional milestone.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Zuni Elementary on its 20 outstanding years of educational excellence and dedication to scholastic achievement.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

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**HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 2009*

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately last night, May 12, 2009, I was unable to cast my votes on the Motion to Table the Flake Question of Privilege, H. Res. 413 and H. Res. 378 and wish the record to reflect my intentions had I been able to vote.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 243, on the Motion to Table Representative FLAKE's Question of Privilege, I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 244, on suspending the Rules and passing H. Res. 413, Supporting the goals and ideals of "IEEE Engineering the Future" Day on May 13, 2009, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 245, on suspending the Rules and passing H. Res. 378, Recognizing the 30th anniversary of the