

early are much more likely in later years to suffer mental illness, heart disease, obesity, diabetes and other physical ailments.

The bill before us, HB 628, would give time and financial support at very little cost, to permit new parents to establish an attachment to their baby that would pay dividends over the lifetime of their child. We are one of the few developed countries in the world that does not provide this benefit to new parents.

In England, my daughter-in-law was given nine months of paid maternity leave when she had our granddaughter. In France, our former exchange student was awarded six months of paid leave, as was her husband, following the birth of each of their three children. In Germany, a close friend's daughter had one year of paid maternity leave and her husband three months after their first baby. It should not surprise us that the people of those countries are healthier and live longer than us (even though Europeans drink and smoke more than us). And, remarkably their health care costs amount to half of what we spend per person in this country.

The implication is that the most cost-effective window to bring about change in the health and welfare of a country isn't high school or even kindergarten. It is the early childhood years, and it can be done at a relatively low cost, when compared to the later financial burden of adult health care.

Presently, we have a ravaging substance abuse crisis into which we are pouring millions of dollars to treat and rehabilitate those afflicted. It seems, almost every week, we read in the Concord Monitor about another young person whose life has been lost to overdose. Is there a better example today that an "ounce of prevention would save pounds of cure"?

If we are to have healthy, responsible, kind adults—young people who choose not to abuse themselves or others—we must first create kids with a deep sense of self worth, a strong respect for themselves and others. Adults who love well have been children who were well-loved. Adults who care deeply about others and our world were children who were deeply cared for.

The crucial value of "paid family leave" is that it would provide parents to start their child on the path to a successful adulthood.

I recently read the book *Find Me Unafraid: Love, Loss and Hope in an African Slum*. The author, Kennedy Odede, overcame a late childhood fraught with constant hunger, complete poverty and physical abuse. He writes, "As a young child, I knew how much my mother loved me. When I was on the streets, I thought of what my mom had told me, that no matter where I was in the world, if I could see the stars, I should know that she could see them, too, and I felt her love always."

Kennedy Odede is an adult now, who has returned to his impoverished Nairobi slum and created a school for girls and a community organization called *Shining Hope for Communities*. In spite of a cruel childhood, except for his first three years of life, he has become a successful, productive, happy adult who is devoted to improving his old neighborhood, his world. Paid family leave is fundamental to a healthy society because it provides the framework for a precious, priceless early childhood—the foundation on which responsible, loving adults grow. For those of you who believe we cannot afford paid family leave, I would argue that we can't afford not to provide paid family leave. The future of our society surely rests on this wise investment.

(Dr. Oglesby H. Young lives in Concord.)

IN HONOR OF WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a school in my District who was recently crowned as state champion in football. The Westfield High School Bulldogs Football team, led by Athletic Director Terri Towle, Head Coach Kyle Simmons and Assistant Coaches Dan Keating, Jon Shields, Mike Giancola, Pete Bendorf, Jose Ardon, Alex Callas, Mike King, Chris Coyer, and Curtis Knight, was one of several teams who won state titles in a variety of sports from Virginia's 10th Congressional District. I am proud of their hard work in achieving this goal. They practiced long hours as a team, and this extraordinary achievement shows how far dedication, hard work, and commitment to teamwork can take a group as they played against some of the best competition in the nation.

This year's state championship was a rematch of the 2015 state championship, where Westfield defeated Oscar Smith High School in quadruple overtime. Oscar Smith jumped out to a 7-0 lead in the first quarter; but Westfield took the lead in second with touchdowns by Nolan Cockrill and Sean Eckert. They extended their lead to 21-7 in the third after Nathaniel Chung punched in a third touchdown. However, Oscar Smith stormed back in the fourth quarter, scoring two touchdowns and executing a two point conversion with seven seconds left on the clock to send the game to overtime. Oscar Smith struck first with a touchdown pass on the first play. With the game on the line, Westfield answered with a touchdown pass of its own, tying the game at 28 and forcing a second overtime. Westfield had capitalized on having the first possession, with Rehman Johnson throwing his fourth touchdown of the night to Ivory Frimpong. Westfield's defense then rose up, and stopped Oscar Smith's high powered offense on the three yard line and in doing so, secured the Bulldogs' second state championship in as many years.

Westfield High School's Football team has made Virginia's 10th Congressional District proud and they have represented us well. Winning a state championship attests to their impressive athletic ability, unselfish mentality, and determination to succeed. I commend them for their tireless dedication to both their school and their teammates, without neither of which this could have been possible. It takes a delicate combination of superior skill and many hours of practice to win a state title. Westfield Football has certainly earned this honor and the lessons learned over the years will valuably serve them as they continue on in their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the Westfield Bulldogs for winning the Virginia 6A Football State Championship and representing Virginia's 10th Congressional District with such distinction. I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING JACKSON COUNTY'S 221ST ANNIVERSARY

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 221st Anniversary of Jackson County, which was formed on February 11, 1796. To celebrate this important day in northeast Georgia's history, the committees of the Jackson County Courthouse are creating an exhibit that will cover their two centuries of history.

The Historic Courthouse Restoration Committee will be giving presentations to each school system in Jackson County, including the great schools of East Jackson, Commerce, Jefferson, and West Jackson.

The presentations titled, "Finding a Sense of Place in Jackson County, Georgia", will invite approximately 1,100 eighth grade students into the dynamic history of their county.

The Jackson County Historical Society has already published a transcription of the first Jackson County Superior Court docket book, which contains the complete histories of each case brought between 1796 and 1802. These cases in Jackson County will serve to show the rich history of the judicial system that has guided Jackson County since its inception.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the deep history and notable leadership that comes from Jackson County on its 221st Anniversary.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MISSISSIPPI ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SERGEANT (SGT) ROBERT A. MCNAIL

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Army Sergeant Robert A. McNail who died while defending our great nation on February 11, 2005, when his Humvee struck another military vehicle in Iskandariyah, Iraq. SGT McNail was the sixth Mississippi National Guard soldier to give his life in Iraq and the second to die that year.

SGT McNail was a member of Detachment 1, Company B, 150th Engineer Battalion, out of Quitman, Mississippi. His unit was attached to the 155th Brigade Combat Team. In 2005, I was deployed as a Major to Iraq with the 155th Brigade as the Operations Officer of the 150th Engineer Battalion. It was an honor and a privilege to serve with SGT McNail.

SGT McNail was studying to be a nurse and was a civilian employee at the Naval Air Station in Meridian before he was deployed. His mother, Linda McNail, said her son was engaged to be married at the time of his death. She says he enjoyed fishing and camping.

SGT McNail's father, Marvin McNail, said his son followed in the footsteps of 16 family members who served in the military. He was the only member of his family to die in military service. At his funeral, family and friends remembered him for his faith in our Heavenly Father and his willingness to give his life to keep America safe.