

H. Res. 600

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

May 4, 2004.

Whereas charter schools deliver high-quality education and challenge our students to reach their potential;

Whereas charter schools provide thousands of our families with diverse and innovative educational options for their children;

Whereas charter schools are public schools authorized by a designated public entity and are responding to the needs of our communities, families, and students and promote the principles of quality, choice, and innovation;

Whereas in exchange for the flexibility and autonomy given to charter schools, they are held accountable by their sponsors for improving student achievement and for their financial and other operations;

Whereas 41 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico have passed laws authorizing charter schools;

Whereas nearly 3,000 charter schools are now operating in 37 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and serving 750,000 students;

Whereas over the last 10 years, Congress has provided more than \$1,000,000,000 in support to the charter school movement through facilities financing assistance and

grants for planning, startup, implementation, and dissemination;

Whereas charter schools improve their students' achievement and stimulate improvement in traditional public schools;

Whereas charter schools must meet the student achievement accountability requirements included by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and contained in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, in the same manner as traditional public schools, and often set higher and additional individual goals, to ensure that they are of high quality and truly accountable to the public;

Whereas charter schools give parents new freedom to choose their public school, charter schools routinely measure parental satisfaction levels, and charter schools must prove their ongoing success to parents, policymakers, and their communities;

Whereas nearly 40 percent of charter schools report having a waiting list, and the total number of students on all such waiting lists is enough to fill over 1,000 average-sized charter schools;

Whereas charter schools nationwide serve a higher percentage of low-income and minority students than the traditional public system;

Whereas charter schools have enjoyed broad bipartisan support from the Administration, the Congress, State Governors and legislatures, educators, and parents across the United States; and

Whereas the fifth annual National Charter Schools Week, to be held May 3 to 7, 2004, is an event sponsored by charter schools and grassroots charter school organizations across the United States to recognize the significant im-

pacts, achievements, and innovations of charter schools:
Now, therefore, be it—

Resolved, That—

(1) the House of Representatives acknowledges and commends charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education and improving and strengthening our public school system;

(2) the House of Representatives supports the fifth annual National Charter Schools Week; and

(3) it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the President should issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to conduct appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities to demonstrate support for charter schools during this week long celebration in communities throughout the United States.

Attest:

Clerk.