

investigate at the request of the FBI, and yet two nuns in the Buddhist order have been indicted. Two nuns have been indicted. Yet everyone else in the administration is let off scot-free.

So my colleagues demand campaign finance reform today. I would urge them to ask Mr. GORE to submit his e-mail records. Let us look at Justice Freeh's memorandum of understanding to Mrs. Reno. Let us finally look at campaign finance reform as the laws apply today. But, no, let us create a smoke screen.

LEAVE STAR WARS TO THE MOVIES

(Ms. MCKINNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, 17 years and over \$40 billion, one would hope that such an investment would be directed towards upgrading our schools, providing job training, or making payments on our national debt.

Instead, this astronomical amount has been squandered on Star Wars. Now, they have changed the name to National Missile Defense, but it is the same thing. After 20 years of trying, it still does not work.

Reagan started it to beat the Soviets. Now they say we need it to protect us from Iraq. But Timothy McVeigh was not in Iraq.

The greatest threat to our country is having leadership that fails to recognize real threats. Instead of funding more government waste, deadly corporate welfare, and a missile build-up that jeopardizes the ABM Treaty, I suggest that we concentrate on our problems at ground zero and leave Star Wars to the movies.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on House Resolution 465 and H.R. 4051 will be taken after debate has concluded on those motions.

Record votes on remaining motions to suspend the rules will be taken later today.

ENCOURAGING GOVERNMENTS TO DISSEMINATE STATISTICS ON ABANDONED NEWBORN BABIES

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 465) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that local, State, and Federal governments should collect and disseminate statistics on the number of newborn babies abandoned in public places.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 465

Whereas April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, which provides Congress the opportunity to focus attention and raise awareness of the problem of newborn babies abandoned in public places;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services reports that, in 1998, 31,000 babies were delivered and abandoned in hospitals by mothers;

Whereas an unknown number of newborn babies are abandoned in dumpsters, trash bins, alleys, warehouses, and bathrooms;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services conducted an informal survey of major newspapers and found that, in 1998, 105 babies were found abandoned in public places in the United States, of which 33 were found dead, and that, in 1991, 65 babies were abandoned, of which 8 were found dead;

Whereas national statistics on the number of infants abandoned in public places are not kept, though States are required to submit data to the Department of Health and Human Services on the number of children who enter foster care as a result of abandonment in general;

Whereas Texas is the only State to have enacted a law designed to address this social problem, though 24 other states are considering such legislation, including Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Connecticut, Oregon, Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, Mississippi, Michigan, and New Mexico; and

Whereas there are innovative model programs in Houston, Mobile, Minneapolis, and Syracuse that protect mothers who take newborns to hospitals or some other safe haven rather than dumping them in a trash bin or leaving them on a doorstep: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That local, State, and Federal statistics should be kept on the number of babies abandoned in public places.

□ 1130

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE).

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

I rise in support of House Resolution 465, focusing our attention on the thousands of infants who are abandoned in this country every year.

In November of 1996, two college freshmen, Brian Peterson and his girlfriend, Amy Grossberg, were charged in the death of their newborn son, found wrapped in plastic at a Dumpster near a Newark, Delaware motel.

In June of 1998, the body of a 6-pound baby boy was found in a trash can at a Smyrna, Delaware car wash. The parents were never found.

Today, two Virginia teens are fighting extradition to Delaware where their baby girl was found abandoned on the floor of a portable lavatory on a housing construction site in Bear, Delaware.

This is my State of Delaware alone, the size of each of our 435 congressional districts by population.

Recently, a writer sorted through 1,000 newspaper articles on infant murders between 1990 and 1999 and found 700 cases in which the mother killed her child. Of course, these were the cases where the murder was committed, the mother was found, and the story was reported in the newspaper.

According to child welfare experts, States include infant abandonment with the abandonment of children of other ages in their records, so there are no specific figures on the number of newborns abandoned each year. Therefore, it is fitting that this resolution calls on localities, States, and the Federal Government to keep statistics on the number of infants abandoned in public places each year. With this data, we will have the ability to better assess the scope of this problem and then take steps to address it.

In fact, after 13 infants were found abandoned in the Houston area, Texas became the first State to pass a law protecting parents who leave newborns in safe places. In fact, State Representative Geanie Morrison, from Victoria, Texas, who was the sponsor of this legislation breaking the ice on this subject, is here with us in the gallery.

Many States, including my State of Delaware, are considering similar legislation designed to reduce the number of infant deaths.

For more than a decade, April has been recognized as Child Abuse Prevention Month. During April, public and private agencies, community organizations, volunteers, and concerned citizens unite to highlight the problem of child abuse and to educate the public about how it can be prevented. Therefore, it is only fitting that the House of Representatives pass this resolution to focus the national attention on the problem of infant abandonment.

I urge the adoption of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded they should not make references to visitors in the gallery.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I am honored to be sponsoring this resolution with my colleague, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE).

Mr. Speaker, today's resolution, H. Res. 465, recognizes the necessity to keep statistics on the number of newborn babies abandoned in public places. This is a horrible and, unfortunately, an increasing situation. We need additional data so that we can better assess this growing problem so that we can strengthen our efforts to reduce it and prevent it entirely.

Too often, Mr. Speaker, we turn on the evening news or wake up to the morning papers to find out that yet another baby has been abandoned in an alley, on a park bench, or some other

public place. Too often these babies are sick, injured, suffering from exposure, if indeed they are lucky enough to be alive at all.

When the baby does live, communities are very generous. They respond with offers of help for the abandoned baby in the form of clothing and in the form of financial resources. Truly, it is a heart-warming response. While this generosity responds to the immediate problems of the newborn child, it absolutely does not respond to the cause of the problem.

Mr. Speaker, our current data on the number of abandoned babies comes from newspaper accounts and other media reports. In order to truly understand this problem and improve our efforts to address it, we need to have all levels of government, local, State, and Federal keep statistics on the number of babies abandoned in public places. It is my hope that this resolution, H. Res. 465, will both encourage our Nation to collect this much-needed data and also invigorate our efforts to make the abandonment of babies a thing of the past.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I too want to commend Representative Morrison from the State of Texas for her leadership on this issue.

We have read horrifying stories in the news about babies being abandoned at birth in public places. One child was found in a river, another in a garbage Dumpster. These are all sad, heart-breaking stories. But States and communities have been responding to this crisis both with new laws and new programs to ensure that these babies have a chance at life; programs that allow parents, with no questions asked, to deliver their children, their babies, to a hospital instead of hiding the baby away or leaving the child to die.

What we lack is accurate data on how many babies are abandoned in public places. We have a pretty good handle on how many babies are left in hospitals. Almost 31,000 are abandoned in hospitals annually. But we can only guess at how many babies are abandoned in alleys or bathrooms or other public places. We think it is around 105, but we just do not know.

This legislation today calls on government at every level to collect and publicize statistics in this area so we can respond with the right solution. One solution, a permanent and loving solution, is adoption. I and many Members of the Congress have continually worked on a bipartisan basis to make adoption easier.

The Committee on Ways and Means, since 1994, has adopted a number of provisions, tax credits for adoption, ending discrimination in adoption, the Adoption and Safe Families Act, which either says families should be reunited

or a loving permanent family should be found to end languishing in foster care. We have a number of provisions to make a real choice for families.

Stories of abandoned babies dying alone break everyone's heart, but it brings even more tears to the eyes of those couples in my hometown of Midland, Michigan or towns like Richmond, Virginia or Omaha, Nebraska families waiting and waiting to adopt a new baby.

Let us get the data, let us work for a solution, and let us make sure not one baby is abandoned to die.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), who is and has been facing this problem in her home State by organizing a successful billboard campaign that is showing results, and she has introduced H. Res. 4222 here in the House so that she can take her efforts national.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for yielding me this time, and I thank her for her leadership, as well as that of the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE).

I am rising in support of this resolution in commemoration of Child Abuse Month. I think this is an important first step. What this does is it lays the ground work for us then to pass legislation, such as H.R. 4222, that will require a reporting system so that this information can be calculated and give us the basis upon which we will be able to make the kind of legitimate laws that we should make.

This is a serious issue, and let me congratulate and express my appreciation for the leadership our State Representative Morrison has taken in the State of Texas. But let me also say that when we pass legislation, there must be action behind legislation. I am very gratified for the action and community organization of my community in Houston, Texas.

Let me share with my colleagues some of the horror that we experienced from December 1998 through 1999. We saw 13 babies abandoned over a 9-month period in greater Houston. It was this tragedy that caused me to gather individuals from Houston in my congressional office in the early spring of 1999. These members, Annette Emery, Regenia Hicks, Peter Durkin, Marianne Ehrlich, George Ford, Louella Steller, Dr. Christine Dobson, representing the Baylor College of Medicine, the Harris County Children's Protective Services, Planned Parenthood, and the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services came together to say that we must take the hard coldness of legislation and make it real.

These individuals organized and determined what we should do to try to save the lives of babies. I am very proud of their work. Their work included not only their own efforts but included the help of the University of

Houston, Texas Women's University, the City of Houston Health Department, Memorial Herman Hospital, Office of Dr. Janice Beale, Bayou City Medical Center, Healthy Family Initiatives, Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, Harris County Children's Protective Services, Communities in Schools, Depelchin Children's Center, University of Texas Medical Branch, Head Start Education Services, Houston Advocates for Mental Health in Children, and an entire community of individuals whose names I will further submit into the RECORD.

We felt we must get the word out on the legislation in Texas that allowed individuals who felt themselves lonely, who felt themselves frustrated, who felt themselves fearful and were pregnant to come forward and to talk about what they could do. And so we had this campaign that shared the information in Spanish and English and other languages, with an 800 number, that said to those young people that were fearful and pregnant that they did not have to abandon their babies; that they can save lives.

The legislation, H.R. 4222, which I have introduced, will help us further save lives because we will organize a Department of Justice task force to collect this data and to instruct us appropriately on how we, as a Federal Government, can help the States who are looking at legislation, along with the State of Texas that has passed legislation, to ensure that we save babies' lives.

I can only say that this is momentum. Let us not let this momentum fall. Let us create not only the momentum but let us also create the spirit to save the lives of these babies before they are lost.

I am sure my colleagues can understand how tragic it is for those who follow this and who have worked on this to find that one baby was discovered with ants on its face, that one baby was found in a Dumpster. One of the young women was a student in one of the high schools that I represent, a 15 year old, that was ultimately prosecuted in a criminal prosecution. I would imagine that if we had had the opportunity to provide her with some comfort, with an 800 number, with someplace to call, she would have been able to do something other than to lose that baby and to cause that baby a loss of life.

Let me thank, Mr. Speaker, the following additional community groups: Metropolitan One Church, Eller Media Company, Planned Parenthood, Family Assistance Center, Covenant House, C.R.A.F.T.Y., which is Christian Reform Alliance for Today's Youth, AAMA, AVANCE, Harris County Child Abuse Task Force, City of Houston Fire Department, New Generation Maternity Home, Lyndon Baines Johnson Hospital, Northwest Cypress United Methodist, Interfaith Ministries, Saleah, Inc., Justice for Children, Ultimate Care Rehabilitation and Wellness

Center, Judge Berta Mejia, the New Generation Maternity Home, Texas Children's Hospital, Tilson Newborns, Victoria Waters, and Eller Media.

Mr. Speaker, I am eager to indicate that these individuals have all been part of this effort because it is a community effort. And it is important that this resolution be noted as an instruction so that we can move forward to pass legislation to help the communities who are seeking to do something and to be on the map to save lives.

I believe this is an important first step, and I look forward to moving collectively and in a bipartisan way.

Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for this opportunity to speak on this important resolution that will help focus attention upon the growing problem of baby abandonments in this country.

In recognition of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month, I feel that it is imperative that we raise awareness of this tragic situation.

As a Chair and founder of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I have been active in the battle to end this growing tragedy.

Just last week I spoke at a Luncheon by Childhelp along with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to recognize the "Day of Hope." This day, like this resolution, was meant to recognize the plight of abused children everywhere.

I am particularly aware of the abuse children are experiencing in our country because in my hometown of Houston, Texas, we have experienced a rash of newborns abandoned in public places.

Thus, I supported the formation of the Baby Abandonment Task Force and the enactment of H.R. 3423 that is the first state law implemented to combat this problem.

H.R. 3423, the Texas law, came into effect on September 1, 1999.

The Texas law amends the Penal Code to allow this affirmative defense if the person abandoning the child voluntarily delivers the child to an emergency medical services provider as defined under the Texas Family Code.

The Texas legislation further outlines the guidelines by which the EMT must provide for the abandoned child and indicated that the EMT must contact CPS within 24 hours. There is also a hotline in effect for desperate mothers to call.

The Texas law took effect September 1, 1999. Since that time, according to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.

This resolution, like my bill which I will be introducing this week recognizes that there is no comprehensive study in place to track the number of newborns abandoned across the nation.

Although HHS conducted an informal study on newborns abandoned in 1998, this study was only an estimate taken from newspaper reports. For FY 1998 there were 105 newborns abandoned in public places and 31,000 in hospitals (boarder babies).

Consequently, it is imperative that we have an accurate study in place to truly understand how to prevent this abandonments in the future.

First, what people must understand when interpreting these statistics is that there is a difference between babies abandoned outside of

a hospital and those babies delivered at the hospital, but left by the parent(s). The latter are called "boarder babies."

According to HHS, from 1991 to 1998, "boarder babies" increased 38%, to 13,400 from 9,700. Abandoned babies, those being treated but unlikely to go home with their biological parents—grew 46%, to 17,400 in 1998 from 11,900 in 1991. From this limited study, we do know that about two thirds of these babies were exposed to drugs.

All states are experiencing this problem of newborn abandonments.

It started Dec. 23, 1998 when a baby boy was found in a hospital restroom. From then, the numbers catapulted. Five other babies were abandoned in the next two months. Between May and September of last year, seven more babies were dumped.

In Indianapolis, at least 17 babies have been abandoned in Indiana since 1990, not counting those in hospitals and in Florida, just last month; a newborn was found outside a church in Volusia County and others in West Palm Beach and Tampa.

Programs exist to address baby abandonment in the states of Alabama and Minnesota also. Laws are being debated in 14 other states including: Georgia, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Wisconsin and here in Washington, D.C.

Anyone trying to address this problem would know that the problem lies in the absence of any official reporting mechanism for nationwide abandonment newborns.

My proposed legislation will authorize a study to be conducted that would gather information from law enforcement agencies and social services agencies about the incidences of babies, defined as children newborn to age 1, that have been abandoned or discarded by any mother (teen or older).

This information would be kept by the U.S. Department of Justice and the information would define the best approach the federal government can utilize to stop this abandonment of babies and save lives—save our precious children.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the majority whip of the House of Representatives.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my unqualified support for this resolution.

Tales of babies being left to die in dumpsters and alleys are almost too horrifying to believe, but they are true. Steps must be taken to combat the crisis.

The Department of Health and Human Services estimates that more than 30,000 babies are abandoned in hospitals by their mothers every year. This is troubling, but these babies are the lucky ones because they have a chance to live and are eventually adopted.

Babies left in hospitals get the care they need during their first crucial hours and days. The little ones left in trash bins and on street corners do not often live past their first day. Today, there are no reliable statistics that accurately detail how many such tragedies occur.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. This is a time when we all need to think more seriously about child abuse and neglect and consider new ways to combat it.

□ 1145

One essential tool is data. We must know how bad the problem is before we can stop it. This resolution simply states that this Congress holds that local, State, and Federal governments should chronicle statistics regarding abandonment of newborn babies.

Mr. Speaker, we must do everything in our power to make the world more welcoming to newborn babies. We must do everything in our power to learn what circumstances precipitate the unthinkable acts that hurt and kill our children. And finally, as individuals, as communities and as legislators, we must do everything in our power to protect these vulnerable lives and afford them the opportunity to thrive in secure and permanent homes and to become productive members of our society.

I applaud the efforts made thus far on this issue in Texas, including the work of my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), and State Representative Genie Morrison, who is here visiting the Capitol today.

I just urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation and other efforts to confront child abuse and abandonment.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY).

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of House Resolution 465.

Several weeks ago in New York, I went to a funeral and it was a funeral of a baby that was abandoned; and it was probably one of the saddest events that I have had to participate in.

When we think about these children being left in Dumpsters, garbage bags, we have to do everything that we possibly can to make sure this does not happen.

In my State of New York, we have legislation right now that is looking to make sure that these women that are going to abandon their child can find a safe haven.

I strongly support it certainly on the New York State level, and I would like to see it some day here on the Federal level. We should reach out to these women to make sure that we can save every single child that we can.

So I stand in very strong support of House Resolution 465, and I encourage all my colleagues to support it also.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY).

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time, and I stand in strong support of the resolution as a cosponsor and as a concerned citizen for the depravity of leaving a child in a public place to die.

It is sad when we wake up in the morning and read another instance where a mother or parent has decided to leave their child and walk away from their responsibility. So I hope we will consider this as a strong measure of trying to identify just how many times it is occurring.

The Department of Health and Human Services conducted a survey in 1998 and found 105 babies were found abandoned in public places in the United States, in which 33 were found dead. Sixty-five babies were abandoned in 1991, eight of which were found dead, which is not only alarming but it is frightening and sad that in a day and era when there are so many parents willing to adopt and in fact are going overseas to find children that these babies would be allowed to be placed in such an unsafe condition.

But it also goes to the heart of another problem that we have to speak about, and that is unwanted and unplanned pregnancies, welfare dependencies. All of these are intertwined. We need to educate people about the consequences of unwanted and unplanned pregnancy.

And, yes, I support Planned Parenthood because I think education is the only way we will stop some of these abuses and some of these problems. It is sad. Every life is precious. And I think both sides of the aisle agree, whether they are pro-choice or pro-life, that every life is viable and valuable and must be protected.

This is a measure in which we can weigh how many are in fact being abandoned. But let us not just stop with the resolution. Let us start looking at education. Let us fundamentally change the way people look at children and childbearing and child raising. Let us make sure they recognize that responsibility.

We all talk about laws and enactment of tougher penalties to get tough on criminals. Let us find a way to make certain those penalties include recognizing the responsibility every person bears, both male and female, when they conceive and bring a child into this world. And it does not just stop after the act of having fun. It means 9 months later they have to accept that responsibility.

So I support this amendment and urge my colleagues its adoption.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to add to the comments made by my colleague from New York and my colleague from California and my colleague from Florida. Every life is special.

I would hope that this is a day today that we catapult ourselves in a bipartisan manner to talk about children and hope. Just last week, we had a meeting with a group that emphasized hope for children.

I want to say that we can do more litigation that is negative litigation, but we can do legislation that is positive. And so, I would hope that as we look to trying to be positive that we will have a bipartisan effort to support an action item, H.R. 4222, which answers some of the concerns that my colleagues have talked about, getting the numbers to come into the Federal Government on how babies are abandoned, not only by young people but the 20,000 babies that are abandoned in hospitals, what drives people to come to hospitals and walk away from their children, how do we make parents better parents, what kind of initiative should we have to do that, and what do we do when a teenager age 15 who comes from a different culture is pregnant and does not know where to turn.

And so this legislation that I am looking forward to passing in the House will ask the questions of the prevalence of such incidents, the demographics of such children and their parents, the factors that influence the decision, and the circumstances of abandonment.

My colleagues do not know the tears that we faced in the little girl that abandoned her baby in a high school dumpster. This is what we are facing. I believe that if we pass instructive legislation that will require these data to come into the Federal Government for us to assess that we will be able to make determinations that can collaborate with the efforts made by States.

I join my colleagues in today standing up on behalf of children and saving their lives. Let us pass this resolution and further legislation.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. FOWLER).

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, which takes a sensible step toward finding a solution to a horrible problem.

Recent high-profile cases of women and girls giving birth in hotel rooms without any support from their families or friends and then abandoning their babies in Dumpsters and public restrooms have made us all aware of the unfortunate reality of baby abandonment and infanticide.

These horrific stories are not currently captured by national statistics. Only those instances where the mother abandons her baby in the hospital are kept in our records. The babies who are left elsewhere are forgotten in the statistics.

This resolution would urge governments at all levels to keep track of those instances where babies are abandoned in public places. This resolution would also encourage State and local policymakers to seek solutions to these problems.

Many States, including my home State of Florida, are currently contemplating such solutions. Ideas such as decriminalizing abandonment at certain safe havens such as fire stations

can go a long way towards saving these children from possible death.

As we go forward in celebrating Child Abuse Prevention Month, we should not forget those children who spend their first moments of life abandoned, neglected and abused. To that end, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 465.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. GARY MILLER).

(Mr. GARY MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this life-affirming resolution.

When mothers abandon their own children, we have a problem in our society with how we value life. In California, and in the Los Angeles area specifically, the reports of abandoned babies have increased dramatically. This resolution will help us understand the full scope of the problem.

In addition to gathering information on how prevalent this problem is, those of us in Washington need to take some concrete steps to make sure that the laws value life.

We should support protection for mothers who take newborns to hospitals or some other safe haven rather than dumping them in a trash bin or leaving them on a doorstep. We should support the legislation of the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) to encourage adoption; and Title 10 money should be used to value life by allowing for the women to be counseled on the option of adoption.

We need to send a message loud and clear from this Chamber that life is valuable and that there are options beside abandoning a baby. Then we need to go home and instill respect for life in our families and in our communities.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and to support life.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT).

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. Speaker, it is a sad day when we have to come to the floor of the House and acknowledge that the number of babies abandoned in public places is growing.

While some 30,000 babies each year are born in hospitals and then abandoned by their mothers, there are many, many more born in public places and then abandoned. These nameless children born around this country are never given a chance at life and a loving home.

It is a sad commentary on our society that we do not hold life as more precious, more dear than to leave little children alone to face the world. Some miraculously live. Many die.

Not only do we need better reporting of the number of baby abandonments

which take place throughout the Nation's alleys, trash cans and bathrooms; but we need to do something about the root of the problem.

These women who leave their babies in different places feel they have no place to go, that there is no future for them or their child, that they cannot care for their child.

Mr. Speaker, as has already been referenced, I have a bill pending before the House of Representatives, H.R. 2511, the Adoption Awareness Act, which would help these women learn of the loving alternatives of adoption.

Adoption is a wonderful option because it brings a positive end to what could be difficult circumstances. The birth mother can place her child in a loving family. The child receives a warm and welcome home. An adoptive couple gets to wear one of the greatest titles in America, parent.

If these women only knew that for every abandoned baby there is a couple eagerly awaiting to give that child a home, maybe they would choose adoption. If these women only knew that they could get help in defraying the cost of medical care, maybe they would choose to give birth in a medical facility and make an adoption plan. If these women only knew that there may be unwanted pregnancies but there are no unwanted children, they might have made a different decision.

I commend my colleague from Connecticut for introducing H. Res. 465 because it is important for us to have a better grasp on how many babies are being abandoned all over this country so we can attempt to provide support and hope for these women in need.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, could I inquire as to the time remaining on either side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HANSEN). The gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) has 6 minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) has 9 minutes remaining.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CALLAHAN).

(Mr. CALLAHAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 465 and compliment those that are responsible for bringing this issue to the floor today. It is extremely important.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to add to the list of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) of parental responsibilities that could prevent these baby abandonments in the first place, and that is child support.

Possibly, if the mother who is considering abandonment did not feel abandoned by the father of the child, then there would be a team effort to make this child's life a life that the mother could then support.

□ 1200

For certain, H. Res. 465 will give us the information we need on a local, a State, and a national level to prevent baby abandonment. My State of California is also considering legislation in Sacramento on this issue because, as we learn the real numbers, we will learn the real reasons and the causes for child and baby abandonment and we will move on to prevention, so that indeed the harmful effects of baby abandonment will stop and will stop forever. I heartily ask all of my colleagues to support H. Res. 465 and support the end of baby abandonment. I thank the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) for letting me do this as his partner.

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

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for her support.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CALLAHAN).

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, let me reemphasize how important it is that this resolution be brought to the floor today and how proud I am that those of you that are responsible have taken the initiative to bring it to the attention of the Congress.

We have a program in Mobile that is quite unique. It is a program that already is in effect. It was started by a television reporter in my district. Jodi Brooks of WPMI-TV, Channel 15, helped develop a program that allows a woman with an unwanted newborn to take her baby to an area's hospital emergency room, hand it over to a doctor or a nurse and walk away, no questions asked. It is completely confidential. The district attorney's office has agreed not to prosecute anyone who uses this program as long as the baby is not harmed.

If a newborn is left at the hospital, the Alabama Department of Human Services will seek protective custody and attempt to locate an appropriate resource within the community. The department will assess viable alternatives for placement, including appropriate relative resources. The newborn will be released from the hospital as soon as medical clearance is obtained and an appropriate home is found.

As a result of the Secret Safe Place for Newborns program, many babies have already been served in Mobile, Alabama. Since the program began at the end of 1998, no dead babies have been found in Mobile or the surrounding areas. Moreover, at least four babies have been brought in by their mothers for adoption. I am really pleased that this program started in Mobile, Alabama, but even more pleased that it has spread now to other counties in Alabama and other cities and other States.

In addition, many states are developing programs of their own. I congratulate Texas for having enacted a new law. What this will do is not a Fed-

eral unfunded program, it is simply a statistical gathering resource that will be available to encourage every area in this country to adopt such a program as this, because it is a viable alternative to a very horrible situation that is taking place in this country. Once again I rise in total support of this resolution. I urge its adoption today.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON).

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I thank my colleague for bringing this resolution to the floor. It is extremely important that we develop a system that responds to the real life needs of young women who have unwanted pregnancies and that the cost of inappropriate births not be borne by the child.

So the kinds of things that are beginning to develop in America where people actually can bring children someplace where they will be safe, cared for and put up for adoption is really a wonderful turn of events. Ultimately we know very little about these babies that are so tragically either abandoned or even worse disposed of in Dumpsters, trash bins, alleys or warehouses.

An informal survey of the Nation's newspapers conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services in 1998 discovered 105 cases of abandoned babies in public places. Thirty-three were found dead. This is simply a tragedy and so unnecessary. I am delighted that a number of cities have thought about how to deal with this problem. State Representative Geanie Morrison in Texas has really worked to bring this to the attention of the Texas legislature. Our own colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), has created a task force in her district in Houston, a billboard campaign and an 800 number so women can get support. I urge passage of this resolution.

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

The gentlewoman from California has been extremely positive in terms of her support as well as the support of everybody from that side of the aisle for this legislation. Everybody on this side of the aisle has supported this legislation. It is very simple. It just calls on local governments and States and the Federal Government to keep statistics on the number of infants abandoned in public places each year. We have heard a lot of stories as to why that should happen. It should happen. I would encourage everybody in the House of Representatives to not only support this legislation today but to make sure it is carried out in their home districts as well.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to point out the hypocrisy of H. Res. 465, a resolution to collect and distribute Statistics on Babies Abandoned in Public Places.

This resolution to count the number of babies that have been abandoned in public places shamefully represents the fact that the

Republican Majority is all talk and no action in helping the children of America. This resolution offers to count the number of children who are abandoned, but provides nothing toward preventing these devastating events from occurring.

I am all for keeping good statistics on America's social problems, however I am more interested in providing funding to programs necessary to address these problems. Teenage pregnancy, parents' substance abuse and lack of access to mental health benefits are the most cited causes by researchers for abuse and neglect of children.

Instead of increasing access to these services, this Congress has denied people access to these services. Last year, Congress reduced the Social Services Block Grant by \$125 million. This program has been essential in providing funding for family planning services.

HHS released a report last year that found parental substance abuse to be a problem in 26 percent of child welfare cases. Last year, the Majority House Appropriations bill responded to this report by reducing the funding to the SAMHSA Substance Abuse Block Grant by \$115 million under the President's request.

The Majority also refuses to act on bills that increase the affordability and accessibility of mental health benefits to Americans. I have a bill, the National Mental Health Parity Act of 1999, that would require parity for physical and mental private health benefits and increase mental health benefits in Medicare. The Majority has refused to act on it or any other item. This bill is just one of many that attempt to ensure that Americans receive adequate mental health benefits.

I wish the Majority would stop providing resolutions that are nothing more than empty statements. It is time to help the American people and pass substantive legislation to prevent the tragedy of parents abandoning their children in public places. Congress could achieve this by increasing accessibility and affordability to family planning services, mental health benefits and counseling for substance abuse—not through empty resolutions like the one offered here today.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HANSEN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 465.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROJECT EXILE: THE SAFE STREETS AND NEIGHBORHOODS ACT OF 2000

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4051) to establish a grant program that provides incentives for States to enact mandatory minimum sentences for certain firearms offenses, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4051

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 "Project Exile: The Safe Streets and Neighborhoods Act of 2000".

SEC. 2. FIREARMS SENTENCING INCENTIVE GRANTS.

(a) PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.—Title II of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subtitle D as subtitle E; and

(2) by inserting after subtitle C the following new subtitle:

"Subtitle D—Firearms Sentencing Incentive Grants

"SEC. 20351. DEFINITIONS.

"For purposes of this subtitle:

"(1) The term 'violent crime' means murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, or a crime in a reasonably comparable class of serious violent crimes as approved by the Attorney General.

"(2) The term 'serious drug trafficking crime' means an offense under State law for the manufacture or distribution of a controlled substance, for which State law authorizes to be imposed a sentence to a term of imprisonment of 10 years or more.

"(3) The term 'part 1 violent crime' means murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault as reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for purposes of the Uniform Crime Reports.

"(4) The term 'State' means a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

"SEC. 20352. AUTHORIZATION OF GRANTS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—From amounts made available to carry out this subtitle, the Attorney General shall provide Firearms Sentencing Incentive grants under section 20353 to eligible States.

"(b) ALLOWABLE USES.—Such grants may be used by a State only for the following purposes:

"(1) To support—

"(A) law enforcement agencies;

"(B) prosecutors;

"(C) courts;

"(D) probation officers;

"(E) correctional officers;

"(F) the juvenile justice system;

"(G) the expansion, improvement, and coordination of criminal history records; or

"(H) case management programs involving the sharing of information about serious offenders.

"(2) To carry out a public awareness and community support program described in section 20353(a)(2).

"(3) To build or expand correctional facilities.

"(c) SUBGRANTS.—A State may use such grants directly or by making subgrants to units of local government within that State.

"SEC. 20353. FIREARMS SENTENCING INCENTIVE GRANTS.

"(a) ELIGIBILITY.—Except as provided in subsection (b), to be eligible to receive a grant award under this section, a State shall submit an application to the Attorney General that complies with the following:

"(1) The application shall demonstrate that such State has implemented firearms sentencing laws requiring 1 or more of the following:

"(A) Any person who, during and in relation to any violent crime or serious drug

trafficking crime, uses or carries a firearm, shall, in addition to the punishment provided for such crime of violence or serious drug trafficking crime, be sentenced to a term of imprisonment of not less than 5 years (without the possibility of parole during that term).

"(B) Any person who, having at least 1 prior conviction for a violent crime, possesses a firearm, shall, for such possession, be sentenced to a term of imprisonment of not less than 5 years (without the possibility of parole during that term).

"(2) The application shall demonstrate that such State has implemented, or will implement not later than 6 months after receiving a grant under this subtitle, a public awareness and community support program that seeks to build support for, and warns potential violators of, the firearms sentencing laws implemented under paragraph (1).

"(3) The application shall provide assurances that such State—

"(A) will coordinate with Federal prosecutors and Federal law enforcement agencies whose jurisdictions include such State, so as to promote Federal involvement and cooperation in the enforcement of laws within that State; and

"(B) will allocate its resources in a manner calculated to reduce crime in the high-crime areas of the State.

"(b) ALTERNATE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—A State that is unable to demonstrate in its application that such State meets the requirement of subsection (a)(1) shall be eligible to receive a grant award under this section notwithstanding that inability if that State, in such application, provides assurances that such State has in effect an equivalent Federal prosecution agreement.

"(2) EQUIVALENT FEDERAL PROSECUTION AGREEMENT.—For purposes of paragraph (1), an equivalent Federal prosecution agreement is an agreement with appropriate Federal authorities that ensures 1 or more of the following:

"(A) If a person engages in the conduct specified in subsection (a)(1)(A), but the conviction of that person under State law for that conduct is not certain to result in the imposition of an additional sentence as specified in that subsection, that person is referred for prosecution for such conduct under Federal law.

"(B) If a person engages in the conduct specified in subsection (a)(1)(B), but the conviction of that person under State law for that conduct is not certain to result in the imposition of a sentence as specified in that subsection, that person is referred for prosecution for such conduct under Federal law.

"SEC. 20354. FORMULA FOR GRANTS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The amount available for grants under section 20353 for any fiscal year shall be allocated to each eligible State, in the ratio that the number of part 1 violent crimes reported by such State to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the 3 years preceding the year in which the determination is made, bears to the average annual number of part 1 violent crimes reported by all eligible States to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the 3 years preceding the year in which the determination is made.

"(b) UNAVAILABLE DATA.—If data regarding part 1 violent crimes in any State is substantially inaccurate or is unavailable for the 3 years preceding the year in which the determination is made, the Attorney General shall utilize the best available comparable data regarding the number of violent crimes for the previous year for the State for the purposes of allocation of funds under this subtitle.