

□ 1030

RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING GOALS AND IDEAS OF AMERICAN YOUTH DAY

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H.R. 124) recognizing the importance of children in the United States and supporting the goals and ideas of American Youth Day.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 124

Whereas national evidence indicates that America's youth are faced with oppressive issues, such as violence, drugs, abuse, and even family stress, causing the future of the youth of the United States, and therefore the future of the Nation, to be at risk;

Whereas youth in America, regardless of their economic status, ethnic or cultural heritage, or geographic location, are experiencing the pressures caused by contemporary society;

Whereas although Americans realize the challenges of today's busy lifestyles and balancing work schedules and youth activities, they remain committed to education, physical fitness, and civic-mindedness;

Whereas it is imperative that the people of the United States act willfully and purposely to secure a positive future for the Nation by devoting time to youth, sharing traditions, and communicating values to children in an effort to sustain ongoing relationships with caring adults;

Whereas America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth, founded by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, is one of the Nation's most comprehensive nonprofit organizations dedicated to building and strengthening the character and competence of youth by mobilizing the Nation to fulfill the organization's "Five Promises" for young people:

- (1) ongoing relationships with caring adults;
- (2) safe places with structured activities during nonschool hours;
- (3) a healthy start and future;
- (4) marketable skills through effective education; and
- (5) opportunities to give back through community service;

Whereas the citizens of the United States will celebrate American Youth Day and encourage all youth organizations to participate annually on a Saturday near the beginning of the school year; and

Whereas American Youth Day will provide opportunities for America's youth to reclaim the values which foster trust and build better communication and which will encourage parents, grandparents, and extended families to recognize the importance of being involved in the physical and emotional lives of their children: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

- (1) recognizes the importance of youth to the future of the United States;
- (2) supports the goals and ideas of American Youth Day; and
- (3) encourages the people of the United States to participate in local and national activities that seek to fulfill the Five Promises to America's youth, as established by America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAYS). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 124.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Delaware?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 124, a resolution which recognizes the importance of children and supports the goals and ideals of American Youth Day, offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW), my colleague.

In the next 24 hours, 1,439 teens will attempt suicide; 2,795 teenage girls will become pregnant; 15,006 teens will use drugs for the first time; and 3,056 teens will run away. That is within a 1-day period.

Without a doubt, teens cope, as we all did, with major physical changes, emotional ups and down, peer pressures and a changing identity; but they are also confronted by a more complex and impersonal society where drugs and alcohol are easily available and tragedies, such as violence and disease, often strike close to home.

In this time of growth and uncertainty, I strongly believe that our children need a caring adult to help them resist negative influences and make positive life choices.

America's Promise, the Alliance for Youth, is one organization which recognizes the importance of strong, positive relationships between young people and adults. Chaired by Secretary of State Colin Powell, America's Promise is based on five promises designed to help strengthen the character of our children and give them the opportunity to mature into successful and responsible adults.

The promises are simple enough. They seek to ensure that every young person has an ongoing relationship with caring adults, but they also attempt to provide every child a safe place to go before and after school, a healthy start into the future, a quality education, and an opportunity to build their neighborhoods and schools through community services.

Of course, a warm and caring family atmosphere is the most important factor in helping our young people resist negative influences, but researchers have found that many relationships are needed in a child's life. In fact, recent studies have demonstrated that youth who have relationships with older role models outside the family, such as teachers, coaches and neighbors, can help develop the broad spectrum of personal resources they need to become healthier and more caring adults.

Like many States across the Nation, the number of single-parent and two working-parent families in my State of Delaware is increasing. As a result, there is a growing need for mentors

and our mentoring programs, in cooperation with organizations like Big Brothers/Big Sisters and local businesses are organizing a campaign to ensure that every child in Delaware who wants a mentor gets a mentor.

According to the Delaware youth who participated in these programs, having a mentor means having a trusted friend who cares about them, listens to them. Not surprisingly, children that have mentors or adults involved in their lives are 46 percent less likely to start using drugs, 27 percent less likely to start using alcohol, and 53 percent less likely to skip school.

If we are to continue to enjoy unprecedented freedom and prosperity as a Nation, we need to look at our collective future through the eyes of our children, for they will be responsible for navigating the challenges and opportunities of the new century. Only through the encouragement, structure, and caring provided by parents, adults and organizations such as America's Promise can we help our children realize their potential and make the world a better place for us all.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution rightly recognizes the importance of our children and the need for all Americans to mark American Youth Day through the formation of new relationships with the young people in their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW) for his resolution, and I urge an aye vote.

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW), my colleague, for bringing H. Res. 124 forward today.

The ideals embodied in this resolution promoting American Youth Day that children and youth are to be valued and that we have a responsibility to provide them with the resources they need to secure a healthy and promise future are not to be taken lightly.

Too often, Congress overlooks the needs of our Nation's young people. We somehow fail to make the issues of young people a priority, and we somehow fail to make an adequate investment in their development and well being.

Too often, we also find public programs for young people focus on the problems of youth. In turn, we wind up with a lot of programs and policies that react to the negative behaviors, like juvenile delinquency or teenage pregnancy.

That is not to say that we should ignore these problems, nor can we. In the communities across the country, children are faced with numerous obstacles which prevent them from reaching their full potential.

If you just look at the children in this Nation who are impoverished, in

1999 there were over 12 million youth under the age of 18 who were poor. In spite of low unemployment, my own State of California has one of the highest rates of child poverty among the States, ranking 45th out of the 50 States and the District of Columbia. The gap between high- and low-wage earners in California is the fifth largest among the States.

With much of the job growth that we have in the next 5 years concentrated in low-paying positions, six out of 10 of those jobs are expected to pay under \$8 an hour, many working families will continue to have a difficult time making ends meet and to provide for their children.

Affordable housing, nutritious food, quality childcare, quality health care, in fact, are out of reach of many of these families.

In the area of health care, California youth have less access to health care than their counterparts in other States; 21 percent of the children and teens are uninsured as compared to 15 percent nationally. Less access to health care means that children are less likely to be immunized and less likely to receive well-child care. One study found that uninsured children are 3½ times as likely as insured children to go without needed health care, including medical, surgical, dental care, prescription drugs, eyeglasses and mental health care, all of the things that we know are important to children performing well in our schools, to take an advantage of the opportunities for success that were presented to them.

Without this kind of health care coverage, without access to this kind of diagnosis, these children's chances to succeed are greatly diminished.

Two out of three California youth in need of mental services do not receive those services. The teen unemployment rate for youth is 13.1 percent; particularly troubling is the unemployment rate for black teens of 24.7 percent.

In 1999, one out of six of the 16-year-olds to 19-year-olds in California who were looking for work could not find a job. That is why this resolution is important to call attention to these matters.

In the area of youth crime, nationally we see the juvenile crime rate is declining; but yet again, my home State of California ranks 48 out of 50 States and the District of Columbia for the percentage of youth detained in the California Youth Authority, county camps, juvenile halls, and private institutions. For too many of these youth, this incarceration will greatly diminish their chances in later life.

Twenty-two percent of the violent crimes in the U.S. are juveniles, and children under the age of 12 make up approximately a quarter of the juvenile victims known to police.

Tomorrow, the Subcommittee on Select Education will begin work on reauthorizing the Juvenile Justice and the Delinquency Prevention Act to address

several of these issues. Yet the need for these programs take a more positive approach to youth still exists.

We must accentuate the positive possibilities that we can bring to these children's lives. An overwhelming body of research has demonstrated that we need to do more to foster positive youth development, to build social and emotional competence and to link young people with adult mentors.

H. Res. 124 is a step in the right direction, and Congress has the opportunity to do even more to ensure that all of these children and the purposes of this resolution are carried out and have access to the core five principles stated in this resolution.

H.R. 17, the Younger Americans Act, which I have introduced with the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA), represents the next step. The Younger Americans Act was built around the same five pillars of youth development as found in H. Res. 124, helping youth to access ongoing relations with caring adults, to have safe places, to have a healthy start and future, and education and community service activities.

H.R. 17 provides communities the resources they need to achieve the very goals we are setting out for them in today's resolution. H.R. 17 has 49 cosponsors, Democrats and Republicans; and there is a companion measure in the Senate.

The Younger Americans Act establishes a national policy on youth development and assists communities in developing an infrastructure and network for local initiatives that promote the positive goals and outcomes for youth.

The Younger Americans Act promotes youth development programs that work, such as mentoring, teen employment programs, after-school learning activities, and recreational activities.

It encourages youth-led activities that encourage self-esteem and character development. It does not create new programs; instead, it reinforces, reinforces youth development initiatives that already exist at the local levels in the communities all across this country.

The bill has a vast national coalition of supporters, including Secretary of State and former Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, the Boys and Girl's Club of America, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, the National Urban League, America's Promise, the Child Welfare League of America, the United Way, the National Mental Health Association and many, many other organizations.

The Younger Americans Act ensures that all children and youth can benefit from youth development programs and have access to education, health and economic resources they need to realize their potential.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to call upon the communities to celebrate American Youth Day, then Congress must do its part.

This resolution should be just the beginning, and I commend the gentleman

from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW) for his efforts; and I hope that this resolution will receive unanimous support in the House of Representatives today. Mr. Speaker, I also invite the gentleman and many of our other colleagues to join me and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) in supporting the next step, passage of the Younger Americans Act.

The Younger Americans Act will ensure that every day is American Youth Day. This is a commitment that this Nation must make. It is a commitment that this Nation cannot afford not to make. Mr. Speaker, I want to again say how much I appreciate this resolution being brought to the floor, because it is time for this Congress to stop, think and to reflect, and for this Nation to stop, think and reflect about the opportunities, the potential that exist in each of our children as they are born; and then the question will be whether or not that child will be in a position to take advantage of the opportunities for success. Because almost each and every one of these children is capable of doing that.

Mr. Speaker, if they do not have the access to a caring adult, if they do not have access to health, to education, to civic involvement in our communities, then their chances for those opportunities and taking advantage of those opportunities are greatly diminished. That is why we should pass this resolution today, and that is why the Congress should then take the next step, which is the passage of the Younger Americans Act.

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

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW), the sponsor of the resolution.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer for House consideration H. Res. 124. This simple proposal encourages communities all across the Nation to set aside 1 day each year to honor organizations and individuals that take the time to help young people, especially those who are vulnerable to negative influences and at risk of falling through the cracks, help these young people fulfill their dreams.

For all its wealth and prosperity, in recent years America has been suffering from what I call problems of the soul, where courts and Congress do not have any jurisdiction. So many of our neighbors have lost their moral compass and need help finding their way again when it comes to moral values. This is most true when it comes to our young people.

Nowadays, children are exposed to serious drug and alcohol use, violence, gang influences, and sexual activity at younger and younger ages. Popular culture through music, videos, television and the movies often exposes young people to images and ideas that would have been unthinkable for their age group only a few years ago.

There no longer seems to be a period in young people's lives when kids can

just be kids. Mr. Speaker, it make no difference what their race, their gender, their ethnicity. These negative images and influences make no distinction and no prejudices; all young people are fair game.

So it is incumbent on each and every one of us to offer our time and energy and love to children to provide positive role models and influences to young people to give them guidance and hope.

American Youth Day would honor those who have already made this commitment and encourages others to do the same. In particular, the resolution focuses on an organization that has captured the imagination and sparked the enthusiasm of millions of Americans with its little red wagon symbol that I am wearing on my lapel. It is called America's Promise, the Alliance for Youth.

America's Promise was founded by Secretary of State Colin Powell as an outgrowth of the President's Summit for America's Future in 1997.

Then General Colin Powell answered the call of his Nation, as he has done before in uniform, and founded an organization that would partner with businesses, government, and nonprofit organizations to make and fulfill five promises for all of America's youth.

And since then, more than 550 communities and State partners have joined with America's Promise to act on this commitment. In addition, nearly 500 national organizations representing diverse interests, purposes, and locations have partnered with America's Promise.

□ 1045

America's Promise, the Alliance for Youth, is building and strengthening the character and competence of youth by mobilizing the Nation to fulfill five simple promises. Each of us has organizations and individuals in our communities that exemplify the commitment to these promises. In my district in northeast Florida, there are hundreds of groups that expend their time and energy for this good cause, fulfilling these promises to America's young people. I would like to name just a few outstanding examples of how they live up to each of these promises.

The first promise is providing young people ongoing relationships with caring adults. Since opening its center in Flagler and Volusia Counties, the Pace Center for Girls has served over 300 girls, helping them to recognize their own self-worth.

The second promise is providing safe places with structured activities for young people during non-school hours. This year the Jacksonville Children's Commission will provide over 3,000 children with scholarships to attend the summer camps of their choice.

The third promise, giving young people a healthy start and future. At the I.M. Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless, young people can see pediatricians and pediatric nurses, many from the University of Florida Pediatric Resi-

dency Program, and get the special care they need.

The fourth promise, helping young people gain marketable skills through effective education. A group called PowerUP tries to connect people to the Internet and give them access to technology and technology-related education and opportunity to explore computers that ordinarily would not have a chance to do that.

And the fifth promise, providing opportunities to give back through community service. There is an Optimist Club in northeast Florida that sponsors youth antidrug campaigns and public speaking contests with special emphasis on fostering responsible citizenship and activity within the community.

ONGOING RELATIONSHIP WITH CARING ADULTS

It is no longer purely anecdotal that just having a caring and involved adult in his or her life can make a real difference for the future of a young person. Youth with mentors are 46% less likely to start using drugs; 27% less likely to start using alcohol; 33% less likely to hit others; and 52% less likely to skip school.

Flagler and Volusia Counties: Pace Center for Girls, Inc.—Young girls sometimes face added negative pressures from society which severely impact their self-esteem. Unfortunately, just as with young boys, the lack of a feeling of value to those they look up to is often just the beginning of their troubles. In particular, it can lead to promiscuous sexual activity, which in turn can end in pregnancy or disease, changing the path of that girl's future forever. Since opening its center in Flagler and Volusia Counties in July 1996, the Pace Center has served over 300 girls, helping them to recognize their own self-worth. The Pace Center's volunteers and trained staff show them through example and friendship how to "celebrate a life defined by responsibility, serenity, and grace." In fact, one of my staff in addition to raising her own two sons, gives her time and love to the girls at the Pace Center.

SAFE PLACES WITH STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES DURING NON-SCHOOL HOURS

The most influential time in a young person's life occurs every day between the hours of 3 and 8 PM. It is then, when parents are often at work, that children are most vulnerable to the influences of popular culture and peer pressure. If we can just give them a safe place to be during those hours with positive influences and productive activities, such as tutoring, arts and crafts, or sports, we can teach them behaviors and attitudes that they will carry with them for years to come.

Duval and Nassau Counties: Boys and Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida.—There are more than 2,850 Boys and Girls Clubs nationwide. They provide young people of all ages with an environment flooded with positive influences, strong adult role models, and constructive activities. In Northeast Florida, these clubs work with their local school boards to put a particular emphasis on learning. In fact, many of the tutors and mentors who participate in their programs as volunteers are teachers by profession. Their success has been phenomenal. Most of the 8th Grade students who participate in the programs in Nassau County have seen such vast improvements in their testing scores, that their school's state-conferred

grade rose from a C to an A. And, since learning does not always mean sitting down and reading from a book or solving a math problem, at the Boys and Girls Club in Nassau County, which was only established a year ago, the volunteers and supporters are working with the County to establish a 10-acre park for the young people they serve.

Duval County: Jacksonville Children's Commission.—The Commission primarily serves as an umbrella organization helping groups all around the Jacksonville area provide services to young people. But one program that they have undertaken themselves has proven enormously popular and successful is their Summer Camperships Program. This year, the Commission will provide over 3,000 children with scholarships to attend the summer camps of their choice. The children must earn this scholarship by getting good grades, but the lure of summer camp can be a powerful incentive to work hard. The Summertime offers just that many more hours for getting into mischief. The Summer Camperships gives children who would otherwise have no other options than hanging around on the street corner the chance to participate in structured and fun activities.

A HEALTHY START AND FUTURE

Young people who lead healthy and active lives are better prepared to learn in school and better prepared to begin down the road to a productive adult life.

Duval County: I.M. Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless.—There is perhaps no group of young people facing an uphill battle than those who are homeless, and homelessness has been noted to be a direct predictor of specific childhood illnesses. In fact, homeless children are found to be in fair or poor health twice as often as other children, suffer 50% more ear infections, and are hospitalized twice as much. At the I.M. Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless, young people can see pediatricians and pediatric nurses—many from the University of Florida Pediatric Residency Program—and get the special care that they need. The staff there help the parents to gain access to Medicaid and SCHIP and other government programs for which their children qualify but they don't even know about. They also provide back to school physicals so homeless children can meet school requirements for entry. Furthermore, the Center teaches young people about the importance of proper nutrition and exercise, which can lead to long-term behavioral changes and healthier, longer lives.

Flagler and Volusia Counties: Pace Center for Girls.—In addition to teaching girls to love themselves and have hope for their futures, the Pace Center shows girls the value in living a healthy and drug-free life with its outdoor adventure program. This program helps young girls to incorporate exercise into their daily lives. The Pace Center also has a pregnancy prevention program, as well as an intervention program to help young girls who are already pregnant or parenting. The Pace Center takes an holistic approach to their intervention program, involving the fathers of the girls' babies as well to ensure the best possible outcome for the young parents and their child.

MARKETABLE SKILLS THROUGH EFFECTIVE EDUCATION

Education—whether it is to purely academic or also vocational training—really is the key to a brighter future. But, that's not always the message that young people are getting. This is particularly true for young people who come

form disadvantaged backgrounds or families that are trapped in a cycle of illiteracy and stunted education or schools that fail to provide them with a safe and effective learning environment. These young people even more than their peers need to be reminded that it's not where you come from, but where you want to go; that they can achieve most any goal they set so long as they put their minds and souls into it; and that there are people in their neighborhoods who want to help them succeed.

Duval County: Communities in Schools.—The Communities in Schools program serves young people in nearly 300 communities in 28 states across the country. In Jacksonville, Florida, the effort includes mentoring children in several public middle schools and vocational programs. The volunteers who make this program so successful operate under the motto: "Help young people learn, stay in school, and prepare for life."

Duval County: PowerUP.—It cannot be denied that skills and experience in information technology and other high-tech resources are needed to compete in the job market. But, those resources are expensive, and parents who lack financial wherewithal to provide their children with access to them need help. Those children lack access to a bright new world of possibilities. PowerUP is dedicated to bridging the digital divide by giving children who would otherwise lack access to technology and technology-related education the opportunity to explore computers, the Internet, and new technologies. The State of Florida—which was recently named fifth in the nation in the number of high-tech jobs created in 2000 by the American Electronics Association, was PowerUP's first public partnership. Earlier this year, Governor Jeb Bush announced 24 sites where PowerUP programs will be available to young people between the ages of 6 and 18 in our inner cities. One of those sites which will soon be up and running is in Jacksonville, which is in the midst of a severe shortage of just this kind of skilled labor.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE BACK THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE

It can be as simple as providing a positive role model. By showing young people how good it makes us feel to lend them a guiding hand, those young people may turn around and seek that same feeling by helping others around them. But sometimes, it is an orchestrated effort to instill in young people a positive vision for their communities and a desire to really make a difference.

Nassau County: Fernandina Beach Optimist Club.—The Optimist Club considers itself a "friend to youth." Its members raise money to provide children with a wide variety of important programs to improve young attitudes and minds, such as scholarships and team sports. But, they also sponsor youth anti-drug campaigns and public speaking contests with a special emphasis on fostering responsible citizenship and activity within the community.

Mr. Speaker, many of us recognize the little red wagon that Colin Powell chose as the symbol for America's Promise as a reminder of a more innocent time when children were given a chance to be children. Giving every child a little red wagon might make them happy for a day or two, but giving them the moral equivalent of that little red wagon, a caring adult, a nur-

turing environment, and hope for a brighter future can make them happy for a lifetime.

In closing, I would like to read from a letter I recently received from Governor Marc Racicot, the new Chairman of the Board for America's Promise. He said, "I was grateful to learn of your support of America's Promise and the work we are doing. As you know, our goal is to make youth the number one national priority, and House Resolution 124 will help accomplish that. I also appreciate you shaping the bill around the framework of the five promises in America's Promise. We truly believe this will work."

Finally, Mr. Speaker, just let me thank my colleagues for their strong support. I encourage each of us to make a commitment to honor the groups and individuals in their communities that have made a commitment to young people by celebrating American Youth Day in their districts.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD the letter from Governor Racicot I just referred to.

AMERICA'S PROMISE,
Alexandria, VA, June 8, 2001.

Hon. ANDER CRENSHAW,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN CRENSHAW: Thank you for your kind letter welcoming me to America's Promise. I am delighted and honored to lead an organization doing such important work for young people.

I was grateful to learn of your support of America's Promise and the work we are doing. As you know, our goal here is to make youth the number one national priority, and H. Res. 124 will help accomplish that.

I also appreciate you shaping the bill around the framework of the Five Promises and America's Promise. We truly believe, and research proves, that this is the right solution. Your bill will help us share our message with millions and we are thankful for the opportunity.

Thank you for your dedication to youth and for your leadership in Congress on this important national priority. I very much look forward to working with you on legislation to build the character and competence of our nation's young people.

With best wishes,
Sincerely,

MARC RACIOT,
Chairman.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER), and wish to thank our earlier speaker, the sponsor of the bill, another gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW).

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution introduced by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW), a fellow Floridian.

Today we are recognizing the importance of children in the United States and supporting the goals and ideas of American Youth Day. America's Promise, the nonprofit organization created by Secretary of State Colin Powell, is dedicated to building and strengthening the character of children by fulfilling five promises.

The first of those promises is to provide mentoring programs throughout this country, and it is that promise that I would like to direct my remarks to today. Specifically, I would like to talk about the educational and crime prevention benefits of mentoring.

First, the educational benefits, and I will tell my colleagues why it is so important to me. I had the happy privilege of serving as the volunteer chairman of the board of the Orlando/Orange County Compact Program, which is the largest mentoring program in the State of Florida. I also had the privilege of serving as a mentor myself to two students at Boone High School. From these experiences, I learned firsthand how important mentoring is.

In the State of Florida, we had a big problem. We had the worst graduation rate in the country, with only 53 percent of our students graduating from high school. We decided to do something about it by starting this Compact Mentoring Program, which matches up students at risk of dropping out of high school with business people, sort of like a Big Brother, Big Sister program. The results were dramatic. Over the last 10 years, 95 percent of the children in the Compact Mentoring Program have graduated from high school. The number one graduation rate in the country.

Let me give an example, so we are not just dealing with statistics. A young man, 16 years old, African American, named Lenard, went to an inner-city school called Jones High School. He had been arrested for selling drugs, was making D's and F's, was skipping school, and said he was going to drop out. He said he would be in the Compact Mentoring Program on one condition; "Just don't give me a white mentor."

Well, to help Lenard reach out a little bit, we assigned him a white mentor, an AT&T executive named Paul Hurley. He worked with Lenard every week, developed a friendship and, to make a long story short, by his senior year, Lenard's grades went up, his attendance went up, and he went on to become Orange County Student of the Year for the Compact Program.

In his senior year, Lenard won two tickets to the Orlando Magic basketball game. He called his mentor and said, "Hey, I just won two front row tickets to the big game tonight." His mentor said, "That's great. Why don't you invite your best friend." Lenard said, "That's why I called you."

Mentoring truly does make a difference one person at a time. That is why I joined with the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE), or Coach OSBORNE, earlier this year in sponsoring the Mentoring for Success Act, which now will become law, as it passed in H.R. 1 over in the Senate as part of the President's education reform will.

In summary, recognizing America's Youth Day and fulfilling the five promises will make a meaningful difference

in the lives of young people, will prevent crime, will save us money, and I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important resolution.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA).

(Mrs. ROUKEMA asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) for yielding me this time, and I do want to identify myself with the compelling statements made by both the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER). They made compelling statements for the need for this resolution, and not only this resolution but going on to other legislation that can help implement our goals here. Certainly they have been outlined very well here, the critical resources that we need, and identified in America's Promise, founded by Secretary of State Colin Powell.

As people can observe, we have been referencing the little red wagon, but it is important to understand that this is more than just a symbol. It is a way of translating into action. And to quote Secretary Powell, he said, "The little red wagon could be filled with a child's hopes and dreams or weighed down with their burdens. Millions of American children need our help to pull that wagon along. Let us all pull together." That is a good way of stating it. And of course I want to congratulate the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW) for spotlighting this need.

I want to stress, as I believe the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) stressed, and I want to identify myself with the next step. This is only a first step. The next step, the really promising step, is to implement the legislation H.R. 17, the Younger Americans Act, and put into law the rhetoric of this particular resolution.

I want to advise the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) that I will do everything I can to work with my House leadership on this side of the aisle to expedite consideration of the Younger Americans Act and hopefully get it enacted this year or in this Congress.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW), and all those working here, but it has to be more than rhetoric. We have to translate this into action and promise for America's youth.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, today's youth are the future of this country. However, the children of this country today are faced with many more difficult and dangerous situations than any previous generation. They are in need of strong guidance and leadership from adults in their community. America's Promise helps the children of America develop the skills they need in order to be the leaders of tomorrow.

American Youth Day will provide an opportunity for citizens to recognize one specific day

as a day to devote to the youth of this country. It will allow the communities to become aware of the "Five Promises" that America's Promise has made to our children.

Each one of the "Five Promises" represents an essential way to assist the youth of this country. Children need to build strong relationships with caring adults in order to learn how to become caring adults themselves. They need places to go and things to do during nonschool hours so that they are not left alone without supervision. They deserve a healthy start and an equal opportunity for a prosperous future. They need the chance to learn the types of skills that they will need in the job market. And they need to learn the joy of giving back to the community through service.

We must do all that we can to support the youth of this country. They need more than just the guidance of their parents. They need the support of their communities. And they need an education system that will recognize each child as an individual, one that will adapt to the specific needs of each child.

One way to allow the education system to meet the needs of a greater number of people is the reform of the GED program. The GED does not give individuals the increased earning power that a high school diploma gives. We need to improve the GED program to allow those individuals who decide to pursue a GED the types of skills that employers look for today.

The youth of today need our assistance. I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 124 and American Youth Day and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution introduced by Representative CRENSHAW to establish American Youth Day. As a long-time teacher, mentor, and coach of young people, I have seen the difference that caring adults can make in the lives of our young people. I believe that the principles set forth by H. Res. 124 will help our country to provide a better environment for the development of young people.

This resolution would encourage communities to set aside a Saturday prior to the beginning of the next school year in order to participate in activities that highlight our children and share their successes in our communities where there is a commitment to youth. One of the commitments our communities can make to youth is to provide support through mentoring. A mentor can make an enormous difference in the life of a child by providing a strong positive role model for that child.

I have known many young people who testify that they have become the successful people they are today because caring, involved, qualified mentors took the time to get involved in their lives. I was recently able to help include a mentoring program that I introduced in H.R. 1, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This program would provide \$50 million in competitive grants to mentoring programs across the nation that work to link children with mentors who have undergone background checks and are interested in working with youth. Although ESEA and the appropriations process is far from over, I hope that several hundred thousand young people will benefit from this grant program.

This resolution would also serve to highlight the accomplishments of hundreds of youth organizations around the country—including 4-H

and others—that work full-time, year round to provide healthy opportunities for young people. Additional investment in programs that serve young people and provide them with healthy, constructive activities—the type of investment encouraged by the Younger Americans Act, of which I am a cosponsor—would help extend opportunities to even more of our country's youth.

Investment in our children is probably the best investment we can make. While a child's potential and self-esteem cannot be measured by a bottom-line, the cost of incarceration and absenteeism far outweighs the cost of investing in youth programs. In my state of Nebraska, it costs \$21,219 per year to incarcerate an offender in the Nebraska State Penitentiary and \$29,200 per year to house an arrested juvenile.

Supporting our young people as they navigate the challenging terrain of becoming adults is such a worthwhile and rewarding effort. H. Res. 124 is a great first step. I strongly support H. Res. 124 to create an American Youth Day and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAYS). 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 124.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE HONORING NATIVE AMERICANS

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 168) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Nation's schools should honor Native Americans for their contributions to American history, culture, and education.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 168

Whereas Native Americans have given much to this country;

Whereas an emphasis on freedom, justice, patriotism, and representative government have always been elements of Native American culture;

Whereas Native Americans have shown their willingness to fight and die for this Nation in foreign lands;

Whereas Native Americans honor the American flag at every powwow and at many gatherings and remember all veterans through song, music, and dance;

Whereas Native Americans honor, through song, the men and women of this country who have fought for freedom;