

thank enough those who saw fit to carry this legislation in an expedited manner. Just sharing with both proponents on the floor of the House it was brought to my attention that those of us in the minority community may even be impacted in a more devastating manner. But this bill speaks to all of us as Americans, and it focuses on saving lives, for those who have suffered with blood cancer diseases, those who have lost their lives.

This is, in fact, an enormous tribute, but, most importantly, it shows we are going to act. I would encourage both the passage and the funding of this legislation, for tribute comes by action and not just words. I thank the distinguished members of this committee.

I ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all Members that a proper reference to a Senator is as a sponsor of the measure.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1094.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 386) supporting a National Charter Schools Week, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 386

Whereas charter schools are public schools authorized by a designated public body and operating on the principles of accountability, parental involvement, choice, and autonomy;

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

Whereas 37 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico have passed laws authorizing charter schools;

Whereas 37 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico will have received substantial assistance from the Federal Government by the end of the current fiscal year for planning, startup, and implementation of charter schools since their authorization in 1994 under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.);

Whereas 34 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico are serving over 580,000 students in more

than 2,431 charter schools during the 2001-2002 school year;

Whereas charter schools can be vehicles for improving student achievement for students who attend them, for stimulating change and improvement in all public schools, and for benefiting all public school students;

Whereas charter schools must meet the same Federal student achievement accountability requirements as all public schools, and often set higher and additional goals, to ensure that they are of high quality and truly accountable to the public;

Whereas charter schools assess and evaluate students annually and often even more frequently, and charter school student achievement is directly linked to charter school existence;

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

Whereas two-thirds of charter schools report having a waiting list, the average size of such a waiting list is nearly one-half of the school's enrollment, and the total number of students on all such waiting lists is enough to fill another 1,000 average-sized charter schools;

Whereas students in charter schools nationwide have similar demographic characteristics as students in all public schools;

Whereas charter schools in many States serve significant numbers of students from families with lower income, minority students, and students with disabilities, and in a majority of charter schools, almost half the students are considered at risk or are former dropouts;

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

Whereas charter schools are laboratories of reform and serve as models of how to educate children as effectively as possible: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) the Congress honors the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Nation's first charter school;

(2) the Congress acknowledges and commends the charter school movement and charter schools, teachers, parents, and students across the Nation for their ongoing contributions to education and improving and strengthening the Nation's public school system;

(3) the Congress supports the goals of National Charter Schools Week, an event sponsored by charter schools and charter school organizations across the Nation and established to recognize the significant impacts, achievements, and innovations of the Nation's charter schools; and

(4) it is the sense of the Congress that the President should issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to conduct appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities to demonstrate support for charter schools in communities throughout the Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) 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. Con. Res. 386.

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 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER), who is the author of this legislation.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Delaware for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my resolution to honor National Charter Schools Week House Concurrent Resolution 386. This resolution recognizes the many contributions charter schools have made to strengthen America's public school system. I introduced this resolution because of my firm conviction that charter schools work to benefit all students and all schools.

This resolution honors the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Nation's first charter schools. It acknowledges and commends the charter school movement and it honors the parents, teachers and students across the Nation for their ongoing contributions to education and for strengthening the Nation's public school system.

Since 90 percent of the children in this country go to public schools, it is critical that we do what we can to strengthen the public school systems. Charter schools have done just that. In just 10 short years, there are already almost 2,500 charter schools serving half a million students across the country.

Currently, 37 States, D.C. and Puerto Rico have passed charter school laws. Florida's public school system already has over 200 charter schools serving almost 30,000 children. There are 11 charter schools in my districts alone. I often hear of the successes of Lake Eola Charter School and Hope Charter School in Orlando, Florida.

What are charter schools and why do they offer alternatives for our parents and children? Charter schools are public schools established under State law that are given varying degrees of autonomy from State and local regulations. Charter schools must meet the same Federal student achievement accountability requirements as all other public schools, and they often set higher and additional goals to ensure that they are a high quality and truly accountable to the public.

□ 1730

This flexibility and exchange for accountability often translates into higher test scores and innovative practices. They provide an option to parents, often from low-income families, who desire an alternative to their local school.

Charter schools, by their very nature, place more emphasis on parental involvement, increased instruction, higher academic standards, and character education. They routinely measure parental approval and student

progress. Otherwise, they would cease to exist. A charter school is created out of the demand for an alternative to the local school and is often started up through a group of active parents and teachers. Many of them serve a specific need in the community. Some can be oriented toward math and sciences and others exist to satisfy a need for liberal arts. Each is unique, but necessary.

President Bush's landmark legislation, the No Child Left Behind Act, contains multiple provisions which support the expansion of charter schools. It provides for an additional \$200 million to help establish 700 new charter schools, and we expect an additional \$100 million this year for construction of new charter school facilities.

Mr. Speaker, I would again like to congratulate the students, parents, teachers, principals, and administrators who have embraced the charter school movement and have made it such a success. The bottom line is that charter schools work because they are free from burdensome regulations and, in return, are held accountable for academic results. I urge my colleagues to recognize the role charter schools have made to strengthen our public school system and vote "yes" on House Concurrent Resolution 386.

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

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

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I obviously rise in support, strong support, of this resolution commending the very important contribution that charter schools make to our public schools across this great land, and also to designate a week of Charter School Appreciation Week.

I want to talk a little bit about the past, the present, and the future of charter schools. Our families and our parents and our teachers are all very excited and very concerned about the prospect of public education in America today. It continues to rank as one of the highest issues when we poll, when we go to town meetings, when we ask any families about their priority concerns across the United States.

The past of charter schools, when we first got into this issue, was working with the new Democrats here in the House of Representatives and working with the DLC, the Democratic Leadership Council, and the PPI, and coming up with more opportunities for parents to get public school choice; not to rip money away from public schools and transfer it to private schools, but help support the foundation of public schools, while also helping the reform movement, the accountability movement, the change movement, the new opportunities for students, parents, and teachers movement; to try to get new curriculum and new ideas in our public schools. This has caught fire, and a host of States now have passed enabling legislation at the State level

to create charter schools. The Federal Government is passing new laws and new help, providing new resources for charter schools to go forward in today's education environment.

So the past has been our efforts to help at the national level to create incentives and carrots to foster more public school charter schools in the United States. Last year, Indiana became the 38th charter school State, and I am very proud of that.

What is the present state of charter schools? As I said before, charter schools stress accountability, parental involvement, choice, and autonomy, and I am glad that this type of innovation is now beginning in Indiana. Charter schools are public schools that respond to an increasingly high demand for choices from parents, from teachers, and from students. They represent reform, improvement, and innovation in public education. Charter schools often serve our at-risk students. Nearly 60 percent of charters serve a population in which more than 40 percent of students qualify for free or reduced lunches. More than half of all charter schools serve a population in which 40 percent of the students are minorities. Nearly half of all charter schools serve a population in which more than 40 percent of students are considered at risk or former dropouts.

So this is not going out and picking the best students and forming a school and then trying to raise test scores and separating the public students more and more, or cherry-picking the best and leaving some of the at-risk students behind. In fact, many of the charter schools are designed to go after those dropouts, to go after those at-risk students, to go after those students most in need.

Mr. Speaker, 34 States, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, including Indiana, are serving more than 500,000 students in about 2,430 charter schools. I mentioned the District of Columbia, and I want to note the support of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for these charter schools. I have visited many of these schools in the D.C. area, and I want to say for the record that I think some of those schools are the most innovative, the strongest, some of the schools with the best teachers and students and success rates as any charter schools in America. I know that she is very proud of those charter schools.

So what is the future of charter schools? What do we need to concentrate on to make sure that these charter schools remain viable choices for parents, teachers, and students?

One obstacle for charter schools is to overcome the difficulties and problems of start-up costs. They need to get in a building, and oftentimes procuring that building is the single biggest impediment to starting that charter school. We need to provide Federal resources, maybe matching with bonds and other State incentives, to help start these charter schools.

Secondly, we need to share best practices. If there are some good charter schools in one State, we need to find ways to share those best practices, those successful schools with other charter movements in other States, and strengthen the accountability, because these schools need to be held accountable. If they are not working, they can be closed. We need to make sure that the State laws are good charter school laws.

Thirdly, we need to look at the per-pupil expenditures so that they are equal to other public schools. We are talking about public charter schools and other public schools, so let us make sure that these students get equal access, whether they go to a public charter school or a previous public school.

So I am very excited about this movement that is catching fire across this country. I am very excited about the New Democrats' support for this back 5 and 6 and 7 years ago when it was a new idea. I am very supportive in a bipartisan way of working with the Republicans and the administration to find new ways to support the growth of charter schools, as I have outlined, in the future.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of H. Con. Res. 386, recognizing the charter school movement for its contribution to improving our Nation's public schools.

Charter schools are independent public schools that are created by parents and teachers and operated with exemptions from most State laws and regulations. In just 10 years, the charter school movement has grown to over 2,400 schools enrolling 580,000 students in 34 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. These schools provide new choices for parents of public schoolchildren and they serve as laboratories for innovative educational practices that improve student achievement.

In my State of Delaware, the first charter school located in Wilmington opened in 1996. Unlike other schools, Wilmington Charter School focused its curriculum on math and science and it has achieved top scores in the Delaware assessments in math, reading, writing and science. Like many charter schools, Wilmington Charter School boasts high parental involvement, excellent student behavior, and state-of-the-art technology in every classroom. Unlike many traditional public schools, however, charter schools are subject to an unprecedented level of accountability. They have detailed written performance contracts, and where they are unable to meet the terms of the contracts, the schools are closed.

Recently citing financial instability, the Delaware Department of Education took a first step toward the revocation of the charter of a charter school in my

State. Many parents and students waged a heroic battle to keep the school doors open, attempting to fund the school with bake sales and auctions, and many are still reeling from the decision. Despite this setback, many Delaware charter schools continue to have more applications for admissions than they can currently accommodate. In my mind, this reinforces the need for alternative public education in Delaware.

Combined with high parent satisfaction and improved academic achievement, the strong support for Delaware charter schools has caused many school officials to acknowledge some of the failures of our traditional public schools, and they tell me it compels them to improve. With this week being National Charter Schools Week, April 29 to May 3, it is therefore fitting that we recognize our Nation's charter schools as another way to improve student achievement and increase parental involvement.

In conclusion, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) for his leadership on this issue, and I urge an "aye" vote.

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

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), my classmate.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I appreciate all of his work on this issue. He has been one of the movers and shakers for charter schools in this Congress. This is only one of the reasons I am in mourning that he is leaving the Congress. I want to thank the author of the resolution, H. Con. Res. 386, as well.

Mr. Speaker, the District of Columbia, our Nation's Capital, is supporting charter schools in a way that counts with the largest number of charter schools per capita in the United States. Fourteen percent of our youngsters go to charter schools, more than in any other State. We have 2 chartering authorities, including one that was authorized by this Congress pursuant to a bill I sponsored in 1995 with the agreement of the District of Columbia. All of our charter schools are public, non-sectarian schools. There are 13 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, and 16 high schools. I want to draw attention to one in particular, the Seed School, which is the first inner city charter boarder school in the United States. Yes, that is right. A boarding school of 14 children in a classroom, and it has attracted all kinds of private funds. We can imagine how surrounding these children with what such a school has to offer, what it means in terms of their career opportunities and their ability to get into top-flight schools.

We think our charter school movement here is a model for how to promote competition to the traditional public schools. This House may recall that there was fierce opposition in the

District which this Congress tried to impose on the District vouchers, fierce opposition, rage, and yet the District has embraced charter schools like its second skin. They have proven to be better than vouchers because they are far less controversial and have a far greater variety of schools than we could ever have gotten with vouchers.

These schools are very independent. They are not tied to the bureaucracy of the public schools of the District of Columbia at all.

For those who say that the public schools need competition, they are right. Boy, have they been competition for our public schools. I think they have made our public schools better. The scores in the public schools are better than the scores in the charter schools, but at the very bottom, the very bottom, the charter schools are doing better, and that may be because of the teacher-student ratio, because there are a smaller number of students in those schools.

□ 1745

The competition is good, but it has been publicly accountable competition.

What the charter schools and the public schools do is really enable us to compare schools that are apples and apples, because there is an even playing field here. Both of them get public money; both of them must take every student; none of them can cream off the top; none of them can discriminate based on where they come from or what their parents are or what the test scores are; and they all have the same health, safety, financial, and reporting regulations.

So we are probably going to be the first jurisdiction with a critical mass that is able to compare how students do in charter schools with how students do in traditional public schools.

In some jurisdictions, I want to caution the Congress that charter schools have become more controversial. They are seen less as competition and more as a distraction. I regret that. That has not yet happened in the District of Columbia.

But caution has to be taken to make sure that where a critical mass of money is necessary to run a public school system, that that remains intact, and that the number of charter schools relative to the number of traditional public schools remains in some kind of balance, and people do not go off chartering, catch-as-catch-can, charter schools.

In any case, the District, its parents, its students, are embracing charter schools. What is happening in the District of Columbia, in the Nation's capital, there is a real, live, thriving charter school movement helping to improve educational opportunity by providing a variety of public school vehicles from which our public school children, indeed any child in the District of Columbia, can choose.

I urge Members to look at this model to see what it may have to offer for

their own jurisdiction. I thank the gentleman for his work on this issue.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI).

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak in support of this resolution, as it once again recognizes the charter school movement for its contribution to improving America's schools.

Although Congress has been supporting the growth of charter schools for almost 10 years now, we should remember that this is, in fact, a grassroots movement. The movement was really started in the early 1990s by concerned parents and frustrated teachers who were fed up with the status quo, weary of fighting the bureaucracy that defeats innovation, and tired of seeing their children consigned to mediocrity and to failure.

In my State of Wisconsin, I am proud to say that we have a strong charter school program that was one of the first in the Nation to be established. I recently participated in the charter school conference held near my district. I was excited to learn of the innovation going on in my State.

For example, Wisconsin will soon have two virtual charter schools, which are public charter schools that conduct classes online. Thanks to Wisconsin's open enrollment law, children from anywhere in the State can apply to enroll in these schools. These virtual charter schools will provide a computer and Internet access to the enrolled children.

In these virtual schools, the parents have great control, and the parents make final decisions as to their child's personalized learning plan while still having full access to professionally-prepared curriculum and teacher support. Thus, this approach utilizes the advantages of home schooling, charters, and public school choice to create a unique educational experience.

I would like to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) for bringing forward this resolution. I appreciate the opportunity to speak in its support, and I urge my colleagues to support a National Charter Schools Week, and to continue to encourage the growth of this important and successful reform movement.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, in honor of National Charter Schools Week, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 386 introduced by my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER), also a member of our committee.

This week-long celebration, which runs through Friday, is cosponsored by more than 75 grassroots charter school support organizations in 45 States, and is coordinated by the Charter Friends National Network and the Center for Education Reform.

Also during this week there will be six charter school nights at major league baseball games in Colorado and in California. In addition, other national organizations have signed on as national supporting organizations for National Charter Schools Week, including the National Council of La Raza, the National Cooperative Bank Development Corporation, the Gates-EdVisions Project, and Youthbuild USA.

Although a relatively new phenomenon, charter schools have been at the cutting edge of educational reform for the past several years. Nowhere is this more true than in Dayton, Ohio, a new part of my district, the site of one of the fastest growing charter school movements in the Nation.

In Dayton, more than a dozen charter schools are up and running, serving thousands of area children. In Dayton and across the Nation, the contributions of charter schools are helping to strengthen our Nation's public schools. They are playing a key role in the effort to raise expectations and ensure that every child of every income and ethnic background has the chance for a safe and world-class education.

There are not many things that I and the editors of the Dayton Daily News agree on usually, but they were right on this one earlier this month when they wrote, and I will quote, "Charter schools deserve a chance. They can serve as models for public schools, and the competition they provide is a good thing."

In exchange for flexibility and freedom from regulations, charter schools are held accountable for improving the academic achievement of their students. This new-found flexibility and freedom has not only translated into higher test scores, but also innovative practices. I think it has empowered parents with the ability to seek out the best education possible for their own children.

In fact, we mirror these same principles of freedom, flexibility, and accountability through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in H.R. 1, the No Child Left Behind Act, which the President signed into law earlier this year.

Currently, 37 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have passed charter school laws, and more than a half a million students attend charter schools somewhere nationwide. My hope is that every State will have passed a charter school law in the very near future.

That said, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate all of the students, parents, teachers, principals, and administrators who have embraced the charter school movement and are working to make it a success.

I would also like to recognize the efforts of two Ohio officials, State auditor Jim Petro and State Representative Jon Husted of Dayton, who have worked tirelessly on behalf of our State's charter schools.

Finally, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER), the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) for their efforts in bringing this resolution to the floor.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Delaware for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of this resolution. I commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) for introducing it, because it recognizes an important principle: We in government know that regulation, with the best of intentions, is not always successful.

The charter school movement recognizes that empowerment of parents, teachers, and the children is almost always successful. That is the basic principle of the charter school movement. It engages the parents in setting the goals, it engages the faculty with the parents in setting the goals, and it asks for regulation waivers in return for the accountability for achievement and higher standards.

In my district in Georgia, the first charter school in our State was approved, and it has subsequently been reapproved. The results are remarkable. The parents are proud, the kids are engaged, and the faculty is a part of the decision-making process, the change, and the reform that has made the school movement a success.

So I commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER), I commend those parents, as the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman BOEHNER) has said, and I commend those around the country that are trying to help public schools with that key process of parental involvement and teacher involvement in higher goals and better achievement.

Lastly, I want to add a comment. At our recess a few weeks ago, I traveled with USAID to Egypt and Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, I observed a program known as BESO, sponsored by Save the Children, CARE, World Learning, and USAID. It is a program that engaged, due to the following: It is basic educational structural overhaul. The result is, it is charter schools.

There in Ethiopia, where we have problems with AIDS, problems with Muslim children being able to go to school, problems with economic development because of poor job training, we are bringing in parents, most of whom never had an education, to be part of the school with their children and the teachers to set goals.

We saw children in the worst of impoverished situations achieving higher goals because their parents were involved, their government supported change, and because teachers, parents, and students were partners together.

The resolution of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) is a good one. The charter school movement is a tre-

mendous asset to public education. I commend the gentleman from Florida for its introduction. I support the resolution.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT).

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me. I rise in strong support of this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation's charter schools have been a great boon to America's education system. My great State of Minnesota enjoys being at the forefront of many movements. Charter schools are no exception. St. Paul Academy in St. Paul, Minnesota, and Bluffview Montessori School in Winona, Minnesota, are America's first charter schools. These schools received their charters back in 1993.

Charter schools provide an innovative curriculum. Students are able to explore specific interests in a unique environment. Charter schools address the special needs of students who may not otherwise prosper in traditional public education systems.

Minnesota features charter schools that specifically address the needs of Hmong and Native American students.

A new agricultural charter school just opened in the Twin Cities. This is an excellent opportunity for urban students to expand their knowledge. Too many adults do not know enough about how food is produced. Charter schools are providing the innovative solutions to that gap of understanding.

As a component of public education, charter schools are a testing ground for education delivery systems, and they are proving very successful. With an enrollment of 175 students, Bluffview continues to prosper. Their students, with the guidance of 15 teachers, have consistently scored higher than national and State averages on standardized tests.

Charter schools provide a creative answer to the question of parental involvement, flexibility and accountability in the public school system, higher standards, and oversight by a sponsoring public district maintain quality and continuity in each school.

In the case of parental involvement, I want to tell Members about Sandy Bauer. Her children have already graduated from Bluffview. Her experience as a parent was so positive that she continues to be a volunteer. That is commitment. Her actions tell me that Bluffview is doing something right.

Accountability is best demonstrated by the creation of a charter document. This document specifically outlines the goals for achievement. I firmly believe in planning your work and working your plan. Charter schools, by their very nature, must meet the goals of their charter or they lose that charter.

I am proud to celebrate National Charter Schools Week. I wholeheartedly commend the charter schools, the movement, the charter school teachers, the parents, and the

students for their ongoing contributions to education. They are leading our country to a brighter future for all students, and I am happy to cosponsor this important resolution.

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

Mr. Speaker, I conclude by stating my very strong support for this resolution. I want to thank the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) for his support on this bipartisan resolution today, as well.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) for his sponsorship of this, and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER).

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WHITFIELD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 386.

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.

□ 1800

EDUCATION SCIENCES REFORM ACT OF 2002

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3801) to provide for improvement of Federal education research, statistics, evaluation, information, and dissemination, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3801

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

TITLE I—EDUCATION SCIENCES REFORM SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002".

SEC. 102. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

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Sec. 101. Short title.

Sec. 102. Table of contents.

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PART A—ACADEMY OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

SEC. 111. ESTABLISHMENT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There shall be in the Department an Academy of Education Sciences, to be administered by a Director (as provided in section 115) and a board of directors (as provided in section 117).

(b) MISSION.—The mission of the Academy is to provide national leadership in expanding fundamental knowledge and understanding of education, in order to provide parents, educators, students, researchers, policymakers, and the general public with reliable information about the condition and progress of education in the United States, educational practices that support learning and improve academic achievement for all students, and the effectiveness of Federal and other education programs. In carrying out this mission, the Academy shall conduct research, evaluation, statistics, and dissemination activities supported by Federal funds through the Academy and ensure that such activities—

(1) conform to high standards of quality, integrity, and accuracy; and

(2) are objective, secular, neutral, and non-ideological and are free of partisan political influence and racial, cultural, gender, or regional bias.

SEC. 112. ORGANIZATION.

The Academy consists of the following:

(1) The Office of the Director (as set out in section 115).

(2) The National Board for Education Sciences (as set out in section 117).

(3) The Office of Educational Resources and Dissemination (as set out in section 119).

(4) The National Education Centers, which include—

(A) the National Center for Education Research (as set out in part B);

(B) the National Center for Education Statistics (as set out in part C); and

(C) the National Center for Education Evaluation (as set out in part D).

SEC. 113. FUNCTIONS.

The Academy, directly or through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, shall—

(1) conduct and support scientifically valid research activities, including basic and applied research, statistics activities, scientifically valid education evaluation, development, and dissemination;

(2) disseminate the findings and results of scientifically valid research in education;

(3) promote the application of knowledge gained from scientifically valid research activities;

(4) strengthen the national capacity to conduct scientifically valid research in education; and

(5) promote the coordination of scientifically valid research in education within the Department and the Federal Government.

SEC. 114. DELEGATION.

(a) DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding section 412 of the Department of Education Organization Act (20 U.S.C. 3472), the Secretary shall delegate to the Director all functions for carrying out this title (other than administrative and support functions), except that—

(1) nothing in this title or in the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act may be construed to alter or diminish the role, responsibilities, or authority of the National Assessment Governing Board with respect to the National Assessment of Educational Progress from those authorized by the National Education Statistics Act of 1994 immediately before the enactment of this Act;

(2) members of the National Assessment Governing Board shall continue to be appointed by the Secretary;

(3) section 302(f)(1) of the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act shall apply to the National Assessment Governing Board in the exercise of its responsibilities under this Act;

(4) sections 116 and 117(b)(2) shall not apply to the National Assessment of Educational Progress; and

(5) sections 116 and 117 shall not apply to the National Assessment Governing Board.

(b) OTHER ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary may assign the Academy responsibility for administering other activities, if those activities are consistent with—

(1) the Academy's priorities, as approved by the National Board for Education Sciences under section 116; or

(2) the Academy's mission, if the activities are not consistent with such priorities.

SEC. 115. OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR.

(a) APPOINTMENT.—Except as provided in subsection (b)(2), the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint the Director of the Academy.

(b) TERM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall serve for a term of 6 years, beginning on the date of appointment of the Director, but may be removed by the President prior to the expiration of that term.

(2) FIRST DIRECTOR.—The President, without the advice and consent of the Senate, may appoint the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (as such office existed on the day before the date of enactment of this Act) to serve as the first Director of the Academy.

(3) SUBSEQUENT DIRECTORS.—The Board may make recommendations to the President with respect to the appointment of a