

Americans should be able to access the Internet without being subject to state and local taxes.

□ 1230

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 150.

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.

RECOGNIZING THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA FOR PUBLIC SERVICES PERFORMED ACROSS THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 853) recognizing the Boy Scouts of America for the public service the organization performs for neighborhoods and communities across the United States.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 853

Whereas the Boy Scouts of America is one of the leading volunteer youth movements in the United States, serving more than 4,700,000 young people with the support of 1,200,000 volunteer adult leaders;

Whereas the Boy Scouts of America was incorporated on February 8, 1910, and recognized by Federal charter on June 15, 1916, to provide an educational program for youth to build character, train in the responsibilities of participatory citizenship, and develop personal fitness;

Whereas the Boy Scouts of America teaches the core values of duty to God and country, personal honor, respect for the beliefs of others, volunteerism, and the value of service and doing a "good turn" daily, principles which are conducive to good character, citizenship, and health; and

Whereas during the 95-year history of the Boy Scouts of America, the organization has partnered with the Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity International, the American Red Cross, and thousands of other community and civic organizations to address critical issues facing communities in the United States, including the problems of hunger, inadequate housing, and poor health and youth obesity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the Boy Scouts of America for the public service the organization performs for neighborhoods and communities across the United States; and

(2) commends the Boy Scouts of America for the Good Turn for America program and the work the organization has accomplished while partnering with the Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity International, the American Red Cross, and thousands of other community and civic organizations across the United States to address critical issues facing communities in the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms.

JACKSON-LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 853.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 853, recognizing the Boy Scouts of America for the public service the organization performs for neighborhoods and communities across the United States.

Despite the widespread respect the Boy Scouts of America have earned over their long history, the Boy Scouts have been and continue to be the targets of strident legal attacks simply because religious faith is part of the scouting program.

The purpose of the Boy Scouts of America, incorporated on February 8, 1910, and chartered by this Congress in 1916, is to provide an educational program for boys and young adults to build character, to train in the responsibilities of citizenship, and to develop personal fitness. The community-based organizations receive national charters they use to integrate the Scouting program into their own youth work.

These groups, which have goals compatible with those of the Boy Scouts of America, include religious, educational, civil, fraternal, business and labor organizations; governmental bodies; corporations; professional associations; and citizens' groups.

Several Presidents of the United States, including John F. Kennedy and Gerald R. Ford, have been ex-Scouts. Of the 108th Congress, 264 Members, nearly half the entire congressional membership, participated in Scouting. Membership in the Scouts since 1910 totals more than 110 million. As of December 31, 2003, the Boy Scouts of America included 3.2 million youth members and 1.2 million adult members.

The Scout Law sets forth 12 guiding principles, providing that a Scout is "trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent." With regard to the final principle, the Scout Law says, "A Scout is reverent. A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others." All Boy Scouts must know and subscribe to the Scout Oath and Law, which embodies not only the ideals of Scouting but also those of our great Nation.

While many religious organizations charter Scouting units, Boy Scouts of America prohibits them from requiring

boys who belong to other denominations or faith to take part in or observe their religious ceremonies. Rather, the Boy Scouts of America encourages its youth members to practice their religious beliefs as directed by their parents and their spiritual advisors.

In *Boy Scouts of America vs. Dale*, the Supreme Court held that "during the time spent with the youth members, the scoutmasters and assistant scoutmasters inculcate them with the Boy Scouts' values, both expressly and by example. It seems indisputable that an association that seeks to transmit such a system of values engages in expressive activity."

Whenever the Boy Scouts are singled out for unfavorable treatment because of their viewpoint, very serious constitutional issues are raised. And this Congress will do everything in its power to uphold the Boy Scouts' constitutional rights.

Despite affirmation of the Scouts' first amendment right of expressive association by the Supreme Court in the *Dale* case, the Boy Scouts have been attacked on a variety of legal fronts.

In 1999 the American Civil Liberties Union filed suit against the United States Department of Defense, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees claiming that governmental support of the Boy Scouts violates the establishments clause because the Boy Scouts require a belief in God as a condition of membership. This lawsuit seeks to remove virtually all government support of the Boy Scouts of America.

Additionally, though the Supreme Court affirmed the Scouts' freedom of expressive association in the context of setting membership standards, the Scouts have been excluded from participating in Connecticut's charitable giving program for choosing to express this right.

The Scouts are also under attack in the city of San Diego. For decades the Scouts have used San Diego park property pursuant to a lease agreement with the city. However, the use of this property is currently in jeopardy due to claims by activist groups that the Scouts' use of the property violates the establishment clause.

The Scouts have also had to fight for equal access to school facilities for after-hour use. Shortly after the Supreme Court's decision in *Dale*, the Broward County School Board in Florida unanimously voted to exclude the Boy Scouts of America from utilizing school facilities for after-school use simply because of the Boy Scouts' religious principles, even though, for many years prior to this, the local arm of the Scouts had enjoyed the after-hours use of many Broward school facilities and numerous other organizations continued to use the school facilities.

Throughout the history of the Boy Scouts of America, the Boy Scouts have provided services to others, gathering food and clothing for needy

neighbors, building playgrounds, repairing parks and public buildings, assisting fire and police departments, and aiding disaster victims. In the days following September 11, Boy Scouts across the country collected food and other necessities for the victims' family and rescue workers and helped to rally the patriotism of the country by handing out flags and holding candle-light vigils.

Practically every Member of this body, Mr. Speaker, has been invited and participated in Eagle Scout ceremonies. I have been at a number of them, and it is a recognition of the good kids in our society that in my opinion do not get enough recognition. But in order to become an Eagle, every Scout has to do some type of community service project. And if the Scout does not do that, the Scout does not attain the highest rank, which is Eagle status. And it would be a shame if the Boy Scouts ended up being sued to death and, thus, the communities that benefit from all of these Eagle projects, as well as the projects that Scouts of lower rank participate in, would not be available.

We need the Boy Scouts now more than ever. And this Congress will do whatever it takes to make sure their vital spirit continues to inspire and strengthen America and its youth. I rise today in support of House Resolution 853, and I will rise in support of future efforts to protect the Boy Scouts whenever they or any other organization face unfair discrimination.

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

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise as a Silver Beaver recipient and a member of the board of directors of the Houston-Galveston Boy Scouts of America. I also am a member of this body and recognize that there is diversity of opinion and thought and process and also in many instances the interpretation of the Constitution. But I rise today to recognize that we have the kind of embracing support for H. Res. 853 and recognizing the young men that engage in Boy Scout programs throughout America.

Let me first say that we in this country should be very proud that we have the kind of young people who are willing in their very young age to become a part of a civic organization that provides service. And so this resolution recognizes that service.

I would just offer to my colleagues the list of service activities, probably so many of them in your community that we see Boy Scouts engaged in. For example, "Habitat Fills in the Missing Pieces on Dallas Street," and this article shows Boy Scout Troop 1077 going about their activities and helping to rebuild communities, young men, if you will, that are not even voting age at this time.

Then when we have looked at the question of homeland security, we see another article suggesting something that I am very committed to, preparedness in our neighborhoods. Boy Scouts of America helped launch a national preparedness month, and they are here with Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge because it is the Boy Scouts who understand preparedness and understand first aid and understand organizational skills that are very key and can be very key in helping us to secure our neighborhoods.

Of course, all of us have heard about aiding hurricane victims, and we have another release that talks about 200 Boy Scouts aiding Hurricane Charley victims. So we know that this is an opportunity for young people to learn not only their civic duty but to participate in it.

Let me share with you a personal story on the Boy Scouts. I think it is a program that has now taken some national wings, and that is what we call Urban Scouting. Some years ago in Houston we started this program with T-shirts and having youngsters from the inner city come and do Boy Scouts programs in the parks. That was the only place that they had; and unlike other units that had parents and maybe other kinds of facilities, we used paid Scouters, professionals, to help us with the Urban Scouting program. I am very proud to say that today it has in our community hundreds of members, maybe up to thousands of members, now with their uniforms; our programs are in our schools.

I would venture to say that we understand that there is a balance in expressing your constitutional right to be free from various church and State issues, but we also know that we must have a balance. So this resolution charges this Congress with having a balance. I would say that this program, the Good Turn for America program, is a key element of the work that we do with the Boy Scouts. Through the Good Turn for America program, thousands of young people have worked with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, have worked to aid victims of Hurricane Charley, have volunteered to feed the poor, and have worked to become good citizens by serving their communities.

So it is appropriate, Mr. Speaker, that we join with our colleagues in recognizing the fact that the Boy Scouts do good work for us.

I will say that I welcome the Boy Scouts to Washington, D.C., or the region, and I welcome them for their annual jamboree. The reason why I say that is because sometimes we do take personal privilege and I want to acknowledge Wheeler Avenue Boy Scouts Troop in Houston, Texas, and thank them for allowing and helping my young man, Jason Lee, become the Eagle Scout that he is today. I thank them for allowing him to participate in the jamboree, and for those insiders, Philmont Camp in New Mexico.

This is a training process for the leaders of today and also for tomorrow. So I think it is important for us to join in this resolution and to commend the ideals of the Boy Scouts and of course the results of the Boy Scouts. I join with my neighbors and friends and my colleagues in commending the public spirited work of these young people throughout the Nation. There is no higher ideal than serving your community. By helping their neighbors they are making themselves better citizens. These young people deserve to be commended for their work.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution commends the Boy Scouts for their work in our communities through the "Good Turn for America" program.

Through the Good Turn for America program thousands of young people have worked with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, have worked to aid victims of Hurricane Charley, have volunteered to feed the poor, and have worked to become good citizens by serving their communities.

I want to join my colleagues in commending the public spirited work of these young people throughout the Nation. There is no higher ideal than serving your community. By helping their neighbors, they are making themselves better citizens. These young people deserve to be commended for the good work.

200 BOY SCOUTS AID CHARLEY VICTIMS

On Saturday morning, August 21st, at 5 a.m. over 200 Boy Scouts in Palm Beach County departed from Boca Raton's Town Center Mall for Florida's devastated west to provide disaster relief services for the victims of Hurricane Charley. Boys and adults from nine troops drove 16 vehicles, including five trucks loaded with food and supplies to Arcadia to serve three meals to those left homeless by the storm.

The Boy Scout relief effort, organized by Tom Ehrbar II, a Boca Raton businessman and longtime Scouting supporter, carried contributions of food from Wholesum Bread, Johnsonville Bratwurst, Cheney Bros. Foods, and other local vendors to the Arcadia disaster area. The Boy Scouts served 1,000 breakfasts, 1,500 lunches, and over 1,500 dinners to the beleaguered residents of Arcadia. The Scouts also carried personal care items for distribution.

Once in Arcadia, the Boy Scouts assisted the local disaster relief personnel in whatever tasks needed attention: assisting in construction of temporary housing, providing logistical support, or communications, states Eagle Scout Thomas Ehrbar III, son of the project organizer. Weyerhouser has donated lumber supplies for that effort.

The Scouts kicked off Good Turn for America, a nationwide program of community service provided by the Boy Scouts for the communities they serve. Hurricane Charley arrived in Florida on the eve of that program kickoff.

[September 9, 2004]

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA HELP LAUNCH NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

When the Department of Homeland Security wanted to send a message about the importance of "being prepared" at the launch of National Preparedness Month in Washington, DC, they turned to the Boy Scouts of America.

Eagle Scout Tucker Barbour of Troop 500, chartered to the Capitol Hill Scouts in Washington, DC, introduced Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge at the kickoff event on the grounds of the United States Capitol.

Barbour was joined on stage by Scouts and leaders from the National Capital Area Council and representatives of the Girl Scouts.

The Boy Scouts of America is part of a coalition of organizations assembled by the Department of Homeland Security to promote September as National Preparedness Month. The emphasis is intended to provide Americans with a variety of opportunities to learn more about ways they can prepare for an emergency, get an emergency supply kit, establish a family communications plan, and become better aware of threats that may impact communities.

The event was attended by honorary National Preparedness Month co-chairs Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) and Representatives Christopher Cox (R-CA) and Jane Harman (D-CA), as well as American Red Cross President and CEO Marsha Evans and leaders of more than 80 other organizations to announce hundreds of events focused on preparedness across the country. Following the event, the Scouts distributed emergency preparedness kits to members of Congress.

To support National Preparedness Month, the Boy Scouts of America is encouraging Scouts and volunteers to focus on earning the Emergency Preparedness BSA Award. The award was developed at the request of the Department of Homeland Security and introduced in 2003.

HABITAT FILLS IN THE MISSING PIECES ON DALLAS STREET—VOLUNTEERS BUILD HOMES THAT DEVELOPER WAS UNABLE TO FINISH

(By Kim Homer)

The residents of Pinebrook Drive just watched their neighborhood go through a makeover.

And it took only nine days.

On Saturday, Habitat for Humanity volunteers finished building 22 new three-bedroom homes there on the short street near Bonnie View and Simpson Stuart roads on lots that had stood vacant for years.

Hundreds of volunteers planted flowers, installed mailboxes and put the last bricks on the attractive homes with front porches Saturday.

A developer ran out of money to finish building homes on Pinebrook Drive a few years ago. That left gaps of missing houses. Toney Lemons, who has lived on the street since 1974, said he didn't mind all the construction work and traffic—which police came to direct at times—since it was for a good cause.

"Everybody needs somewhere to stay," Mr. Lemons said, adding that he'll be happy as long as his new neighbors take care of their properties like he does.

Nora Hernandez, who will move in down the street, was so excited about her new place she couldn't eat the lunch provided for volunteers on Saturday.

"It's perfect," she said of the home. "It's beautiful."

The 31-year-old single mother will move her three young children from a cramped one-bedroom Arlington apartment to her new three-bedroom home in July.

Ms. Hernandez, who works as a packer in a Grand Prairie plastics factory, said she's thrilled to become a homeowner. She has looked into buying a house before but found she could not afford one.

"It's a big opportunity for families like mine," she said. Ms. Hernandez said her mortgage will be slightly less than her rent of \$485 a month. Her children, ages 8, 7 and 2, will be able to have separate bedrooms for the first time, she said.

Ms. Hernandez said she learned about the program from her friend and co-worker, Juanita Acosta. Ms. Hernandez told Ms. Acosta

that she was hosting a birthday party at her house for one of her children.

"I said, 'Where?'" said Ms. Acosta, who couldn't imagine her friend had enough room to host the celebration.

Now that Ms. Hernandez knows about Habitat for Humanity, she said she wants to return the favor by spreading the word about the program to others who may not realize they can apply.

Ms. Acosta, who lives in a Pleasant Grove house built by Habitat for Humanity, took a week's vacation to help build her friend's home. The two friends have been putting up walls, painting and sweeping as part of the "sweat equity" homeowners must contribute in exchange for no-interest, \$60,000 mortgages.

In all, about 3,500 volunteers pitched in during the building blitz. They came from 20 churches, 11 businesses and other organizations, including 300 AmeriCorps volunteers who traveled from throughout the nation.

Ronald Denham of Victoria, Texas, was one of the workers from AmeriCorps, which gives participants a small living allowance in exchange for community service.

"I believe there's a need and I'd wanted to do this for years," said Mr. Denham, 67, a retired court reporter.

Volunteers from Dallas-based Home Interiors and Gifts put a finishing touch of a wreath on each house on Saturday. The company sponsored one of five homes built by all-women crews as part of Habitat for Humanity's Women Building program.

"The home is a haven," said Carol Eichinger, the company's director of communications, who worked on the house. "But first you have to have a house to decorate."

Filling in 22 empty lots with new houses turned Pinebrook Drive into a whole new place for current and incoming residents, said Fred Hoster, director of development for Dallas Area Habitat for Humanity. Habitat built 19 homes on the street more than two years ago, so now the nonprofit organization has built a majority of the homes there.

Mr. Hoster said he expects private-for-profit homebuilders will expand on what Habitat started in that area. Then, he said, he hopes new stores and restaurants will follow in the neighborhood that lacks many retail businesses. Mr. Hoster said he's confident the surrounding area will have a new look in a few years.

"We build neighborhoods," he said. "All the neighbors already know each other because they've worked on each others' houses."

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

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), the author of this resolution.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for bringing this important resolution to the floor in a timely fashion, and I say "timely" because an organization that on a bipartisan basis enjoys so much support to be under attack on a daily basis as we speak is an organization that needs our attention.

In 1916 when the Congress chartered the Boy Scouts, it did so in recognition of their contribution in their early days. But as we hear today that nearly or actually over half of the male Members of Congress are here today in no small part because of their participation in Boy Scouts, what we see is a ratio of success that comes from the

Boy Scouts, that comes from the kind of training they provide to both urban and rural America. That is what we are here to defend today.

This resolution is, as the chairman so aptly said, one step in a dedication that we have on a bipartisan basis to defend the Boy Scouts' ability to continue the fine work they have done for nearly a century.

As a San Diegoan I am acutely aware of just how easily outside organizations objecting to what the Boy Scouts stand for could lead to the end of Scouting as we know it.

□ 1245

So I want to, once again, thank the chairman for bringing this important resolution to the floor in this Congress. I have no doubt that we will take up these issues and more in the next Congress, but as a former Boy Scout, somebody who, if I owe anyone the "thank you for being here today," it was, in fact, for a Christian Arab young man to be in a Jewish Boy Scout troop, to be around the kind of openness and thinking that was available to me as a Scout, coming every week to an orthodox temple to understand the values of the world, not the values of Christianity, not the value of Judaism but the values of the world and the people of the world.

So, once again, Mr. Speaker, I urge the unanimous support of this resolution, and I ask all my colleagues to vote with the chairman, with myself, with the ranking member in favor of H. Res. 853.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 853 which honors the Boy Scouts of America, for the public service the organization performs for neighborhoods and communities across the United States.

I would like to thank Chairman SENSENBRENNER, the Judiciary Committee staff, the Majority Leader and his staff for their hard work to bring this measure to the floor.

For 95 years, the Boy Scouts of America have made outstanding contributions to citizenship, service, and leadership.

The stated purpose of the Boy Scouts of America, incorporated on February 8, 1910, and chartered by Congress in 1916 is to provide an educational program for boys and young adults to build character, to train in the responsibilities of citizenship, and to develop personal fitness.

More than 50 percent of congressional members participated in Scouting either as a scout or a scout leader.

As I stand here today, the City of San Diego is facing litigation that would force the city to stop supporting the activities of the Boy Scouts and void a long-standing lease under which the Boy Scouts operate their headquarters in city-owned Balboa Park.

The Boy Scouts of America was founded on the premise of teaching boys moral and ethical values through an outdoor program that challenges them and teaches them respect for one another and themselves.

Scouting has always represented the best in community, leadership, and service.

The Boy Scouts of America relies on dedicated volunteers to promote its mission of preparing young people to make moral and ethical choice over their lifetime by instilling the values of the Scout Oath.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is an expression of Congress' appreciation for Scouts, volunteer leaders, and employees of the Boy Scouts of America.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), someone who understands the importance of opportunities for young men and has been a leader on these issues.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with the gentleman from Wisconsin (Chairman SENSENBRENNER); with the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), the ranking member of the subcommittee; with the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), the sponsor of this legislation; and all of the others who have come to provide recognition of the public service that is performed by the Boy Scouts of America.

I can agree that there can be disagreements and there can be examination of practices, but the Boy Scouts of America have been one of the most prolific organizations in the development of boys into men that I know about in this country.

As one who served for 12 years as the scouting commissioner in my community, there was no sight one would rather see than 2- or 300 young boys at a blue and gold dinner or to see the 500 Scouts who used to participate in parades and other activities that we would put on.

So, in addition to the community service that they provide, I commend the Scouts for developing boys into men, and I am pleased to join in support of this resolution.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, for yielding me the time.

As an Eagle Scout, I rise in strong support of this resolution and am heartened by the bipartisan outpouring of support for the Boy Scouts of America, as mentioned earlier, a movement that was chartered federally by this very Congress early in the 20th century. While we today reiterate our support for the scouting movement, as my colleague from California, the sponsor of this resolution, noted, scouting is under attack.

The American Civil Liberties Union filed a nuisance lawsuit against the Pentagon saying that somehow sponsorship of Scout troops on military bases violates the doctrine of separation of church and State. Mr. Speaker,

that is a nuisance lawsuit, and I am sorry the Defense Department attorneys decided to surrender to the ACLU.

Mr. Speaker, I have written Secretary Rumsfeld asking him to countermand the decision of the Pentagon lawyers. Scouting values, military values, citizenship values, a respect and reverence for our Creator is not a violation of the doctrine of separation of church and State. So I hope those who join us in support of this resolution will likewise join us to say to the Pentagon attorneys, take down the white flag of surrender, do not give up on scouting, and we remain poised to take further measures to ensure that our government institutions follow the will of the people and the sentiment of the Congress.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution and support, of course, of the Boy Scouts of America.

As mentioned, they have had 90 years of history here helping young men, young boys build character and train them in the responsibility of participating in citizenship. The Boy Scouts teach these boys and young men that there is a higher good, something outside of themselves within each of them they should strive to achieve.

We have heard, for example, from the chairman of millions of American boys and young men who participate in the Boy Scouts, including Gerald Ford, Hank Aaron, Ross Perot, Jimmy Stewart, Neil Armstrong. They all have benefited tremendously from belonging to and participating in the Boy Scouts.

As such, it is altogether fitting that we recognize the Scouts for all the public service and all the charitable work they have done over the years.

But Congress also has a responsibility to defend the Boy Scouts from the relentless attacks on it from various government entities and interest groups. For example, the ACLU is suing to challenge the Federal Government's longstanding support for the Boy Scouts. Do my colleagues realize also the ACLU also currently sued for the right of a nudist camp for children to open?

Recently, the Department of Defense has agreed to no longer officially sponsor the Scouts on military bases. Why? Because the Scouts' oath mentions God. This is not the first time the Boy Scouts have come under attack for their oath or their membership policies, even though the Supreme Court and the American people are on the side of the Boy Scouts.

The ACLU has led the charge against the Scouts in States like Connecticut and cities like San Diego to defund this important organization, take away their campsites and treat them as though they are hate groups. This cam-

paign against the Scouts is truly wrong. It is about time we do something about it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and any other efforts to protect the Boy Scouts of America.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I believe I have no further speakers, Mr. Speaker, and I would just simply say, let me add my appreciation and applause to the sponsor of this legislation, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), but also to all of the volunteers and parents and community citizens, businesses that contribute to the Boy Scouts of America across the Nation.

As well, let me thank the Houston-Galveston Council on Boy Scouts in our community and as well maintain the fact of the valuable asset that Boy Scouts and their programs represent in the United States of America.

I ask for support.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 853 may be the most self-evident resolution this body has considered in the 108th Congress. It is a bill to recognize the good service of the Boy Scouts of America. One would think we might as well consider a resolution recognizing the good service of motherhood and apple pie.

But, Mr. Speaker, as we near the end of 2004 we have to come to understand that some Americans do not believe in the good works of the Boy Scouts of America. In fact, there are those who believe that the very existence of the Boy Scouts of America does not deserve recognition by the Federal Government.

Although such a disposition may appear to be shocking at first, it is the mind-bending logical conclusion of an effort that seeks to isolate groups like the Boy Scouts. The American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU, released the details of a legal settlement with the U.S. Department of Defense, DoD, this Tuesday, November 16, 2004. In this ongoing case, the ACLU has sued DoD and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD, for sponsoring the Boy Scouts of America, thus, in the opinion of the ACLU, breaching the Constitution's separation of church and state. While the settlement reached by the ACLU with DoD seems benign, the attack upon our country's cultural institutions cannot be ignored.

While purporting to defend Liberty, the ACLU and its allies promote an agenda that discriminates against religion and blocks the People from helping those who help others. You see, the Boy Scouts of America have the word "God" in their oath. While the Scout Oath also contains words like honor, moral, and country, the ACLU is concerned that religion is intruding upon the rights of the American people because Department of Defense employees have long worked with the Boy Scouts of America for community events.

Mr. Speaker, I serve as the chairman of the Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Reform. Through my subcommittee, the ranking member, ELIJAH CUMMINGS, and I have held eight hearings in the last 2 years on the provision of services by faith-based and community groups. In a field

hearing we held on January 23, 2004, in Los Angeles, CA, the subcommittee heard from a witness who explained the simple yet weighty impact the use of government property would be for groups like his. Keith Phillips is the founder and president of World Impact, a nonprofit, faith-based organization "designed to transform the lives of the urban poor." For groups like Mr. Phillips', the use of buses for weekend trips can be the difference in helping the children of the urban poor. He suggested at our hearing that the Federal Government allow groups like his to use their buses on the weekend. He explained that government can help World Impact help other Americans, "Give us facilities where we can run clinics, thrift stores, recreational activities. Help us provide better transportation for the urban poor to camps, conferences and schools by giving us the use of government vehicles like buses on weekends."

Mr. Speaker, our Department of Defense, not to speak of other federal departments, operate hundreds, probably thousands of buses. The first legal step has been taken to prevent these buses from ever being used by the Boy Scouts or by groups like World Impact. I hope this House takes leaps toward helping groups like these. I hope this House takes steps to help DOD and other branches of the Federal Government help these people help their fellow Americans. I hope we stand up for the religious liberty of Americans against those who would discriminate against religiously oriented Americans.

I rise with my colleagues of the House in recognizing the good service of the Boy Scouts of America. Though H. Res. 853 would appear to be a simple resolution for this body to consider, I believe we are forced to defend the Boy Scouts and all other service organizations that would be falsely challenged in their service of other Americans. Let us unanimously pass H. Res. 853, and honor the ideals of the Scout Oath:

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 853.

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. SENSENBRENNER. 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.

THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN OPEN ELECTIONS ACT OF 2004

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules

and pass the bill (H.R. 4324) to amend title 5, United States Code, to eliminate the provisions limiting certain election opportunities available to individuals participating in the Thrift Savings Plan, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4324

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

SECTION 1. ELECTIONS FOR THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN CONTRIBUTIONS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Thrift Savings Plan Open Elections Act of 2004".

(b) IN GENERAL.—Section 8432(b)(1)(A) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the first sentence—

(A) by inserting "(i)" before "The Executive Director"; and

(B) by striking "shall be afforded a reasonable period every 6 months to elect to" and inserting "may";

(2) by striking the second sentence; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(i) An election to make contributions under this paragraph—

"(I) may be made at any time;

"(II) shall take effect on the earliest date after the election that is administratively feasible; and

"(III) shall remain in effect until modified or terminated."

(c) CONTINUATION OF NOT MAKING IMMEDIATE AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.—Section 8432(b)(4)(C) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting "(i)" after "(C)"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(ii) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A) or (B), contributions under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (c) shall not begin to be made with respect to an employee or Member described under paragraph (2)(A) or (B) until the date that such contributions would have begun to be made in accordance with this paragraph as administered on the date preceding the date of enactment of the Thrift Savings Plan Open Elections Act of 2004."

(d) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM PARTICIPATION.—Section 8351(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "only during a period" and inserting "as".

(2) CONTRIBUTIONS BY PREVIOUSLY INELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES.—Section 8432(b)(2) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking "second period" and inserting "date";

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking "second period" and inserting "date"; and

(C) in subparagraph (D) by striking "other than during a period afforded" and inserting "as provided".

(3) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—Section 8439(c)(2) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "at least 30 calendar days before the beginning of each election period under section 8432(b)(1)(A) of this title" and inserting "on a regular basis".

(4) JUSTICES AND JUDGES.—Section 8440a(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "only during a period" and inserting "as".

(5) BANKRUPTCY JUDGES AND MAGISTRATE JUDGES.—Section 8440b(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "only during a period" and inserting "as".

(6) COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS JUDGES.—Section 8440c(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "only during a period" and inserting "as".

(7) JUDGES OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS.—Section 8440d(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "only during a period" and inserting "as".

(8) MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES.—Section 8440e(b)(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking "only during a period" and inserting "as"; and

(B) by striking all after section "8432(b)" and inserting a period.

SEC. 2. ENHANCING FINANCIAL LITERACY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (in this section referred to as the "Board") shall periodically evaluate whether the tools available to participants provide the information needed to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products, services, and opportunities offered through the Thrift Savings Plan. The Board shall use these evaluations to improve its existing education program for Thrift Savings Plan participants.

(b) REPORT ON FINANCIAL LITERACY EFFORTS.—The Board shall annually report to the Committee on Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Government Reform of the House of Representatives on its Thrift Savings Plan education efforts on behalf of plan participants.

(c) STRATEGY.—As part of the retirement training offered by Office of Personnel Management under section 8350 of title 5, United States Code, the Office, in consultation with the Board, shall—

(1) not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, develop and implement a retirement financial literacy and education strategy for Federal employees that—

(A) shall educate Federal employees on the need for retirement savings and investment; and

(B) provide information related to how Federal employees can receive additional information on how to plan for retirement and calculate what their retirement investment should be in order to meet their retirement goals; and

(2) submit a report to the Committee on Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Government Reform of the House of Representatives on the strategy described under paragraph (1).

SEC. 3. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

Subchapter III of chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 8433(d)(1), by striking "paragraph (3)" and inserting "paragraph (2)"; and

(2) in section 8440b(b)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking "bankruptcy judge's or magistrate's" and inserting "bankruptcy judge's or magistrate judge's"; and

(B) in paragraphs (4)(B) and (8), by striking "bankruptcy judge or magistrate" each place it appears and inserting "bankruptcy judge or magistrate judge".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4324.

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