

I urge all Members to support the passage of H.R. 4299. I also understand that Dr. Nevarez will actually be an honoree at a dinner reception on Friday night in McAllen, Texas. And certainly on behalf of all the Members of this body, I want to thank and wish Dr. Nevarez the very best in his retirement, and I specifically want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) for introducing this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4299.

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. DAVIS of Illinois. 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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 622) supporting the goals and ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 622

Whereas the well-being of all people of the United States is preserved and enhanced as a direct result of the vigilance and dedication of law enforcement personnel;

Whereas more than 957,500 law enforcement personnel, the highest amount ever in the United States, serve their fellow citizens as guardians of peace;

Whereas peace officers are on the front line in preserving the right of the children of the United States to receive an education in a crime-free environment, a right that is all too often threatened by the insidious fear caused by violence in schools;

Whereas 145 peace officers across the Nation were killed in the line of duty during 2003, well below the decade-long average of 166 deaths annually, and a major drop from 2001 when 230 officers were killed, including 72 officers in the September 11th terrorist attacks;

Whereas every year, 1 out of every 9 peace officers is assaulted, 1 out of every 25 peace officers is injured, and 1 out of every 4,400 peace officers is killed in the line of duty;

Whereas section 136 of title 36, United States Code, requests that the President issue each year a proclamation designating May 15 as Peace Officers Memorial Day in honor of Federal, State, and local officers killed or disabled in the line of duty; and

Whereas on May 15, 2004, more than 20,000 peace officers are expected to gather in Washington, D.C. to join with the families of their recently fallen comrades to honor those comrades and all others who went before them: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day to honor Federal, State, and local peace officers killed or disabled in the line of duty; and

(2) calls upon the people of the United States to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and respect.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 622, the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 622 supports the goals and the ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day. This Saturday, May 15, is Peace Officers Memorial Day, a day that serves as an important remembrance of Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials who were killed or disabled in the line of duty during the past year.

According to the text of the resolution, 145 peace officers were killed during 2003. Mr. Speaker, remarkably, nearly 1 million Americans serve their country in some law enforcement capacity today. Their daily professions remain inherently dangerous, therefore all Americans must recognize and cherish their contributions to our liberty and to our security.

Mr. Speaker, this week is National Police Week, which occurs each year during the calendar week in which Peace Officers Memorial Day falls. Thousands of law enforcement personnel and their families will attend several events in the Washington, D.C. area during this week, culminating with the 23rd annual National Peace Officers Memorial Day services at noon on Saturday, May 15, at the west front of this revered building, the United States Capitol building.

We all owe our Nation's peace officers a tremendous debt of gratitude for their commitment to the safety of every citizen. Therefore, today, I am pleased the House is considering House Resolution 622 during this meaningful and somber week for those who defend our homeland.

Mr. Speaker, I highly commend the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) for shepherding House Resolution 622 to the floor today. Primarily, I wish to thank him for his work to recognize the sacrifices of the men and women of American law enforcement.

This is a solemn piece of legislation, and I encourage every Member of the House to support it.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, each day, police officers nobly protect our families, friends, and neighbors from crime. While it is impossible to suitably thank these brave Americans for the tremendous sacrifices they make, we pause to salute them for their courage, dedication, and service, and to pay our respects to those who have fallen in the line of duty. Peace officers work to improve the quality of life for all of us. For that, they deserve our sincere appreciation and our respect.

Every year, one out of every nine peace officers is assaulted, one out of every 25 is injured, and one out of every 4,400 is killed. In the last year alone, 145 police officers were killed in the line of duty. And while this number reflects a decrease in officers killed, each death is a tragedy and a loss to the community, and especially to the families.

Sergeant Philip J. O'Reilly of Chicago was killed in an automobile accident while on patrol at 5 a.m. Sunday, March 16, 2003. Sergeant O'Reilly was assigned to the Foster Avenue Police District and had been with the Chicago Police Department for 16 years. He is survived by his wife, six children, and seven siblings.

Sergeant O'Reilly's fellow officers remember him as a devoted officer, a tremendous father, and a great man. It is our duty as Americans to honor the service of men and women like Sergeant O'Reilly who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we may all sleep a little easier at night knowing that our community and our world is a safer place.

On Saturday, May 20, Sergeant O'Reilly's name will be among the 362 fallen officers who will be officially added to a memorial at a candlelight vigil. I support the goals and ideals of Police Officers Memorial Day to honor Federal, State, and local peace officers killed or disabled in the line of duty. And I call upon the people of the United States to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and respect.

You can never give more than your life, and these men and women give the very best of what they have.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY), the sponsor of this resolution.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time, and I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) for pushing this through in time for the actual memorial.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the more than 20,000 peace officers from around the country who will come to Washington, D.C. this next week, and in fact all the peace officers, the 1 million or so peace officers of one kind or another throughout the Nation. They are coming for National Police Week to commemorate the lives, as we have already heard, the 145 peace officers who died last year in the line of duty.

Today, we recognize May 15 as National Peace Officers Memorial Day and pay tribute to the commitment, sacrifice, and public safety services these officers provide for all Americans on a daily basis.

As we all know, September 11, 2001 stands out as one of the most tragic days in American history. On that fateful Tuesday, we lost 72 police officers, the largest loss of law enforcement personnel in a single day in our Nation's history. While September 11 offered an extreme glimpse of law enforcement's services and sacrifice, similar acts of heroism, individual acts of heroism and valor, are performed every day in every community by police officers across our great Nation.

Last year, more than 145 officers are killed in the line of duty nationwide, and, thankfully, these police officers killed last year is well below the decade-long average of 166 deaths, and slightly less than in 2002. The deaths have decreased in each of the last 2 years, and, hopefully, this is a lasting trend.

Peace officers in every community have an admirable record of services and sacrifice, yet too many Americans lack true understanding and appreciation, I feel, of law enforcement's work. That is why I worked a few years ago to help establish the National Law Enforcement Museum in Washington, D.C., and this week, 362 names of brave men and women will be added to the memorial, 145 from 2003 and 217 from prior years.

Unlike most other jobs, peace officers face unprecedented risks while bravely protecting our communities and our freedoms. I hope my colleagues will join me today in paying tribute to our Nation's fallen officers and expressing our gratitude for the work these men and women perform.

We feel very strongly here in the Congress, I think, about paying honor to the brave men and women in uniform. And when we say that, we usually mean those that serve in the Armed Services of our country. But there are other brave men and women in uniform we need to pay tribute to, and that is why I offer this resolution today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I would simply congratulate the gentleman from Colorado for his introduction of this legislation and urge its passage.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I also want to thank the gentleman from Colorado for his work on House Resolution 622. It is a great piece of legislation, and I urge its adoption.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the well-being of all people of the United States is preserved and enhanced as a direct result of the vigilance and dedication of law enforcement personnel. More than 957,500 law enforcement personnel, the highest amount ever in the United States, serve their fellow citizens as guardians of peace.

Peace officers are on the front line preserving the right of the children of the United States to receive an education in a crime-free environment, a right that is all too often threatened by the insidious fear caused by violence in schools. 145 peace officers across the Nation were killed in the line of duty during 2003, well below the decade-long average of 166 deaths annually, and a major drop from 2001 when 230 officers were killed, including 72 officers in the September 11 terrorist attacks.

As chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I express my deep appreciation for what the Peace Officers do support the children of America, by focusing on crimes against our children. Every year, 1 out of every 9 peace officers is assaulted, 1 out of every 25 peace officers is injured, and 1 out of every 4,400 peace officers is killed in the line of duty.

On May 15, 2004, more than 20,000 peace officers are expected to gather in Washington, D.C. to join with the families of their recently fallen comrades to honor those comrades and all others who went before them. I am pleased to be joined by my colleagues in the House of Representatives to support the goals and ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day to honor Federal, State, and local peace officers killed or disabled in the line of duty. Also, I want to call upon the people of the United States to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and respect.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of House Resolution 622, "Supporting the Goals and Ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day." Now more than ever our nation relies on the valor and commitment of our peace officers to protect our families and communities each day and in times of crisis. I am privileged to know many fine police officers, including my Uncle Les, a dedicated and long time officer with the Chicago Police Department.

Last year, 145 police officers were killed in the line of duty. While this is a significant drop from previous years, the death of any officer is a tragedy and loss felt deeply in our communities. I join with my colleagues in honoring the memory and sacrifices of these heroes, and I applaud the continued service of law enforcement and all public safety workers who face danger every day to protect our streets and our schools.

As Members of Congress, we have a responsibility to support our nation's law enforcement officers and supply them with all of the tools and resources they need to ensure their safety and ours. Our support means action, not just empty rhetoric. The men and women in blue have asked us to take action on renewing the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban, set to expire on September 13th. Indeed, a

broad coalition of law enforcement advocates, including the membership of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Association of Police Organizations, the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, and the American Probation and Parole Association are among many others who have urged Congress to pass an extension of this legislation, which has proven an effective and life-saving law. To date, their call for this common sense remedy to gun crimes has gone unanswered.

These organizations and the police officers they represent support the ban because it works. Before the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban, one in five police officers killed in the line of duty were attacked with assault weapons. The year after the ban passed, that figure dropped to zero. This single statistic speaks volumes for its effectiveness. Another case in point: In 1991, assault weapons were used in eight percent all gun crimes. By 2003 it was only one percent. If we allow the ban to expire, our peace officers will be subjected to the proliferation of assault weapons and their lives will be needlessly placed in greater danger.

This past Sunday—Mothers Day 2003—thousands of women gathered on the west lawn of the Capitol to mourn the death of children lost to gun violence. This coming Saturday, 20,000 peace officers will gather at the same place to remember their fallen brothers and sisters. What better way to express our support for them than by renewing the assault weapons ban. I believe Congress should go a step further by closing the gun show loophole and enacting sensible safety protections. We owe it to the families of our fallen heroes to pass these life-savings measures.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Gentleman from Colorado for introducing this important resolution, and I urge my colleagues to vote for it. I also urge the leadership to bring the Assault Weapons Ban to the floor for a vote. That would be the most meaningful and effective demonstration of our support and to honor America's peace officers and their invaluable role in the safety of our families and communities.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 622.

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. DAVIS of Illinois. 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.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF VIETNAM HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to resolution (H. Res. 613)