

Resources, pending my appointment to the Committee on Government Reform.

Sincerely,

BETTY MCCOLLUM,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted. There was no objection.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 670) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 670

Resolved, That the following named Members be and are hereby elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE: Ms. Herseth (to rank immediately after Mr. Chandler).

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM: Ms. McCollum.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the additional motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote of the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken tomorrow.

ASSISTANCE FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ACT OF 2004

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4061) to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4061

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2004".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1)(A) According to estimates by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), there are more than 132,000,000 children in the world under the age of three.

(B) Of these children, 4,000,000 will die in their first month of life and another 7,000,000 will die each year before reaching the age of five. Thus an average of 30,000 children under the age of three die each day.

(2) According to a report developed by the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNICEF, and the United States Agency for International Development, in 2001 there were more than 110,000,000 orphans living in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

(3) Assessments carried out by the International Labor Organization (ILO) to investigate the situation of children who are working found that orphans are much more likely than non-orphans to be working in commercial agriculture, the domestic service industry, prostitution, as street vendors, or in industries that violate internationally recognized rights of children.

(4) Infants who are poor and malnourished are more likely to contract respiratory infections, diarrhea, measles, and other preventable diseases, and are less likely to receive needed health care.

(5) According to UNAIDS and UNICEF, by the end of 2001 there were an estimated 14,000,000 children under the age of 15 who had lost one or both parents to AIDS.

(6) As the number of HIV cases increases in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, as well as in Eastern Europe and Asia, the death rate from AIDS among adults in those regions is expected to increase. By 2010 the total number of children in those regions who will lose one or both parents to AIDS is expected to be approximately 30,000,000.

(7) One-third of children born from an HIV-infected mother develop HIV/AIDS. Few of these children have access to HIV/AIDS medications.

(8) Globally, more than 11,800,000 young people ages 15 to 24 were living with HIV/AIDS in 2001, and each day another 6,000 young people became infected with HIV. New estimates indicate that more than 70 percent of new HIV cases among this age group in sub-Saharan Africa are young women and girls.

(9) As their parents fall progressively sick from HIV/AIDS, children generally must take on an increasing number of responsibilities. Girls take responsibility for more household chores, often drop out of school, and care for their parents.

(10)(A) Without an adequate diet, individuals infected with HIV often die at an earlier age. Individuals with HIV become increasingly weak and fatigued, do not respond to drug treatment, and are prone to other illnesses such as malnutrition and tuberculosis (TB).

(B) Hunger can also cause previously HIV-negative people to engage in high-risk survival strategies that increase their chances of becoming infected with HIV.

(11) Extreme poverty and hunger coupled with the loss of one or both parents as a result of AIDS can force children from their families to a life on the streets, where the risk of HIV infection is extremely high.

(12)(A) A considerable number of United States and indigenous private voluntary organizations, including faith-based organizations, provide assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries, especially children affected by HIV/AIDS.

(B) Many of these organizations have submitted applications for grants from the United States Agency for International Development in order to provide increased levels of assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries but in most cases the Agency has not approved the applications.

(13)(A) Section 403(b) of the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-25) establishes the requirement that for fiscal years 2006 through 2008, not less than 10 percent of amounts appropriated for HIV/AIDS

assistance for each such fiscal year shall be expended for assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS.

(B) Further, section 403(b) of Public Law 108-25 requires that at least 50 percent of such amounts shall be provided through non-profit, nongovernmental organizations, including faith-based organizations, that implement programs on the community level.

(14)(A) It is essential that the United States Government adopt a comprehensive approach for the provision of assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

(B) This comprehensive approach should ensure that important services, such as basic care, treatment for those children with HIV/AIDS, mental health and related services for those children affected by HIV/AIDS, school food programs, increased educational opportunities and employment training and related services, and the protection and promotion of inheritance rights, are made more accessible.

(C) This comprehensive approach should also ensure that government agencies and the private sector coordinate efforts to prevent and eliminate duplication of efforts and waste.

(15) As a result of the numerous United States Government programs under which assistance is specifically authorized or otherwise available for orphans and vulnerable children in developing countries, the United States Agency for International Development will be required to develop innovative methods for the conduct and monitoring of these programs, including through the collection, analysis, and reporting of information on the programs and the extent to which such programs provide assistance directly and indirectly to such children.

SEC. 3. PURPOSE.

The primary purpose of this Act, and the amendments made by this Act, is to provide assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children, especially such children affected by HIV/AIDS, and in particular, for such children in countries heavily affected by HIV/AIDS. To the maximum extent practicable, such assistance shall be provided for the direct benefit to such orphaned and vulnerable children.

SEC. 4. ASSISTANCE FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

Title V of chapter 2 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2201) is amended to read as follows:

"TITLE V—ASSISTANCE FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN

"SEC. 241. FINDINGS; DECLARATION OF POLICY.

"(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

"(1) By 2010, HIV/AIDS will orphan more than 25,000,000 children worldwide.

"(2) Ongoing conflicts and civil wars in developing countries are adversely affecting children in these countries, the vast majority of whom currently do not receive humanitarian assistance or other support from the United States Government.

"(3) The United States Government currently administers assistance programs for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries. When requested by the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives to provide information on the overall number of orphans and other vulnerable children receiving assistance from the United States Agency for International Development in fiscal year 2002, the Agency was only able to report on its HIV/AIDS assistance program, under which the Agency provided assistance to 462,000 such orphans and other vulnerable children.

“(4) The United States Government should increase its efforts to provide assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries, especially those children affected by HIV/AIDS or conflict.

“(5) The United States Agency for International Development should establish improved capacity to deliver assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries through partnerships with private voluntary organizations, including faith-based organizations.

“(6) Further, the United States Agency for International Development should be the primary United States Government agency responsible for identifying and assisting orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

“(b) DECLARATION OF POLICY.—Congress, recognizing that prompt and appropriate action by the United States to assist orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries is an important expression of the humanitarian concern and tradition of the people of the United States, affirms the willingness of the United States to assist such orphans and other vulnerable children—

“(1) by providing assistance for the purpose of improving the health, nutritional, shelter, educational, economic, and psychological status of orphans and other vulnerable children in such countries; and

“(2) by providing humanitarian and protection assistance to such orphans and other vulnerable children affected by conflict or civil strife.

“SEC. 242. ASSISTANCE TO PROVIDE BASIC CARE.

“(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

“(1) The need for individuals and local organizations in developing countries to assist households headed by children is necessary due to the increase in the number of such households. Millions of children in these types of households lack basic care, such as access to food and shelter.

“(2) Although families and extended families serve as the primary providers of care for these children, when these family care networks break down, and when communities are responsible for raising orphans, these children are cared for in a rich and nurturing environment and remain connected to the traditions and rituals of families and the community.

“(3) As the number of these children increases, the ability of communities to provide basic care for such children is limited. Assistance to support the provision of such basic care is therefore necessary in and of itself and also to facilitate the provision of other types of assistance for such children under this title.

“(b) ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to provide assistance for programs in developing countries to provide basic care for orphans and other vulnerable children.

“(2) ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED.—Assistance provided under paragraph (1) should be used—

“(A) to support individuals and local organizations, including teachers, social workers, and representatives from religious institutions and nongovernmental organizations, to mobilize their own resources through the strengthening of community care coalitions, networks, or support groups to provide basic care for orphans and other vulnerable children, including day care, food assistance, protection assistance, and home visits;

“(B) to increase the capacity of the community care groups described in subparagraph (A) to meet on a regular basis to identify orphans and other vulnerable children and to facilitate the provision of services; and

“(C) to ensure that the activities of community care groups described in subparagraph (A) include appropriate monitoring and supervision components.

“(3) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ‘protection assistance’ means all appropriate measures to promote the physical and psychological security of an individual, provide equal access to basic services for the individual, and safeguard the legal and human rights and dignity of the individual.

“SEC. 243. ASSISTANCE TO PROVIDE TREATMENT TO ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN WITH HIV/AIDS.

“(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

“(1) Approximately 2,500,000 children under the age of 15 worldwide have HIV/AIDS. Every day another 2,000 children under the age of 15 are infected with HIV.

“(2) In 2002, approximately 2,500,000 children were at risk for infection with HIV through mother-to-child transmission, which includes transmission at any point during pregnancy, labor, delivery, or breastfeeding.

“(3) To date, more than 4,000,000 children worldwide are estimated to have died from AIDS, primarily contracted through mother-to-child transmission. Every year, approximately 700,000 babies are infected with HIV, of which the majority are living in Africa.

“(4) In southern Africa HIV/AIDS is now the leading cause of death among young children, accounting for almost half of such deaths.

“(5) Research has shown conclusively that initiation in a timely manner of antiretroviral therapy for infants or young children with HIV/AIDS can preserve or restore their immune functions, promote normal growth and development, and prolong life.

“(6) Few international development programs specifically target the treatment of children with HIV/AIDS in developing countries. Reasons for this include the perceived low priority of pediatric treatment, a lack of pediatric health care professionals, lack of expertise and experience in pediatric drug dosing and monitoring, the perceived complexity of pediatric treatment, and mistaken beliefs regarding the risks and benefits of pediatric treatment.

“(b) ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to provide assistance for the treatment of orphans and other vulnerable children with HIV/AIDS in developing countries.

“(2) ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED.—Assistance provided under paragraph (1) should be used to carry out the following activities:

“(A) The treatment of orphans and other vulnerable children with HIV/AIDS through the provision of pharmaceuticals, including high-quality, low-cost antiretrovirals and other therapies, including generically manufactured pharmaceuticals where appropriate.

“(B)(i) The recruitment and training of individuals to provide the treatment described in subparagraph (A), including the recruitment and training of appropriate support personnel.

“(ii) Such training should include appropriate methodologies relating to initial diagnosis, appropriate dosages of pharmaceuticals, monitoring, medication adherence techniques, treatment for any complications resulting from such pharmaceuticals, and psychosocial support for vulnerable children and their caregivers.

“(C) Activities of medical laboratories relating to the treatment described in subparagraph (A), including assistance for the purchase of necessary equipment.

“SEC. 244. ASSISTANCE TO PROVIDE PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT TO ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN AFFECTED BY HIV/AIDS.

“(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

“(1) Many children who are orphaned as a result of AIDS blame themselves for the death of a parent and many children are separated from siblings, sometimes for life.

“(2) The trauma that results from the loss of a parent as a result of AIDS can trigger behavior problems of aggression or emotional withdrawal and negatively affect a child's performance in school and the child's social relations.

“(3) Children living in families affected by HIV/AIDS are often stigmatized, teased, and ostracized by peers.

“(4) Children living in families affected by HIV/AIDS who are most vulnerable are those children in households headed by children. In these households, trained community volunteers can play a major role through home visits.

“(5) In many African countries, religious leaders are mobilizing individuals and local organizations within the community to identify and respond to the psychosocial needs of those children affected by AIDS.

“(b) ASSISTANCE.—The President is authorized to provide assistance for programs in developing countries to provide culturally appropriate mental health services and psychosocial support for orphans and other vulnerable children, and their caregivers.

“SEC. 245. ASSISTANCE FOR SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAMS.

“(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

“(1) In 2004, it is estimated that 125,000,000 children worldwide do not attend school, in part because of hunger and malnutrition, and the vast majority of these children are young girls.

“(2) School food programs, including take-home rations, in developing countries provide strong incentives for parents to send their children to school and ensure that they continue with their education. School food programs may reduce short-term hunger, improve cognitive functions, and enhance learning, behavior, and achievement.

“(3) In 2004, more than 8,000,000 children in sub-Saharan Africa are underweight compared to 1994. Malnutrition enhances the risk that orphans and other vulnerable children will be at risk for illness and infections, especially if these children are also infected with HIV.

“(4) Healthy members of families affected by HIV/AIDS in developing countries often leave the workforce to care for those family members with HIV/AIDS, which compounds the problem of access to food for the family. Food consumption has been shown to drop by as much as 40 percent in these families.

“(5)(A) Although a number of organizations seek to meet the needs of children who are orphaned or vulnerable as a result of HIV/AIDS, immediate and extended families continue to be the primary providers of care and support for these children, and they need direct assistance urgently.

“(B) According to a survey by the United States Agency for International Development, orphans and other vulnerable children relied on relatives for food support 74 percent of the time and on friends for food support 19 percent of the time.

“(b) ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to provide assistance for school food programs for orphans and vulnerable children in developing countries, especially in such countries heavily affected by HIV/AIDS.

“(2) ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED.—Assistance provided under paragraph (1) should be used

to purchase local or regional foodstuffs, where appropriate, for school food programs.

“SEC. 246. ASSISTANCE TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT TRAINING.

“(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

“(1) The lack of financial resources in families affected by HIV/AIDS prevents many orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries from attending school because of the requirement to pay school fees and other costs of education.

“(2) Such children, in particular young girls, are often forced to miss school in order to serve as caregivers to relatives with HIV/AIDS or assume adult responsibilities for providing for the family. Younger children who lose a parent also lose the opportunity to learn skills that they will need to support themselves as they grow older.

“(3) According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), approximately 250,000,000 children and adolescents ages 5 to 14 in developing countries are working part-time and approximately 120,000,000 children and adolescents ages 5 to 14 in developing countries are working full-time.

“(4) In many regions of Africa and other developing countries, non-formal education plays an important role to provide children who are unable to attend school with the employment and related life skills training such children need to survive.

“(5) Many organizations in Africa, including faith-based organizations, provide employment and related life skills training for older children to better prepare them to serve as caregivers for younger siblings.

“(6) Organizations that provide non-formal education can assist the thousands of children in developing countries who are not currently being assisted by families or communities and are struggling to survive.

“(b) ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.—The President is authorized to provide assistance for programs in developing countries to decrease barriers to public primary school enrollment by eliminating school fees and other costs of education, especially in developing countries heavily affected by HIV/AIDS. Amounts made available to carry out this paragraph—

“(A) are authorized to be made available to the President for assistance or contributions to nongovernmental organizations and international organizations to achieve the purposes of this paragraph; and

“(B) shall not be used to pay school fees.

“(2) EMPLOYMENT TRAINING ASSISTANCE.—The President is authorized to provide assistance for programs in developing countries to provide employment training and related services for orphans and other vulnerable children who are of legal working age, especially for programs in developing countries heavily affected by HIV/AIDS.

“SEC. 247. ASSISTANCE TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE INHERITANCE RIGHTS.

“(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries, particularly children who are orphaned as a result of AIDS, are routinely denied their inheritance or encounter difficulties in claiming the land and other property which they have inherited.

“(b) ASSISTANCE.—The President is authorized to provide assistance in support of programs in developing countries to protect and promote the inheritance rights of orphans and other vulnerable children, particularly young girls and children who are orphaned as a result of AIDS.

“SEC. 248. ADMINISTRATION OF ASSISTANCE.

“(a) OFFICE FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the United States Agency for Inter-

national Development an Office for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (hereafter in this title referred to as the ‘Office’), which shall be headed by a Director who shall be appointed by the Administrator of the Agency.

“(2) DUTIES.—The Office shall be responsible for carrying out this title.

“(b) APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS.—Subject to the requirements of subsection (e), the Director of the Office shall be responsible for reviewing or approving all applications submitted to the United States Agency for International Development for assistance under this title, including applications submitted to field missions of the Agency.

“(c) PRIORITY.—In providing assistance under this title, priority should be given to assistance for developing countries in which the rate of HIV infection, as reported in the most recent epidemiological data for that country compiled by the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), is at least 5 percent among women attending prenatal clinics or more than 15 percent among individuals in groups with high-risk behavior.

“(d) FORM OF ASSISTANCE.—Assistance under this title shall be provided in the form of—

“(1) grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts;

“(2) contributions to international organizations; or

“(3) assistance to the governments of developing countries.

“(e) COORDINATION.—The provision of assistance under this title for children who are orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS, or are children with HIV/AIDS, shall be undertaken in accordance with section 104A of this Act and assistance relating to HIV/AIDS authorized under the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-25), including section 102 of such Act concerning the coordination of HIV/AIDS programs.

“(f) OTHER ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) REVIEW OR APPROVAL OF OTHER USAID ASSISTANCE.—The Director of the Office shall be responsible for reviewing or approving—

“(A) each component of the annual plan of a mission, bureau, or other office of the United States Agency for International Development as the component relates to assistance for orphans or other vulnerable children in developing countries; and

“(B) each program, project, or activity relating to such assistance.

“(2) COORDINATION OF ALL U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE.—The Director of the Office shall be responsible for ensuring coordination of all United States Government programs to provide assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

“SEC. 249. MONITORING SYSTEM.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—In order to maximize the sustainable development impact of assistance authorized under this title, the President shall establish a monitoring system that meets the requirements of subsection (b).

“(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements referred to in subsection (a) are the following:

“(1) The monitoring system establishes performance goals for the assistance and expresses such goals in an objective and quantifiable form, to the extent feasible.

“(2) The monitoring system establishes performance indicators to be used in measuring or assessing the achievement of the performance goals described in paragraph (1).

“(3) The monitoring system provides a basis for recommendations for adjustments to the assistance to enhance the impact of the assistance.

“SEC. 250. REPORT.

“(a) REPORT.—Not later than December 31, 2005, and each December 31 thereafter, the

President shall transmit to Congress a report that contains a detailed description of the implementation of this title for the previous fiscal year.

“(b) CONTENTS.—The report shall contain the following information:

“(1) For each grant, cooperative agreement, contract, contribution, or other form of assistance awarded or entered into under this title—

“(A) the amount of the grant, cooperative agreement, contract, contribution, or other form of assistance, the name of each recipient and each developing country with respect to which projects or activities under the grant, cooperative agreement, contract, contribution, or other form of assistance were carried out, and the approximate number of orphans and other vulnerable children who received direct or indirect assistance under the projects or activities; and

“(B) the results of the monitoring system with respect to the grant, cooperative agreement, contract, contribution, or other form of assistance.

“(2) For each grant, cooperative agreement, contract, contribution, or other form of assistance awarded or entered into under any provision of law other than this title for assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries, the information described in paragraph (1)(A).

“(3) Of the total amounts of assistance made available in each such fiscal year for orphans and other vulnerable children, the percentage of assistance provided in support of orphans or other vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS.

“(4) Any other appropriate information relating to the needs of orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries that could be addressed through the provision of assistance under this title or under any other provision of law.

“SEC. 251. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS.

“(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Of the amounts made available to carry out the provisions of law described in paragraph (2), there are authorized to be appropriated to the President to carry out this title such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2005 and 2006.

“(2) PROVISIONS OF LAW.—The provisions of law referred to in paragraph (1) are the following:

“(A) The United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-25) and the amendments made by that Act.

“(B) Any other provision of law under which assistance is authorized for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

“(b) ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

“(1) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pursuant to the authorization of appropriations under subsection (a) are authorized to remain available until expended and are in addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes.

“(2) MINIMUM FUNDING REQUIREMENT.—Not less than 60 percent of amounts appropriated pursuant to the authorization of appropriations under subsection (a) for a fiscal year (other than amounts made available for assistance to eliminate school fees and other costs of education pursuant to section 246) shall be provided through United States or indigenous private voluntary organizations that implement programs on the community level. Amounts provided by for-profit entities to not-for-profit entities from assistance under this title shall not be considered for purposes of satisfying the requirement of this paragraph.

“(3) ASSISTANCE UNDER OTHER PROVISIONS OF LAW.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, amounts made available for assistance for orphans or other vulnerable children in developing countries under any provision of law other than this title may be provided to further the purposes of this title.

“(B) REPORT.—To the extent assistance described in subparagraph (A) is provided in accordance with such subparagraph, the President shall include, as part of the report required under section 250, a detailed description of such assistance and, to the extent applicable, the information required by subsection (b)(1)(A) of such section with respect to such assistance.

“(4) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, amounts made available for assistance for orphans or other vulnerable children in developing countries under this title, or under any provision of law other than this title, may be made available for administrative expenses incurred in carrying out this title for a fiscal year in an amount not to exceed 7 percent of amounts made available for such fiscal year for such purpose under this title, or under such other provision of law, as the case may be.

“SEC. 252. DEFINITIONS.

“In this title:

“(1) AIDS.—The term ‘AIDS’ has the meaning given the term in section 104A(g)(1) of this Act.

“(2) CHILDREN.—The term ‘children’ means persons who have not attained the age of 18.

“(3) HIV.—The term ‘HIV’ has the meaning given the term in section 104A(g)(2) of this Act.

“(4) HIV/AIDS.—The term ‘HIV/AIDS’ has the meaning given the term in section 104A(g)(3) of this Act.

“(5) ORPHAN.—The term ‘orphan’ means a child deprived by death of one or both parents.

“(6) PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT.—The term ‘psychosocial support’ includes care that addresses the ongoing psychological and social problems that affect individuals, their partners, families, and caregivers in order to alleviate suffering, strengthen social ties and integration, provide emotional support, and promote coping strategies.

“(7) VULNERABLE CHILDREN.—The term ‘vulnerable children’ includes children who are neglected, destitute, abandoned, homeless, disabled, suffering from malnutrition, are sexually exploited or abused, or are displaced or otherwise adversely affected by armed conflict.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have five legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Childrens Act of 2004. This is an important bipartisan bill introduced by my good friend, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and cosponsored by me as well as 84 other Members.

H.R. 4061 amends the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to create a new title, authorizing the provision of assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

H.R. 4061 will prepare USAID for the important responsibility as established by Public Law 108-25, the United States leadership against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act of 2003, which specifies that by the year 2006, not less than 10 percent of all HIV/AIDS monies must be programmed in support of the needs of orphans and vulnerable children affected by AIDS.

By the year 2010, Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that there will be 25 million children orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS. Entire villages are already being affected by this pandemic. This bill recognizes that the United States Government will need to establish improved capacity to deliver assistance to such orphans and vulnerable children through partnerships with private voluntary organizations, including faith-based organizations.

H.R. 4061 will authorize the President to provide assistance for the care and the treatment of orphans and vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS. It encourages the use of community care councils, of responsible citizens to identify the needs of and assist orphans in their communities instead of sending them off to orphanages or institutions.

As the number of orphans increases, the ability of communities to provide basic care for their children is limited. Assistance to support the provisions of basic care by communities is necessary, in addition to the assistance furnished directly by U.S. agencies through the President's initiative on AIDS and Public Law 108-25.

This bill also encourages the use of assistance to eliminate school fees in developing countries. This practice results in keeping orphans and vulnerable children out of school. Children of all circumstances should be in school and not kept out if they are affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS.

This legislation establishes greater accountability within USAID by establishing an Office for Orphans and Vulnerable Children that will have oversight of all programs for such children, not just AIDS orphans. It will enable USAID to adopt a more comprehensive approach to assisting children through the work of its field missions and through centrally managed activities.

In summary, H.R. 4061 creates accountable mechanisms within USAID. It will also ensure that other U.S. assistance for orphaned and vulnerable children is accountable, measurable and coordinated. H.R. 4061 promotes accountability and effectiveness of existing United States foreign assistance.

I seek Members' support for this important legislation.

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

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

First of all let me just say I rise in support of this legislation. I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida for her leadership and for her commitment to children throughout the world. Mr. Speaker, I also would like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) along with my colleagues on the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) for joining me to craft this very clear and very forward-moving bipartisan compromise agreement. Also I would like to thank them for helping us get it to the floor today.

I also would like to thank our staffs for their work in crafting this bill, including Pearl Alice Marsh of the office of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), Christos Tsentas of my staff, and Peter Smith, who just recently actually left the Committee on International Relations. These members of our staffs and other staff on the Hill who have been working on this have worked on this not because it is part of their job only but because they really have a commitment to these children. I just want to thank them very much for their work.

I also would like to just mention briefly and thank the Global Action For Children Campaign and its members for working so passionately on behalf of this initiative.

This legislation seeks to better coordinate and comprehensively address the ever growing problem of orphans and vulnerable children in the developing world. As of 2001, an estimated 110 million children are living as orphans throughout sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. The rapid growth of HIV/AIDS in Africa and throughout the world has really dramatically impacted the number of children who are newly becoming orphans. In 2001, 34 million children, this is about 12 percent of all African children, were orphaned in sub-Saharan Africa. That is hard to imagine. Eleven million, or 32 percent of all African orphans, were orphaned as a result of AIDS. UNICEF recently released a report entitled “Africa's Orphaned Generations” on November 26, 2003. This report predicted that there would be, as the gentlewoman from Florida said, 20 million AIDS orphans in Africa by 2010 and that in a dozen countries 15 to 25 percent of children under 15 will have lost one or both parents to AIDS.

Today every 14 seconds another child is orphaned by AIDS. With parents dying at such an alarming rate, children are left quite frankly behind without food, without shelter, without education or protection. They are left to

fend for themselves. The global orphan crisis is a profound humanitarian disaster that will be felt for decades to come. This bill seeks to comprehensively address the growing global problem of orphans and vulnerable children by providing assistance to support the following activities:

Basic care through community care groups. Community care groups could be community care coalitions, they could be networks, they could be support groups, they could be orphanages but through the community is very important.

Treatment for HIV infected children is included in this bill.

Culturally appropriate psycho-social support which is very important for children who are orphans and who are vulnerable. That is included in this bill.

School food programs, lunch programs, nutrition programs, so important.

Expanding educational opportunities through the elimination of school fees.

Protecting inheritance rights for orphans and vulnerable children.

This bill seeks to do all of this and more under the new structure of a separate office within the United States Agency for International Development focused specifically on orphans and vulnerable children.

The bill was unanimously approved by the House Committee on International Relations on March 31. I am proud to say that we have bipartisan support, and now I believe it is nearly 100 Members of this body.

I strongly support the amendment which is in the nature of a substitute offered by the chairman and negotiated by our staffs, as it really does improve the bill in a number of very significant ways in order to address the real concerns of several Members and organizations, including USAID. We met several times with USAID, our staff, myself, and we have listened to their suggestions and have tried to incorporate as many of their suggestions into this amendment as we deemed possible. While I understand that the agency and some of the advocacy groups still have some concerns regarding the administrative provisions of the proposed Office for Orphans and Vulnerable Children, I believe that this compromise proposal really represents the best chance we have to deal with this issue in this Congress.

Each time, Mr. Speaker, that we bring a bill to the floor with regard to HIV/AIDS, like many of us here on this floor, we recognize that these bills are only but one small step forward. This bill is another one small step forward in addressing this pandemic. It is a step worthy of our support, a step that brings us closer to a solution.

Briefly let me just mention two bills which we have brought to this floor which were signed into law, which again were very small but significant steps: The Global AIDS and Tuberculosis Relief Act of 2000, signed by

President Bill Clinton; and the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act of 2003, signed by President Bush. Our former colleague, Congressman Ron Dellums, sounded the alarms, suggested we look at an AIDS Marshall Plan and much of this AIDS Marshall plan we are looking at now as we move these very significant bills forward.

I am very proud of the fact that on this issue we have been able to work in a complete bipartisan fashion. We are committed to continue to work with USAID and our colleagues in the other body so that we can ensure that the needs of orphans and vulnerable children are properly taken care of through this bill. We have a moral duty, quite frankly, to provide for these children, these children who are really now victims of circumstance. As the world's most prosperous nation, we have an obligation to act. I am hopeful that as we pass this bill this evening we can encourage the other body to act quickly and to move this initiative forward so that we can get it enacted into law before the end of the 108th Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I wish to add my appreciation to the gentlewoman from California for her leadership, compassion and spirit around these issues and to my friend and colleague the gentlewoman from Florida who has worked on these issues in her capacity, but also we share our passion through the Congressional Children's Caucus of which we both are chair and cochair on this very important journey to help children. I want to thank both of them for their leadership and acknowledge the pathway in which this legislation has taken.

I am reminded of the good work the staff has done and want to cite and associate myself with the gentlewoman from California's thanks to staff and to acknowledge, of course, again the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and his staff Alice Marsh; and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and her staff Cathleen Harrington because I want to remind our colleagues of a very important congressional mission that we were able to travel on led by the gentlewoman from California just about a summer ago when we visited these sites that saw firsthand vulnerable children.

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The gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), myself, and as well the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN), we were led on what I thought was one of the more powerful stories. It was a follow-up to the Presidential mission that we went on in 1997 with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), myself, and the gentle-

woman from Michigan (Ms. KILPATRICK), again, looking at the vulnerability of those facing the HIV epidemic and as well looking at the crisis of some 40 million children being orphaned in sub-Saharan Africa and Africa over the next 5 years.

We have now come full circle, and this legislation is an answer long overdue to a very serious crisis in the world; and specifically it emphasizes assistance for orphans and vulnerable children in developing countries, but I do not think anyone can understand the fullness of what we were dealing with until they can go see and touch those children, homeless, without grandparents, without extended family, children caring for children, living in conditions that are unacceptable for the young life that they are, 12-year-olds taking care of 2-year-olds and 3-year-olds, 4-year-olds taking care of an ailing and dying relative, going into a home and seeing a father lying dying and a parent taking care of them and that parent as well in a condition unacceptable to care for children.

This bill, I believe, is the beginning answer to the crisis and the call for help and mercy by those around the world, and I might emphasize that it is a no-nonsense bill. It gets down to the bottom line, with basic care through the community, treatment for HIV-infected children, culturally appropriate psychological support, school food programs, expanding educational opportunities through the elimination of school fees, and protecting inheritance rights.

It is important to note that according to the estimates by the United Nations Children's Fund, there are more than 132 million children in the world under the age of 3, many vulnerable and cannot take care of themselves. It is interesting that we even saw a case of a 4-year-old, however, left to take care of a dying relative. Of these children, 4 million will die in their first month of life, and another 7 million will die each year before reaching the age of 5. Thus, an average of 30,000 children under the age of 3 die each day.

Infants who are poor and malnourished are more likely to contract respiratory infections, diarrhea, measles, and other preventable diseases, and are less likely to receive needed benefit care.

This legislation goes right to the heart of the matter and provides this very needed office, this independent freestanding office, that can focus its attention and resources on the needs of children.

Children are not our tomorrows; they are our todays. And helping to educate children, helping to inspire children and heal children and provide them comfort gives our world a future. Extreme poverty and hunger coupled with the loss of one or both parents as a result of AIDS can force children from their families and to life on the streets where the risk of HIV infection has

been extremely high. But the psychological support is what I think is very crucial.

And let me just say that we should make note tonight that this is not just about HIV/AIDS but it is about conflict. And I have just recently returned from Afghanistan to see the children who have suffered because of conflict, some without their parents. This office will deal with the children of Afghanistan, the children in Sudan. I just came back from the region but also was able to be told of the stories of children in Iraq, when visiting a hospital there, seeing the conditions that they are in. Many of them lost their family members and their parents in the conflict. Afghanistan, their family members, their parents, in the conflict. Sudan now with some 400,000 displaced refugees, 30,000 people dying a day. A crisis beyond our imagination. Children being orphaned. This office will deal with the conflict that we face every day in this world. If we cannot help our children, then whom can we help?

I rise to support this legislation and ask my colleagues to enthusiastically support it because, as I said, our children are not our tomorrows; they are our todays. I ask unanimous support for this legislation.

I am pleased to be here as the House considers H.R. 4061, the Assistance for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2004. This bill was introduced to address the growing global crisis affecting orphans and vulnerable children. This bipartisan bill has the support of over 100 Members of Congress, including myself.

As Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I am cognizant of the special needs of children in developing countries, and they have always been a top legislative priority. As of 2001, an estimated 110 million children were living as orphans throughout sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. The rapid growth of the HIV/AIDS virus in Africa and throughout the developing world has dramatically impacted the number of children who are newly becoming orphans. Today, another child is orphaned by AIDS every 14 seconds. With parents dying at an alarming rate, children are left without food, shelter, education or protection.

According to estimates by the United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, there are more than 132 million children in the world under the age of 3. Of these children, 4 million will die in their first month of life and another 7 million will die each year before reaching the age of 5. Thus an average of 30,000 children under the age of 3 die each day.

According to a report developed by the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS; UNICEF; and the United States Agency for International Development, in 2001 there were more than 110 million orphans living in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Assessments carried out by the International Labor Organization, ILO, to investigate the situation of children who are working found that orphans are much more likely than non-orphans to be working in commercial agriculture, the domestic service industry, the commercial sex industry, as street vendors, or in industries

that violate internationally recognized rights of children.

Infants who are poor and malnourished are more likely to contract respiratory infections, diarrhea, measles, and other preventable diseases, and are less likely to receive needed health care.

This bill creates a separate office within the United States Agency for International Development to better coordinate and focus our foreign assistance programs on orphaned and vulnerable children, especially children who are affected by HIV/AIDS. This new office would emphasize support for programs that are intended to provide a comprehensive response to the growing global crisis, including basic care through the community, treatment for HIV-infected children, psychosocial support services, expanding educational opportunities through the elimination of school fees and protection for the inheritance rights of orphans and vulnerable children.

This is truly a global crisis, and it demands our attention. I urge you to join in this support of this important initiative.

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

I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for her very eloquent statement, also for her leadership and her passion and for her commitment to children not only in our own country but throughout the world.

Let me take a minute, Mr. Speaker, to mention some of the projects actually that the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), myself, and others have had the opportunity, a real privilege, to visit in Africa. We have become familiar with the work of many, many tireless individuals, committed individuals in Africa. We have met with many here in our own country. We have met on the Committee on International Relations and discussed these efforts. These individuals with barely a nickel have been able to do phenomenal work, and all of these projects that I am going to mention are led by very dynamic individuals who really continue to serve as a testament to what one person, one person, can accomplish when they have the determination and the compassion to care for their fellow human beings.

The first project, the Mother of Peace Orphanage Community in Mutoko, Zimbabwe, is one that I have become quite familiar with. Founded in 1994 by Ms. Jean Cornneck, or Mama Jean as some of us call her, the children call her that also and they are the ones who actually coined Mama Jean as her name because she truly is the mother of peace. The Mother of Peace Community provides care, support, and shelter to over 170 children. The community builds basic family-style homes, each accommodating two to three caregivers and 10 to 15 children who are brought up in Zimbabwean culture. At present there are 11 of these houses. Mother of Peace also benefits members of the adjacent rural community through its farming and building activities in the community.

It also plays a very huge role in the World Health Organization's Mutoko

Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development Pilot Project. And I am proud to say that my own church, the Allen Temple Baptist Church, led by a great leader, Pastor J. Alfred Smith, Sr., has provided the impetus for the involvement of our community and the community in our country. And thanks to the leadership of Dr. Robert Scott and Gloria Cox Crowell, this church has set up an AIDS ministry to provide regular donations and to organize visits by our congregation to the orphanage community. It is an incredible program, and it is really a testament to how much good can be done on a shoestring budget by committed groups of people.

The second program that I would like to talk about is the Bwafwano Home-based Care Organization, run by Beatrice Chola, whom I met when I traveled to Zambia last year. Working as a nurse in the Chipata health center of Lusaka, Beatrice started Bwafwano back in 1996 when she saw that the health center was overrun with HIV and AIDS and also with TB-infected patients. She recognized the strain that the Chipata health center was under, and she saw that the needs of these HIV and TB-infected patients were not being met. So she joined with several other community members to found the Bwafwano Home-based Care Organization, which literally means "helping one another."

Today, thanks to her leadership, Bwafwano has mushroomed into a comprehensive community care organization offering medical services, volunteer testing and counseling for HIV, schooling, home-based care, and poverty reduction and income generation programs. Since its inception, Bwafwano has trained over 300 community health workers and is currently providing home-based care to over 1,300 HIV and AIDS patients and directly observed treatment to more than 180 TB-infected patients. In addition, the organization is caring for over 1,100 orphans and vulnerable children.

When I was there in August of last year, Beatrice was struggling to find just basic ways to provide school uniforms to the children that she was caring for, which was an impediment for these children to go to school, and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN), and I met with these young people; and they were not able to go to school for one reason, and that is they did not have any uniforms. And I am proud to say and pleased to say that they do have their uniforms now so they can attend school just like any child in the community. Thankfully, again, as I said, she did receive the donation of about 300 school uniforms, but she still needs a lot of help.

And of course I would like to mention the Nyumbani orphanages in Nairobi, Kenya, and I know many of us are familiar with Nyumbani. Founded in 1992 by Father Angelo D'Agostino,

Nyumbani initially reached only a handful of orphans because of limited resources; but thanks to the unwavering commitment of Father D'Agostino, who worked hard to raise awareness about the needs of these orphaned children, Nyumbani now provides shelter and care and nutrition, education, psychological and social services to over 100 children on-site.

But the work of Nyumbani does not stop there, as they reach out to the surrounding community to provide major assistance to nearly 800 HIV-positive children who are part of the Lea Toto Community Outreach Program in the slums of Nairobi. With the care and the devotion of the staff and all of its volunteers, Nyumbani now saves lives of most of these children while providing a model of care for nations trying to deal with their own growing HIV/AIDS epidemic.

These three incredible programs, Mama Jean, Beatrice, Father Angelo D'Agostino, they are led by three dynamic and committed people; and they are proof that despite poverty, despite hardship, despite the odds, good programs can be created even in the most difficult settings. So it is programs like these that deserve our support.

We had the opportunity to travel to South Africa and Mozambique with Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson in 2002. Once again it was a bipartisan delegation, and we visited several orphanages and saw exactly what many of the needs of these children were, and we took into consideration in writing this bill some of the recommendations and some of the ideas which we received not from ourselves necessarily but from what the African people told us, what African leaders, what the organizations told us that they needed. We are pleased to note that once again this has been a bipartisan effort.

This is a humanitarian crisis of enormous catastrophe, really. It is a potential disaster, and we are trying to just on both sides of the House figure out a way to deal with it. In the bill we say in closing, "Congress recognizing the need and prompt action by the United States to assist orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries is an important expression of the humanitarian concern and the tradition of the people of the United States. We affirm the willingness of the United States to assist such orphans and other vulnerable children."

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida. I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), our ranking member, for helping us through very difficult negotiations; but once again we are here with another small piece of our efforts to stop this pandemic.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4061. This bill is a step forward in giving hope to orphans and defenseless children in developing countries. In

2001 it was reported that there were over 110 million orphans in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Many of these children become orphans due to the loss of their parents to HIV/AIDS. By the end of 2001 an estimated 14 million children under the age of 15 had lost one or both parents to AIDS. This number is expected to increase to approximately 30 million children by 2010, due to the increase of HIV cases in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean. Many of these orphans who lose their parents to HIV/AIDS are also at risk of being infected with the disease and ultimately die due to lack of access to health care. It is estimated that one-third of the children born from HIV-infected mothers develop HIV/AIDS. In 2001 more than 11.8 million young people ages 15 to 24 were living with HIV/AIDS. Every day another 2,000 children under the age of 15 will be infected with HIV in these areas. Approximately more than 4 million children have died from AIDS primarily through mother-to-child transmission.

A lot of these orphans at a very young age become head of households with the burden of providing for their young siblings and sometimes grandparents who were dependent on their parents before they die. Due to this, many of these orphans are subject to working in commercial agriculture, domestic service industry, commercial sex industry, as street vendors or in industries that violate internationally recognized rights of children. Most of the orphans who have to work are young women and girls who usually end up in commercial sex industries, making them at risk of being infected with various diseases especially HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that more than 70 percent of new HIV cases among young orphans ages 15 to 24 in sub-Saharan Africa are young women and girls.

Many of these children are malnourished due to lack of food, which enhances their risk for illness and infection to diseases. Due to lack of health access, many of these children will die of these illnesses or diseases. In 2004 more than 8 million children in sub-Saharan Africa are underweight compared to 1994. A lot of these children lack education because they have to work to fend for their families instead of going to school, they are not physically fit due to hunger and malnutrition, and they do not have the financial resources to go to school. Approximately 125 million children do not attend school and the majority of these children are young girls.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution will provide the funds needed for the basic care, health care, mental care and educational opportunities for these orphans and vulnerable children in order for them to survive in the world. Our children are our future. We need to give these children a chance to be the future of their countries and the world. I urge strong support of this resolution.

Mr. KOLBE. I rise to express great concern about this bill. At first glance, it would seem to support objectives that we could all get behind, on both sides of the aisle. After all, who could object to assisting orphans—especially those who have had their lives torn apart by HIV/AIDS?

In fact, I have little problem with the provisions of the bill if taken separately. School food programs, HIV/AIDS treatment, training—these are all promising approaches for helping some of the most needy people in the world.

My concern is with how this bill would achieve these worthy objectives.

As Chairman of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, I have had the privilege of managing legislation to support a variety of HIV/AIDS programs. Last August, this House approved roughly \$1.6 billion for the Global HIV/AIDS Initiative, and I believe we took the right approach by insisting that these funds be spent in a focused, accountable way. The Global AIDS Coordinator has been working to establish clear indicators for the use of his funds, and I'm encouraged by his progress.

This bill would walk back much of this progress. It mixes authorities that already exist, such as providing AIDS treatment for orphans, with new, overly broad authorities. If passed, this bill would open the Global AIDS Coordinator's funds to any school fee waiver program and any school food program—even if there is no AIDS component. Instead of a focused, results-driven AIDS program, as we have now, the Global AIDS Initiative would become just another development assistance program—business as usual.

In addition, this bill would establish a new OVC coordinator at USAID—a new coordinator whose authorities are poorly defined and whose relationship to the Global AIDS Coordinator is confusing at best. These kids do not need additional bureaucracy to get help.

Finally, this bill authorizes contributions to UNICEF for a program to reduce the costs of going to school in developing countries. I have received several letters from Members of Congress requesting \$250 million for such a program. It's important to understand that UNICEF would probably simply transfer funds to foreign governments to offset the loss of fees they would normally receive from students. Thus we would be creating a new program of cash assistance for foreign governments—not something we ought to do unless we know a lot about what we would get for our cash, and what accountability we would receive from foreign governments.

The Administration did not request this money, and we do not have it. We cannot expect UNICEF to absorb such a directive, and it's frankly unfair to authorize a program that we know cannot be funded.

Serious revisions need to be made to this legislation. I do not support it in its current form.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in regards to H.R. 4061, the Assistance for Orphans and Vulnerable Children Act of 2004, which passed the House International Relations Committee by unanimous consent on March 31. On May 5 the International Relations Committee filed H. Rept. 108–479.

Because House rules prohibit the addition of co-sponsors to a bill once the committee report has been filed, I am not able to formally add another Member of Congress as a co-sponsor of this legislation.

I ask that the RECORD show that Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts is in support of my bill and should be considered by this body as a co-sponsor of H.R. 4061.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4061, to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries.

This amendment is so crucial in that it provides targeted comprehensive assistance to those who definitely cannot help themselves.

Orphans and other vulnerable children are deprived of the single most important factor in their lives—their family or their parents.

By 2010, an estimated 106 million children under age 15 are projected to lose one or both parents. Among them, the number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS is expected to jump to more than 25 million.

These orphans and other vulnerable children now live throughout sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Conflict has orphaned or separated 1 million children from their families in the 1990s.

H.R. 4061 would help communities to ensure that orphans and other vulnerable children have a secure and healthy childhood by providing essential services, such as basic care, health services including treatment for children with HIV/AIDS, mental health care, school food programs, and job training.

Orphans and other vulnerable children are not especially visible because millions of children are dispersed over many families, in communities where the hardships of individual children are lost from sight.

H.R. 4061 will increase access to needed services, ensure parity for orphans and other vulnerable children and build local capacity for effective decentralization and targeting of services as well as multisectoral coordination among service providers.

H.R. 4061 would allow for school fees to be waived providing a free basic education policy for millions of orphans and vulnerable children, many of whom had never enrolled in school or had dropped out because they simply could not afford the school fees.

Due to their status, these children are often most vulnerable and at risk of becoming victims of violence, exploitation, trafficking, discrimination or other abuses. Unaccompanied girls are at especially high risk of sexual abuse.

Children orphaned by AIDS are themselves particularly vulnerable to infection because they often have no one to care for or protect them, or any means of earning a living.

A 2001 report by the International Crisis Group found that “young people with no job, no income, and no family to support them are at risk of joining, or being abducted by local militias.”

A young Sierra Leone youth told an audience at the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Children, “We want a better life. We want peace. We are counting on your governments and the UN’s continued support for help.”

H.R. 4061 would provide the help this young boy so desperately needs. I urge full passage of this amendment.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for this wonderful bill; we look forward to its passage; and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4061, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

JOBS AND THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month the President of the United States made another trip to my State of Ohio to argue for and try to justify his economic policy.

Ohio has lost one out of six manufacturing jobs since George Bush took office. Ohio has lost almost 200 jobs every single day of the Bush administration. Yet the President’s answer invariably is more tax cuts for the wealthiest people, the most privileged people in the country, hoping that it trickles down and creates jobs. His other answer is more trade agreements, like the North American Free Trade Agreement, that continue to send jobs, continuing to hemorrhage jobs out of the country.

Mr. Speaker, instead of these failed economic policies that have cost Ohio more than 200,000 jobs, we need to extend unemployment benefits, pass Crane-Rangel that actually gives benefits and rewards those companies that manufacture in the United States rather than giving tax breaks to those companies that continue to ship jobs overseas.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

ENERGY LEGISLATION NEEDED NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, often perception does not match reality. I believe that this is true in regard to our present economy.

Many would characterize the economy as very poor. However, as we can see on the following chart, short-term interest rates are the lowest in 40 years; inflation, according to the Producer Price Index, was 1.5 percent over the last 12 months; productivity expanded 5 percent the last four quarters, the highest in 20 years; manufacturing employment reached a 30-year high in May with orders up for manufacturing; and home ownership was 68.6 percent last quarter, which is a record.

All of these things would indicate a strong economy, so what is the problem? Why do people continually talk about what a bad economy we have? I would say that probably the main con-

cern that we hear is simply what one of the previous speakers referred to, unemployment.

I would like to call attention to the fact that during the 1970s, the unemployment rate was 6.2 percent for that 10-year average; during the 1980s, it was 7.3 percent; during the 1990s, it was 5.8 percent; and, today, in 2004, it stands at 5.6 percent. We added 248,000 new jobs to the economy in the month of May, and during the last 9 months of consecutive growth, we have added 1.5 million jobs to the economy.

Certainly this 5.6 percent rate is considerably lower than the 30-year average of 6.4 percent. Currently unemployment in the European Union runs 9 to 10 percent. So we see some remarkable gains, and it appears that even though we would hope that unemployment would be zero, we are at least moving certainly in the right direction.

This does not mean that the economy is not without challenge. We feel that there is one significant issue that needs to be dealt with, and that is the issue of energy policy. This is well within the purview and the domain of this particular body.

Currently we have higher energy prices, which affects trucking, airlines, agriculture, small business, manufacturing and individuals. Yet we cannot get an energy bill passed, even though there is widespread agreement on most of the provisions in the bill. I am going to put some of those issues up here that we think are a matter of considerable consensus.

In the energy bill that has been passed by the House and the Senate, yet we cannot get a conference report agreed upon, is the renewable fuel standard, which provides for wind energy, solar energy, ethanol, biodiesel, hydro, all environmentally friendly and will move us away from energy dependence upon OPEC. Also hydrogen fuel cell development is critical. This is environmentally friendly and is not dependent on petroleum.

The Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline, we have all kinds of natural gas available in our country today, particularly in Alaska, and we cannot access it, so this pipeline is critical to reducing natural gas prices, which are eating us up at the present time.

Finally, incentives to increase energy production. We have shut down our exploration and energy production, and that has certainly hurt the economy.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, the economy is strong, and Congress can fix the biggest obstacle to a period of sustained growth, the lack of a comprehensive energy policy. We can continue to blame the other party, Republicans blame Democrats, Democrats blame Republicans, we can blame the other body, they can blame us. We can do all of the finger pointing we want out there, but the buck really stops here. It is our responsibility, and the American people have every right to expect Congress to put the country’s welfare ahead of partisanship.