

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

Mr. Speaker, just to conclude and build on the remarks of the dean of our committee, Mr. OBERSTAR, we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of a remarkable thing, a generation of Americans, some have said the Greatest Generation, that thought not just of itself, but of its country and its future and invested in the future.

They were not borrowing against existing assets, against existing assets for current expenses. Instead, they were taxing themselves or paying fees themselves to build for the future to create a greater, productive enterprise here in the United States, one symbol of that, of what we are celebrating today, the 50th anniversary of the interstate highway system, the envy of the world, the backbone of the strongest economy in the world.

I had the opportunity, as a much younger person, to meet Dwight Eisenhower on several occasions. I got out of school when I was in fourth grade to go down to the railway station in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, one of the last whistle-stop campaign trips, and again once while in high school. These groups come from all over the country to visit their legislators and so on. I was with a group about to meet President Eisenhower in the Rose Garden in the White House.

But in those days Presidents would often, not only Eisenhower, address the country. Not because there was some great crisis, but because they were always trying to rally people to a constructive cause. I remember him often speaking and saying as a former general who had known war that the true strength of a country was not embodied just in its army, though military, though that was a part of it; the true strength of a country was the moral fiber of its people and the productive capacity of its economy.

If those were tended to, you could always build military strength out of that. But if you relied solely on military strength, you would have a hollow strength and would not have the sustainability that the strong economy and character of the people could provide to face any threat.

Part of that strength is our interstate highway system. He led us to build it. It is our job to sustain and to renew it in future generations and, as a part of that, to commemorate its great contribution and success through this resolution. I urge all Members to join us in supporting it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 372.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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SUPPORTING RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD, PROMOTING MARRIAGE, AND ENCOURAGING GREATER INVOLVEMENT OF FATHERS IN THE LIVES OF THEIR CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY ON FATHER'S DAY

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 318) supporting responsible fatherhood, promoting marriage, and encouraging greater involvement of fathers in the lives of their children, especially on Father's Day, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 318

Whereas married fathers are more likely to have a close, enduring relationship with their children than unmarried fathers;

Whereas according to a 1996 Gallup poll, 90.3 percent of Americans agree that fathers make a unique contribution to their children's lives;

Whereas in a study of fathers' interaction with their children in intact two-parent families, nearly 90 percent of the fathers surveyed said that being a father is the most fulfilling role a man can have;

Whereas a broad array of the Nation's leading family and child development experts agree that it is in the best interests of children and the Nation as a whole to encourage more two-parent families where the father is actively involved with his children;

Whereas promoting responsible fatherhood can help increase the chances that children will grow up with two caring parents;

Whereas children with fathers at home tend to do better in school, to be less prone to emotional and behavioral problems, and to have more successful relationships;

Whereas boys and girls alike demonstrate greater self-control and ability to take initiative when fathers are actively involved in their upbringing;

Whereas children who are apart from their biological fathers are, in comparison to other children, 5 times more likely to live in poverty, and more likely to bring weapons and drugs into the classroom, commit other crimes, drop out of school, commit suicide, abuse alcohol or drugs, or become pregnant as teenagers;

Whereas the promotion of responsible fatherhood should not denigrate the standing or parenting efforts of single mothers, whose efforts are heroic, lessen the protection of children from abusive parents, cause women to remain in, or enter into, abusive relationships, or compromise the health or safety of a custodial parent; and

Whereas Father's Day is the third Sunday in June: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the millions of fathers who serve as wonderful, caring parents for their children;

(2) calls on fathers across the Nation to use Father's Day to reconnect and rededicate themselves to their children's lives, to spend Father's Day with their children, and to express their love and support for their children;

(3) urges men to understand the level of responsibility fathering a child requires, especially in the encouragement of the moral, academic, and spiritual development of children; and

(4) encourages active involvement of fathers in the rearing and development of their children, including the devotion of time, energy, and resources.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 318.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 318, and I would like to congratulate Representative SULLIVAN on this resolution. The upcoming celebration of Father's Day is time to reflect on the role that fathers play in the development of our children and the stability of our families, and an ever-increasing amount of research supports what common sense has told us all along, that fathers are essential for children's development.

Unfortunately, far too many children today are growing up without the presence of their father, with 24 million children in our country, approximately one-third of all American children, living apart from their biological fathers. Even more alarming, 40 percent of those children, with absent fathers, have not even seen their fathers in the last year. Given what we know about the importance of fathers for children, this statistic is truly alarming.

In my previous profession, I saw firsthand the increase in fatherlessness and witnessed this devastating effect on the young men I worked with. I was excited to receive a call one day from one of my player's fathers who wanted to reestablish contact with his son after many years' absence.

I was really excited and went and found the player, told him his dad had called. I knew that he hadn't seen him for 15 or 20 years. So I told him about this call. I remember the player saying this: he said, you know he really didn't care about me when I was little, and now he only wants to see me because I am doing well in football. The player didn't even call his father back after 20 years. So fatherlessness has become very real to me because of those experiences.

Research performed by the National Fatherhood Initiative has indicated that children, both boys and girls with involved loving fathers, are more likely to do well in school, have healthy self-esteem and avoid high-risk behaviors. But just as the presence of a loving father has positive overwhelming effects on a child, the lack of a father carries extremely negative effects.

Children who live absent their fathers are two to three times more likely to use drugs, experience behavioral problems, be victims of abuse, and engage in criminal behavior.

□ 1400

A few years ago, a greeting card company offered free cards to inmates from a prison to send to mothers on Mother's Day. Nearly all the prisoners took the offer and sent cards to their mothers. So the greeting card company was somewhat encouraged by the success and they decided that they would then make the same offer when Father's Day came around. They offered free cards to send to fathers on Father's Day, and they had zero takers. There was no one in that prison who wanted to send a card to his father on Father's Day, which is a real indictment, I think, of the situation in regard to fatherlessness of those who end up in prison.

It is also important for fathers to foster close, caring relationships with their children. Additional research from the National Fatherhood Initiative suggests that adolescents are less likely to smoke, drink or use drugs if they have a close relationship with their father, and adolescents in intact families are also less likely to be negatively influenced by their peers or engage in delinquent behavior.

So what can be done to improve the state of fatherhood? Perhaps the simplest answer can be found in a sound marriage. It is the basic social contract between parents that provides the optimal environment for raising children.

Research by the Fatherhood Initiative says that the concept of marriage is well-supported in America. In fact, nearly 90 percent of survey respondents disagreed with the statement that marriage is old-fashioned and outmoded. Clearly, there is support for the idea of marriage among Americans, yet at the same time half of all first marriages in our country end in divorce. This is linked to the stability of our families, indicating that we must work harder to make sure that marriage and fatherhood is encourage and supported in our society.

I would just say, Mr. Speaker, in concluding my opening remarks, that from my perspective, working with young people for over 36 years, the greatest crisis, the greatest threat facing our country today is not problems with the economy, is not al Qaeda, but it is simply father absence. If we could undo that extreme difficulty with our society, we would solve probably 80, 90 percent of our social problems in our country.

So I strongly support H. Res. 318 and urge its passage.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, marriage rates are down, divorce is up, unemployment is

high, and there are many other social and economic factors which have led to a reduction in the leadership of families by two adults. There are more single family homes and more and more absence of fathers from the lives of children.

I have observed these trends for a number of years and, therefore, rise in strong support of H. Res. 318, a bill supporting responsible fatherhood, promoting marriage and encouraging greater involvement of fathers in the lives of their children, especially on Father's Day.

As we express our support for responsible fatherhood, we should not forget one key aspect of being a responsible father, regular financial contributions. Many low-income, noncustodial parents are barely able to support themselves, let alone their children. For example, as many as one-quarter of noncustodial fathers have incomes below the poverty line. Moreover, they generally experience multiple barriers to employment, including limited work experience, no high school diplomas, no college degrees, criminal histories, transportation restrictions and substance abuse, which really means that they have problems and need help with those problems.

The multiple barriers to employment coupled with child support enforcement rules that are ill-matched to meet the needs of low-income, noncustodial parents often present major disincentives to work or incentives to work in the informal or underground economy, making this population incredibly difficult to recruit and serve within existing fatherhood programs.

Given the widely understood and acknowledged benefits of an actively involved father in the lives of children, we would see that more children have self-control and are less likely to be found within the penal system. From research, we have observed that 63 percent of suicides, 71 percent of pregnant teens, and 90 percent of homeless runaway children are from homes without a father.

Children who develop relationships with their fathers are more likely to develop healthy adult relationships and to feel secure regarding who they are. A father's presence in a child's life is a powerful deterrent to delinquency.

We should work together to remove barriers from employment that affect noncustodial parents and in many instances prevent them from assuming a supportive role in the lives of their children, and we have to find ways to facilitate their involvement.

I have been pleased to work for the last several years with a noted attorney, Jeffrey Levin, who has written a book about father's rights and responsibilities, and every year before Father's Day we convene a full day of activities, seminars, discussions, programs that are designed to help fathers find the way to come back into or reconnect with their children.

I also want to commend the Governor of the State of Illinois, a former Mem-

ber of this body, Governor Rod Blagojevich, for establishing a fatherhood council for the State and appointing Attorney Levin to be the chairman of that.

So we know that in addition to encouraging fathers to be involved that we need to do more than that. We need to facilitate involvement by promoting male involvement in Head Start and other early childhood education programs, by supporting Little League and other programs and encouraging fathers to be an integral part of those.

So I commend the gentleman for introducing this legislation, express strong support for it.

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

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. SULLIVAN), the author of this resolution.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and friend from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) for his work on this. It has been great, and as we anticipate the celebration of Father's Day this weekend, I am proud to have introduced H. Res. 318, which supports responsible fatherhood, promotes marriage and encourages greater involvement of fathers in the lives of their children.

Three of my four children are in Washington with me this week, and I find it very fitting that they are here to share in the passage of this resolution. Being a father is one of the greatest blessings in my life. I love my job, but I look forward to the end of the week when I can head back home to Tulsa and to be with my family.

My children Tommy, Meredith, Sydney and Daniel are my number one priority, and I strive every day to show them they are important. I would like to take this opportunity to remind all fathers, including myself, to spend extra quality time with their children on Father's Day and to continue to do so throughout the year.

I introduced this resolution not only to honor fathers but to call attention to the importance of the job. The role that fathers play in the development of our youth cannot be understated.

According to findings by the National Fatherhood Initiative, which have been reiterated already, the closer adolescents feel to their fathers regardless of the type of family structure in which they live, the less likely it is that they will engage in the use of drugs or delinquent behavior. Involved and proactive fathers help to shape confident and productive future citizens.

So as we honor fathers on Father's Day we should also encourage men to evaluate their own participation in their children's lives, because you can never be too involved.

It is also important to note that this bill includes language recognizing the outstanding efforts of single mothers, grandparents and other caretakers. Their efforts are heroic and should be applauded.

As a cochair of the Fatherhood Caucus, as a father and as a concerned citizen, I ask my colleagues to promote responsible fatherhood and support H. Res. 318.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that I have any other requests for time.

Again, I simply want to commend Mr. SULLIVAN for his introduction of this legislation, and I believe that was probably one of his sons on the floor with him, and I can imagine how he feels, and that ought to be an example for other fathers throughout America and throughout the world to recognize the tremendous value of providing the kind of love, affection and involvement in the lives of children that they receive from responsible fathers.

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

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS).

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution.

We often hear about deadbeat and delinquent dads. So it is easy to forget the millions of dads across America who are striving to be good husbands and positive role models for their kids.

Today, we recognize those dads and the tremendous importance of promoting fatherhood in America. There is no denying the invaluable role that a father plays in a child's life.

According to research from the National Fatherhood Initiative, children with involved and loving fathers have a significant advantage in life. They tend to perform better in school, have a healthy self-esteem, exhibit positive social behavior, and avoid drug use and other criminal activity.

But this kind of statistical research really just affirms what we already know to be true: Fatherhood is important. A loving father plays an integral role in the family, and healthy families are the foundation for a healthy society.

This resolution acknowledges that fact, Mr. Speaker, and it is worthy of our consideration and adoption today. I commend the gentleman, Mr. SULLIVAN, for his leadership on the issue and urge support for the resolution.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY).

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I rise in support of the resolution. I want to echo what others have said about the importance of family.

When we talk about priorities, we have a long list and wide range of them. I think it is critically important to keep family first.

I enthusiastically support the resolution, and I want to say how much our children, Nancy's and mine, Michele, Angela, Nancy and Maria, mean to us; and how much our five grandchildren mean to us, Teigin, Elijah, Lola, Morgyn and Daniel. They are the light of our lives.

I thank the gentleman for bringing this resolution to the floor. I urge all members to support it.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of H. Res. 318 to encourage responsible fatherhood. As we recognize fathers across the country and in celebration of Father's Day, we honor caring, involved fathers and hearten other men to also hold their children and the family unit in the highest regard.

Numerous studies conducted throughout the years have continued to underscore the fundamental role fathers play in a family and highlight the positive effects they have on children. I want to encourage men who are not already doing so to take the responsibility of fatherhood seriously and to understand that there are considerable consequences to broken-families where there is no male role model for the children.

Children in father-absent homes have a tendency to live in poverty, use drugs, commit crimes, drop out of school, and in the case of young women—become pregnant as teenagers. Conversely, children in homes with fathers who are dependable and active tend to do better in school, are less prone to depression and demonstrate the ability to form more successful relationships.

The role of a father is one to be celebrated. A father provides safety, security, love, and support. Children inherently covet and require these qualities as they mature into young adults, and they deserve the opportunity to prosper and learn in a stable home.

Fathers who dedicate their time, energy, and resources to their children harvest the rewards of their efforts as they watch their children become productive citizens. A father or male-guardian who is committed and dependable acts also as a mentor—leading by example and demonstrating the standards by which we expect young people to live.

Mr. Speaker, as we approach Father's Day, I would like to commend the millions of fathers who already serve as wonderful parents for their children, and I ask my colleagues to also support this resolution for the improvement and encouragement of other men nationwide.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. DAVIS for his participation. It seems like we often are involved in these kinds of issues together.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 318, as amended. 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. OSBORNE. 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 question will be postponed.

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ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Adoption of H. Res. 862, by the yeas and nays;

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 4894, by the yeas and nays;

Suspending the rules and agreeing to H. Res. 318, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the vote on adoption of House Resolution 862, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 221, nays 194, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 258]

YEAS—221

Aderholt	Dent	Hostettler
Akin	Diaz-Balart, L.	Hulshof
Alexander	Diaz-Balart, M.	Hunter
Bachus	Doolittle	Hyde
Baker	Drake	Inglis (SC)
Barrett (SC)	Dreier	Issa
Bartlett (MD)	Duncan	Istook
Bass	Ehlers	Jenkins
Beauprez	Emerson	Jindal
Biggert	English (PA)	Johnson (CT)
Bilbray	Everett	Johnson (IL)
Bilirakis	Feeney	Johnson, Sam
Bishop (UT)	Ferguson	Keller
Blackburn	Fitzpatrick (PA)	Kelly
Blunt	Flake	Kennedy (MN)
Boehlert	Foley	King (IA)
Boehner	Forbes	King (NY)
Bonilla	Fortenberry	Kingston
Bonner	Fossella	Kirk
Bono	Fox	Kline
Boozman	Franks (AZ)	Knollenberg
Boustany	Frelinghuysen	Kolbe
Bradley (NH)	Galleghy	Kuhl (NY)
Brady (TX)	Garrett (NJ)	LaHood
Brown (SC)	Gerlach	Latham
Brown-Waite,	Gibbons	LaTourette
Ginny	Gilchrest	Leach
Burgess	Gillmor	Lewis (CA)
Burton (IN)	Gingrey	Lewis (KY)
Buyer	Gohmert	Linder
Calvert	Goode	LoBiondo
Camp (MI)	Goodlatte	Lucas
Campbell (CA)	Granger	Lungren, Daniel
Cannon	Graves	E.
Cantor	Green (WI)	Mack
Capito	Gutierrez	Marchant
Carter	Gutknecht	McCaul (TX)
Castle	Hall	McCotter
Chocola	Harris	McCreery
Coble	Hart	McHenry
Cole (OK)	Hastings (WA)	McHugh
Conaway	Hayes	McKeon
Crenshaw	Hayworth	McMorris
Cubin	Hefley	Mica
Culberson	Hensarling	Miller (FL)
Davis (KY)	Herger	Miller, Gary
Davis, Jo Ann	Hobson	Moran (KS)
Davis, Tom	Hoekstra	Murphy