

without amending the Red Cross charter, and for that to occur, congressional action is needed. That is the reason for our legislation.

Last month the other body acted with urgency by passing the American National Red Cross Organization Act. This House aims to act with similar urgency as we consider this bill just 3 weeks after it was introduced by my good friend, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, and myself.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1681 amends the Red Cross charter in a number of significant ways. First, the board of governors will be reduced to 25 members. Where previously some board members were selected by local chapters, some elected by the board, others appointed by the President, our legislation requires governors to be elected solely by delegates to the Red Cross' annual meeting. The responsibilities for day-to-day operations will be delegated exclusively to the Red Cross management rather than to the board. Our legislation requires the Red Cross to establish an office of ombudsman, who will report to Congress, to raise the profile of the whistleblower process for employees and volunteers and to make improvements to it.

Madam Speaker, while these changes would not directly affect the organization's disaster response, it will help promote the kind of leadership needed to make Red Cross management and operations run smoothly and effectively for the balance of this century.

□ 1500

I would like to express my appreciation to my friend and distinguished colleague, the ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for cosponsoring this legislation; and I want to thank her for her commitment to ensuring that the American Red Cross remains accountable to the American people.

I strongly support this legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, as always, it is a delight and a joy to work with our chairman, TOM LANTOS of California. And I join him as an original co-sponsor of The American Red Cross Governance Modernization Act of 2007.

The American Red Cross, as Mr. LANTOS has pointed out, is an institution with a unique status. It has been assigned the responsibility by Congress of fulfilling the obligations of the United States under the Geneva Convention for carrying out peacetime and disaster relief functions. This obligation has not been a small undertaking. The Red Cross has been helping victims of war and natural disasters since its founding in 1881.

As a Member of Congress from Florida's 18th District, I am well aware of

the great job, the amazing efforts of Red Cross as an organization made up of volunteers, and in the way that they have responded to numerous hurricanes in my State and tropical storms. And so on behalf of the residents of my district and my State, thank you to the Red Cross and its many volunteers.

And it is precisely because of this, Madam Speaker, I applaud the Red Cross for the hard work that it has done to review its internal governance structures and proposed changes to its charter that will make it an even stronger organization so they can help more people that will reform the organization and take it into its next century of service.

I am pleased that the Red Cross was willing to accept additional significant proposed changes that will provide even more accountability and transparency in the manner in which it will report its findings regarding audits and investigations to the general public.

In the future, Madam Speaker, anyone will be able to log on to the Red Cross Web site and view the results of its finding for audits and investigations that are conducted by the ombudsman's office. This act alone will provide even further assurances necessary for the American public to feel confident that the Red Cross handles donations with the utmost care.

I urge my colleagues to unanimously support H.R. 1681. And I thank the chairman for his leadership on this issue.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1681, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS HIGHLIGHTED THROUGH NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 293) supporting the goals and ideals highlighted through National Volunteer Week.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 293

Whereas National Volunteer Week will be observed during the week of April 15 through 21, 2007;

Whereas the National Volunteer Week theme, "Inspire By Example", truly reflects the power volunteers have to inspire the people they help and to inspire others to serve;

Whereas about 61.2 million people volunteered through or for an organization at least once between September 2005 and September 2006, according to a recent survey by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the proportion of people who volunteered was 26.7 percent, more than a quarter of the total United States population;

Whereas the estimated dollar value of volunteer time was \$18.04 in 2005, according to the latest information provided by Independent Sector, a nonpartisan leadership forum, and the coalition estimates the value of volunteer time for 2005 to be \$280 billion;

Whereas volunteers have contributed to the enhancement and improvement of communities across the United States, especially with respect to the aftermath of the hurricanes on the Gulf Coast; and

Whereas National Volunteer Week will continue to build awareness of the role that volunteers play in local, national, and international communities, and their commitment and dedication to improving lives, strengthening communities, and fostering civic engagement through service and volunteering: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals highlighted through National Volunteer Week;

(2) acknowledges the diligent efforts of our major federally funded community service and volunteer programs;

(3) recognizes with gratitude the contributions of the millions of dedicated and caring individuals who have chosen to serve others through volunteerism; and

(4) encourages all American people, of any age and background, to seek out opportunities to serve through volunteerism.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Hampshire.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to House Resolution 293 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. SHEA-PORTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. House Resolution 293 is a bipartisan bill recognizing the important role of volunteers in local, national, and international communities and their dedication to improving lives, strengthening communities, and fostering civic engagement through service and volunteering.

April 15-21, 2007 is recognized as National Volunteer Week. The theme is Inspire by Example, which reflects the power volunteers have to inspire the people they help and to inspire others to serve.

Inspire by Example has been the theme throughout our history. We have 61 million volunteers out of a population of 300 million who volunteer some time each day to serve others.

From the very beginning of our time, we have been committed to serving each other. Benjamin Franklin started a volunteer fire department in a library and took care of those in the community, as have others.

From the beginning, through war, through disaster and through famine, we have seen the greatest step forward to serve our country. Who could forget the service of the Greatest Generation who came forward in so many ways as others went to war and we saw our own population step up to fulfill the roles in our community and to each other?

What do these volunteers do each day of the year? They teach others to read. They care for others who are ill. They work on the forefront for disaster. Right now, in my own State of New Hampshire, which has once again been hit by flood waters, we have volunteers who are out there serving our community. They serve to take care of babies and young mothers. They serve to take care of alcoholics and drug addicts and the most vulnerable in our communities, and they continue their service right through hospice and in senior settings. So we have to thank our volunteers and also recognize what motivates them and to encourage them. That is what this resolution does, to speak to them and to urge them to continue their service.

While we have had the greatest numbers at all in the past year, 61.2 million volunteers, we have also had a slight drop. We have to make sure it is possible for volunteers to continue their full-time lives of service in their own jobs and then also in their communities.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 293, which supports the goals and ideals highlighted through National Volunteer Week.

I would like to thank my colleague from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) for introducing this legislation and bringing it to the floor here today.

As we have heard, National Volunteer Week has been celebrated since 1974, when President Nixon signed an executive order establishing this annual celebration of volunteerism.

As we now celebrate another National Volunteer Week, we are reminded that community service takes place through efforts both large and small throughout our great country. This year's Volunteer Week theme is Inspire by Example, and countless individuals of all backgrounds and ages inspire others every day through their efforts to address the common concerns of our neighborhoods, communities, Nation, and world. And I know personally that it was the example of my parents, Babs and Dutch Platts, volunteering in our community as a Sunday school teacher, a Little League coach,

running the school candy sales; their example of volunteerism for me and my four siblings helped to inspire my interest in public service and pursuit of this very position I now hold.

Our country has seen the inspiring example of our citizens' willingness to serve others in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and rebuilding efforts along the gulf coast, and in response to countless other tragedies, large and small, that touch lives every day.

Community service isn't just about responding to disaster. It is also about lifting a hand to help a neighbor, teaching a child to read, restoring a neglected park, and numerous other acts of good will that reaffirm our common humanity. As cochair of the National Service Caucus here in the House with Representatives CHRIS SHAYS, DORIS MATSUI and DAVID PRICE, I am particularly interested in seeing the spirit of volunteerism celebrated and extended to as many Americans as possible.

As this resolution says, more than a quarter of this country's population volunteered in some capacity from September of 2005 to September of 2006 at an estimated value or benefit to our country of \$280 billion. I certainly hope these numbers continue to grow.

I also want to express my thanks to the thousands of organizations and their leaders across the country that capture the spirit of our volunteers and bring that spirit to bear in a concentrated way to relieve suffering, provide opportunities to the needy, to clean up our communities, and bring hope to millions. These organizations and the public and private partners that support them provide needed infrastructure to support the energy of our community service providers.

As this resolution states, National Volunteer Week will continue to raise awareness of the role that volunteers play in local, national and international communities, and their commitment to improving lives, strengthening communities and fostering civic engagement.

Again, I thank my colleague, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and urge my colleagues to support National Volunteer Week and to support House Resolution 293.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. I now yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky, JOHN YARMUTH.

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Speaker, in a week when our hearts are heavy with the weight of yesterday's tragedy at Virginia Tech and the anniversary of the shooting at Columbine High School, it is important that we also remember America's tremendous capacity for selfless acts of goodness.

I refer to a spirit that sets aside superficial desires in favor of the needs of our fellow human beings, a spirit that shows our Nation at its best, the spirit honored during this National Volunteer Week.

Last year, as has been said, more than a quarter of Americans dedicated their time to bettering their communities, inspiring by example and improving lives.

I am fortunate to represent a community in which passionate leadership and dedicated citizens have enacted community service projects on every scale throughout Louisville. Just during our recent recess, I think a picture has been painted of what people are willing to give to others. On one morning I joined more than 3,000 volunteers of all ages as we embarked on a project to clean up across the communities in furthering the Operation Brightside movement. In visiting schools, we saw parents and grandparents volunteering their time to help kids. In hospital after hospital we saw people of all ages helping our sick. And also in one of the most moving experiences during my recess, two first grade classes at Coleridge-Taylor Elementary had decided to help the troops in Iraq. They went out and collected 200 pounds of candy to send overseas. These were sixth graders who saw the need to give of their time and energy to help others. It was truly an inspirational moment.

The great thing about volunteering is it is a way that you demonstrate your citizenship. We talk a lot about patriotism and citizenship in this body, but nothing demonstrates citizenship more than your willingness to spend your dear time to help others.

I hope this week does not stand alone in honoring our generous citizens and organizations. And I urge every citizen to join them in discovering the rewards that volunteering has to offer.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 293.

Mr. PLATTS. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Connecticut, co-chair of the National Service Caucus (Mr. SHAYS).

Mr. SHAYS. I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 293, supporting the goals and ideals of National Volunteer Week.

This week, we celebrate the millions of volunteers from around the country who give their time and energy to their communities.

National Volunteer Week's theme, "Inspire by Example," says it all. Volunteers set an example of selfless service in giving in support of our country's most vulnerable residents, the homeless, hungry, elderly, at-risk youth, and disabled. Their work not only supports their communities, but encourages others to do the same.

More than 61 million people volunteered between September 2005 and September 2006. The estimated value of volunteer time given in 2005 is \$280 billion.

This underscores the value of national service. Our Federal national service programs give Americans of all ages the opportunity to serve in areas of need around the country, recruiting

and managing volunteers. They help ensure the volunteer's time is used effectively to provide the maximum benefit to the organization and the people it serves.

I still remember how I felt as a 14-year-old watching the 1960 Presidential election between Vice President Richard Nixon and Senator John Kennedy. I felt energized listening to Senator Kennedy when he spoke of the Peace Corps and making the world a better and safer place. I wanted to be part of his vision. I wanted to give to the world community. Years later that dream was fulfilled when my wife, Betsi, and I served 2 years in the Peace Corps. The same powerful emotions, the same sense of energy and eagerness we felt in the 1960s is alive today and expressed by those who give back to their communities.

Today is a day to recognize the millions of Americans who volunteer and express our sincere gratitude for their service.

I thank my colleague CAROL SHEA-PORTER, for introducing this resolution.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. I now yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES).

□ 1515

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, before I say anything else, I would like to extend my deepest sympathies and prayers to the families and friends of the victims of yesterday's tragedy, and to the entire Virginia Tech community.

I rise today in support of H. Res. 293 which recognizes the diligent efforts of federally funded and volunteer programs, and generally observes the role of volunteers in the life of our country. When somebody volunteers to perform a service, it is not only a service for other people, it is a service for them as well.

Now more than ever, Americans need a restored sense of greatness and purpose. On the release of the Corporation for National and Community Service's report on volunteering in America, CEO David Eisner's remarks poignantly address the importance of community and national service. He said, "Service and volunteering aren't just nice things to do, but are necessary parts of how our Nation deals with its challenges."

In the wake of tragedies such as Hurricane Katrina, hundreds of thousands of lives have been changed for the better because of the dedication and hard work of volunteers all across the country. But it is not enough. We can do much more. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, while there has been a significant increase in the number of volunteers nationwide, one in three Americans dropped out of volunteering between 2005 and 2006. Volunteer programs need more than just willing and able volunteers, they need national support.

By reinvigorating national and community service programs, and honoring

our volunteers, we feed our democratic spirit and cultivate citizenship. Being engaged in democracy through service, we bolster the best of what citizenship is about. The result will be more vibrant communities and a stronger America, cultivated through experiences that all people share regardless of their background. No young American should be deprived of these opportunities due to a lack of commitment from Washington.

I ask for your support of H. Res. 293.

Mr. PLATTS. Madam Speaker, I urge passage of H. Res. 293, and thank Ms. SHEA-PORTER for her introduction of this resolution, and hope that all of our fellow Americans will experience and celebrate the spirit of volunteerism throughout our country.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 293 honoring volunteer service and thank Representative SHEA-PORTER for introducing this bill. As Chairwoman of the Healthy Families and Communities Subcommittee, I wanted to highlight this extremely important issue which is why the first hearing the HFC Subcommittee held was on national service. This is a bipartisan issue, and I am looking forward to working with Ranking Member PLATTS to move ahead on reauthorizing the service bill.

National service has a distinguished and strong history in our Nation. Our roots in service extend back to the first pioneers, when colonists had to ban together to overcome the challenges of surviving and adjusting to a new land.

Evidence shows that service and volunteering lowers dropout rates among teens, lowers crime rates in communities with high rates of volunteerism, lowers costs associated with the aging population and improves the health and lowers the rates of depression among the elderly. Volunteering is a cost effective way of meeting our Nation's social needs both from the standpoint of the volunteers and the people who benefit from the services.

In my home state of New York, more than 76,000 people of all ages and backgrounds are helping to meet local needs and strengthen communities. There are 239 national service programs in New York alone. In my district we have more than 1,300 service volunteers, and we have almost 3,000 students age K-12 that participate in the Learn and Serve programs.

I truly believe that expanding national service, particularly to disadvantaged youth, is an effective way to combat things like youth gangs and violence, and the evidence bears that out. And it is critical that we begin teaching about participation and service at an early age.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Congresswoman SHEA-PORTER for her hard work to in introducing this resolution. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 293, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New Hampshire

(Ms. SHEA-PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 293.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam 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.

TREATING CERTAIN COMMUNITIES AS METROPOLITAN CITIES FOR PURPOSES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1515) to amend the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to treat certain communities as metropolitan cities for purposes of the community development block grant program.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1515

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

SECTION 1. METROPOLITAN CITIES.

Paragraph (4) of section 102(a) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5302) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "Notwithstanding any other provision of this paragraph, with respect to any fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this sentence, the cities of Alton and Granite City, Illinois, shall be considered metropolitan cities for purposes of this title."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, this is a bipartisan bill that passed our committee unanimously. It addresses a series of glitches which have resulted in the communities of Alton and Granite City, Illinois, losing their status as entitlement communities under the community development block grant program.

These are both cities that have done a very good job of using these funds. There is no reason why they should not continue to be allowed to enjoy this. The events which led to this having happened are complicated, and even more relevant, quite boring, so it does not seem to me that the House would much care about them.

The relevant point is that there is a unanimous view on the part of our committee, and this has been urged on us by the gentlemen from Illinois, Mr. SHIMKUS and Mr. COSTELLO, that we