

providing a gateway to higher learning for those who would otherwise be unable to continue their education, community colleges, like Bucks County, are improving our society and our communities. We need to continue to work to make college more accessible, so that we continue to build a more competitive workforce. Madam Speaker, by supporting these important institutions of higher education we can ensure their ability to serve students eager for knowledge and a path to a successful future.

Madam Speaker, I am a strong advocate of community colleges because I am the product of a community college. After graduating from high school, I enrolled at Bucks County Community College, in Newtown, Pennsylvania, where I gained the ability and confidence to achieve. My year at Bucks County Community College was very important. It prepared me for King's College, Widener University School of Law and eventually to serve as an educator myself at West Point. My love of learning and teaching blossomed at Bucks County Community College—an experience no doubt shared by so many across our great Nation.

For more than 40 years, Bucks County Community College has provided a critical service to Bucks County. Whether students are there as a stepping stone to another college or university, or preparing for jobs in business, public service or health care, Bucks provides a high quality education and a great environment in which to learn. The college has expanded its services by opening two campuses in addition to its main campus in Newtown. This has increased accessibility, especially for those continuing their education while working full-time. As one of the oldest community colleges in Pennsylvania, Bucks County Community College has established itself as a leader in education, not just among other community colleges, but among all colleges and universities.

If not for Bucks County Community College, I would not be where I am today. I know that mine is not the only case in which a community college changed the life of a young student. With 11 million students enrolled at more than 1,200 community colleges nationwide, these schools provide an invaluable service to a large portion of our community. Madam Speaker, these affordable, local institutions give every student, of every background, the ability to experience the benefits of higher education.

It was at Bucks County Community College that I learned how hard I could work and how much I could achieve. Like millions of other students, all I needed was an opportunity, and I took advantage of it. Madam Speaker, this is the unique and necessary function of our community colleges. They give every student a chance to succeed.

Madam Speaker, my appreciation for the opportunity provided by our community colleges is personal and near to my heart. I Urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 334.

Mr. WICKER. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution celebrating National Community College Month.

For more than a century, community colleges have offered millions of Americans an affordable means of education close to home. Today 11 million students are enrolled in these institutions, and the reach of this educational opportunity goes far beyond serving

the traditional high school graduate. Many adults are taking classes to pursue a college degree, gain continuing education for their present jobs, learn skills for new careers, and earn high school diplomas.

Community colleges are also playing key leadership roles today in support of economic development activities. The unique ability of these institutions to adapt workforce training programs to meet specific needs in the areas they serve is a powerful resource. These schools have been partners in attracting new industry and helping existing businesses expand operations.

As co-chair of the bipartisan Community College Caucus, I am proud to join this effort to support the goals of National Community College Month and congratulate these institutions, their students, faculty, and staff for their contributions to education.

Our caucus was created in 2006 to help educate Members of Congress and focus national attention on the activities community colleges are undertaking to provide educational options and improve the quality of life in the areas they serve.

I am also proud of the role the State of Mississippi has played in the development of this important educational opportunity. In 1922, Mississippi became the first State to create a statewide system of junior colleges. It brought affordable and accessible post-secondary educational choices to all of our citizens. Today, more than 70,000 full-time students are enrolled at 15 community colleges in my home State.

I stand in strong support of our community colleges and salute their work to educate a diverse group of Americans spanning all age, income, race, and ethnic categories. The enhanced opportunities provided by these institutions are educating millions of people and helping provide a more skilled workforce to compete in our global economy.

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

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 334.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. 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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEAS OF A NATIONAL CHILD CARE WORTHY WAGE DAY

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 112) supporting the goals and ideas of a National Child Care Worthy Wage Day.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 112

Whereas approximately 63 percent of the Nation's children under 5 are in nonparental care during part or all of the day while their parents work;

Whereas the early care and education industry employs more than 2,300,000 workers;

Whereas the average salary of early care and education workers is \$18,180 per year, and only ⅓ have health insurance and even fewer have a pension plan;

Whereas the quality of early care and education programs is directly linked to the quality of early childhood educators;

Whereas the turnover rate of early childhood program staff is roughly 30 percent per year, and low wages and lack of benefits, among other factors, make it difficult to retain high quality educators who have the consistent, caring relationships with young children that are important to children's development;

Whereas the compensation of early childhood program staff should be commensurate with the importance of the job of helping the young children of the Nation develop their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive skills, and to help them be ready for school;

Whereas providing adequate compensation to early childhood program staff should be a priority, and resources may be allocated to improve the compensation of early childhood educators to ensure that quality care and education are accessible for all families;

Whereas additional training and education for the early care and education workforce is critical to ensuring high-quality early learning environments;

Whereas child care workers should receive compensation commensurate with such training and experience; and

Whereas the Center for the Child Care Workforce, a project of the American Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation, with support by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and other early childhood organizations, recognizes May 1 as National Child Care Worthy Wage Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress supports the goals and ideas of National Child Care Worthy Wage Day, and urges public officials and the general public to honor early childhood care and education staff and programs in their communities and to work together to resolve the early childhood care and education staff compensation crisis.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to H. Con. Res. 112 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, on May 1 of each year, child care providers and other early childhood professionals nationwide conduct awareness and education efforts highlighting the importance of good early childhood education for our Nation's young children.

In support of these actions, I have introduced H. Con. Res. 112, a bipartisan resolution in support of National Child Care Worthy Wage Day. This resolution is an effort to support these initiatives and to help develop greater public awareness in this area. Every day, approximately 13 million children are cared for outside the home so that their parents can work, including some who work in our congressional offices.

The committed individuals who nurture and teach these young children are undervalued, despite their important work. We know that children begin to learn at birth, and that the quality of care they receive will affect their language, development, math skills, behavior and general readiness for school. However, the inadequate level of wages for child care staff, roughly \$18,000 a year, has led to difficulties in attracting and retaining high quality early childhood caretakers and educators.

In addition to low wages, less than one-third of child care workers have health insurance, and even fewer have pensions. As a result, the turnover rate for child care providers is 30 percent a year. This high turnover rate interrupts consistent and stable relations that children need to have with their caregivers.

Please join me in recognizing the important work of child care providers and support the efforts to provide them with a worthy wage. The Nation's child care workforce and the families that depend on them deserve our support.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 112, supporting the goals and ideas of a National Child Care Worthy Wage Day. I would like to thank my colleague from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) for her leadership on this issue and for introducing the resolution we are considering here today.

Child care is an integral part of the daily routine of millions of families with young children. Working parents depend on child care so they can earn the income needed to support their families, as well as ensure that their children are well cared for in safe environments while they are working. As a result, approximately 63 percent of children under 5 years of age are in some type of regular child care environment each week.

High-quality child care, care that provides a stable, safe, stimulating environment, helps children enter school prepared to learn. Research has repeat-

edly shown that children who receive high-quality child care demonstrate greater mathematical ability, greater attention and thinking skills and fewer behavioral problems than children who receive low-quality care.

Quality care is directly linked to the quality of the educators, helping children to grow, learn and gain new skills is rewarding. However, it's very physically and emotionally taxing, as educators work long days, must be constantly alert, deal effectively with disruptive children, anticipate and prevent trouble, and provide firm but fair discipline. As a result, many child care workers leave the profession. The turnover rate in this industry is roughly 30 percent per year.

Compensation and additional training are important variables to ensure a high quality child care environment for our children. We need to attract and retain educators who have the caring, consistent relationships that are critical to children's development. I am pleased to commend our Nation's child care providers for their dedicated service to our Nation's children and their families.

I think it's important that we are taking time to recognize the critically important work of child care providers and the importance of doing better when it comes to their pay and benefits.

As a parent myself, my children, now second grade, fourth graders, went through a preschool program that was exceptional, it was certified. In that facility, we had both the preschool program and a very high-quality child care center as well. We saw the benefits to our children personally of that professional setting. An important part of being able to retain professional workers, staff, in those settings, is the pay and benefits.

When we look at the quality of these facilities, if we don't reduce that turnover rate, that 30 percent turnover rate, we will continue to be challenged to get somebody new in and get them up to speed. That impacts the quality of the care provided.

So I, again, commend the sponsor of the resolution for helping to raise national recognition and the importance of this issue, and urge a "yes" vote.

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

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

I want to thank the ranking member, Mr. PLATTS from Pennsylvania. Working with him on the committee has certainly been a joy. We do work very well together.

As the gentleman has said, passing H. Con. Res. 112 is extremely important. I stand by the words that my colleague has spoken. But I think that this Nation really has to start looking at how we prepare, certainly for the few future and for the global economy that we are all facing. Certainly having high-qualified teachers, day care workers to

make sure that our children are getting the best education they possibly can at the earliest age possible. We look at the other countries and see what they are doing. I have to say that many times we are shortchanging our children.

Madam Speaker, I am asking that our Members vote for H. Con. Res. 112.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 112.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. 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.

COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA GATORS FOR THEIR HISTORIC WIN IN THE 2007 NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 298) to commend the University of Florida Gators for their historic win in the 2007 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Basketball Tournament.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 298

Whereas, on April 2, 2007, the University of Florida Gators defeated the Ohio State Buckeyes 84-75 in the final game of the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament in Atlanta, Georgia;

Whereas the Gators' became the first team since 1991-92 to win back-to-back national titles and just the 7th school ever to be repeat champions;

Whereas the Gators became the first team ever to repeat as champions with the same starting lineup;

Whereas Florida's overall athletic program has proven to be one of the best in the Nation, now having won 21 national champions in all sports combined;

Whereas the University of Florida remains the only program to hold both football and men's basketball championships at the same time and the first school in NCAA history to hold both the basketball and football championship titles in the same calendar year;

Whereas the Gators' head basketball coach Billy Donovan became the 12th coach to win multiple men's basketball championships and one of four active coaches to win multiple titles;

Whereas Donovan became the third youngest coach to win more than one NCAA title;

Whereas the Gators finished their season with an impressive record of 35-5, including