

note) is amended by striking "June 30, 2007" and inserting "October 31, 2007".

SEC. 3. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act, or in the Higher Education Extension Act of 2005 as amended by this Act, shall be construed to limit or otherwise alter the authorizations of appropriations for, or the durations of, programs contained in the amendments made by the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (P.L. 109-171) to the provisions of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Taxpayer-Teacher Protection Act of 2004.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to H.R. 2559 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

(Mr. HINOJOSA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1100

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong report of H.R. 2559, a bill to extend the Higher Education Act through October 31, 2007.

This bill is very straightforward. It simply extends the current programs authorized under the Higher Education Act until October 31, 2007, giving us the time to fully consider and complete the reauthorization act.

I would like to thank Congressman MCKEON, the ranking member of the full committee, and Congressman RIC KELLER, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and Competitiveness, for joining Chairman GEORGE MILLER and me in bringing this non-controversial extension to the floor in a bipartisan manner.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2559, which is a measure to extend programs under the Higher Education Act that are set to expire at the end of this month.

I want to thank my committee colleagues, Chairman MILLER, Chairman HINOJOSA, Mr. MCKEON and Mr. KELLER for their work on this bill, as well as their consistent efforts on behalf of our Nation's college students and their families.

Bolstering our higher education and student aid programs has long been a priority for Congress, regardless of

which party was in the majority. In the last Congress, for example, under Republican leadership, we passed a measure that reduced lender subsidies, increased loan limits for students, and provided additional resources for students studying math, science and critical foreign languages in college.

Unfortunately, the Senate didn't act on the higher education reauthorization in the last Congress, so we were forced to extend programs under the law last September. In that extension, we included a number of important benefits for college students and institutions of higher education as well. For example, we reduced red tape and provided loan forgiveness to spouses and parents of those who died or became disabled on September 11.

Mr. Speaker, just last month, the House continued our work to strengthen the student aid system by passing the Student Loan Sunshine Act, bipartisan legislation that will restore confidence in the relationships between student lenders and colleges and universities.

Now, as we prepare anew to reauthorize programs under the Higher Education Act, we are again faced with the need to pass an extension of these programs to bridge this gap. Now, make no mistake, the measure before us today is worthy of our support, but, at the same time, I am hopeful that our friends on the other side of the Capitol will renew their commitment to a full reauthorization. These extensions, now five of which we've had in the last Congress alone, ought to become a thing of the past.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and on both sides of the Capitol in completing our reauthorization work in the 110th Congress. Just as importantly, I also look forward to working toward reforms that recognize the contributions of market-based programs that have been made on behalf of millions of students for the last several decades. In the meantime, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my strong commitment, as chairman of the Higher Education Subcommittee, that I will work very closely with Congressman PRICE from Georgia and all of the members of our committee to be able to finish the work necessary to reauthorize the Higher Education Act sometime before the end of this year, hopefully in October.

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am now pleased to yield to my good friend and fellow physician, a gentleman from Louisiana who has been a strong proponent of higher education in his work on the committee. I yield the gentleman 3 minutes.

Mr. BOUSTANY. I thank my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, it is high time that we actually get the work done on this. We really need to get this done permanently, but I rise in support of this extension so that we can continue to move the ball forward. It is my hope that the other body across the Capitol will move this time around. I know we are going to do it here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House has agreed to include a provision I offered with subcommittee Chairman ROB ANDREWS that would limit projected physician shortages. This was an amendment to the bill that we had in the 109th Congress, and it is my understanding that it will be included in the base bill, and I am very pleased.

I hope, also, that Congress will add a provision that I introduced with Congresswoman MCCARTHY to meet the future need of qualified nurses, which is an area where we have critical shortages throughout the country. And so it is my hope that as we go forward with this bill on the House side we can introduce this language into the bill or perhaps amend the bill, if necessary.

Once again, I think it is critical that we get the job done on this. We did our work in the 109th Congress. The other body needs to move forward. We need to complete our work here so we can get a good, solid reauthorization bill that will do justice to our higher education system.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman once again for moving this issue forward. Again, I look forward to working with him as we move forward with the Higher Education Reauthorization Act. I am confident that we will be able to get it done in this Congress.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. HINOJOSA. I thank Congressman PRICE for those closing remarks. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to pass H.R. 2559.

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 Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2559.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING THE MERCURY 13 WOMEN

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 421) honoring the trailblazing accomplishments of the "Mercury 13" women, whose efforts in the early 1960s demonstrated the capabilities of American women to undertake the human exploration of space.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 421

Honoring the trailblazing accomplishments of the "Mercury 13" women, whose efforts in the early 1960s demonstrated the capabilities of American women to undertake the human exploration of space.

Whereas all of the Mercury 13 women were accomplished pilots with commercial ratings or better and at least 2,000 hours of flying time;

Whereas the Mercury 13 women passed the same rigorous physical and psychological tests that the original Mercury 7 astronauts had to undergo;

Whereas the Mercury 13 women successfully completed their testing at the Lovelace Clinic, in Albuquerque, New Mexico by the end of 1961;

Whereas the Mercury 13 women were prepared to continue their contributions to America's space program at the Naval School of Aviation Medicine in Pensacola, Florida, by undergoing advanced aeromedical examinations using jet aircraft and military equipment, until they were informed that their testing program was canceled;

Whereas the Soviet Union flew the first woman in space in 1963;

Whereas the United States flew the first American woman in space, Dr. Sally Ride, in 1983;

Whereas the United States flew the first woman to pilot the Space Shuttle, Lt. Col. Eileen Collins, in 1995;

Whereas the Mercury 13 women served as pathfinders for NASA's female astronauts; and

Whereas the careers of accomplishment of the Mercury 13 women can serve as an inspiration for other young women who are considering pursuing a career in aviation, astronautics, science, or engineering: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes and honors the contributions of Myrtle Cagle, Geraldyn "Jerrie" Cobb, Jan Dietrich, Marion Dietrich, Mary Wallace "Wally" Funk, Jane Briggs Hart, Jean Hixson, Gene Nora Stumbough Jessen, Irene Leverton, Sarah Lee Gorelick Ratley, Bernice Trimble Steadman, Geraldine "Jerri" Sloan Truhill, and Rhea Hurrle Allison Woltman; and

(2) encourages young women to follow in the footsteps of the Mercury 13 women and pursue careers of excellence in aviation and astronautics, as well as in engineering and science.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FEENEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 421.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the trailblazing accomplishments of the Mercury 13 women, whose efforts in

the early 1960s demonstrated the capabilities of American women to undertake the human exploration of space. The Mercury 13 women were Myrtle Cagle, Geraldyn "Jerrie" Cobb, Jan Dietrich, Marion Dietrich, Mary Wallace "Wally" Funk, Jane Briggs Hart, Jean Hixson, Gene Nora Stumbough Jessen, Irene Leverton, Sarah Lee Gorelick Ratley, Bernice "Bea" Trimble Steadman, Geraldine "Jerri" Sloan Truhill, and Rhea Hurrle Allison Woltman.

All of these Mercury 13 women were accomplished pilots with commercial ratings or better and at least 2,000 hours of flying time, and they passed the same rigorous physical and psychological tests that the original Mercury 7 astronauts underwent. The Mercury 13 women were prepared to continue their service to America's space program, until they were informed that their testing program was cancelled.

While the former Soviet Union flew the first woman in space in 1963, it was another 20 years before the United States flew Dr. Sally Ride as the first American woman in space in 1983.

Mr. Speaker, I seek support for H. Res. 421 to honor the Mercury 13 women pioneers and to encourage young women to follow in the footsteps of the Mercury 13 women in pursuing careers of excellence in aviation and astronautics as well as in engineering and science.

Times do change. I spent a chunk of my time last week at home during recess handing out space camp scholarships. At every stop, it wasn't clear whether the winner was going to be a boy or a girl; and the enthusiasm for space seemed to be relatively equal between the boys and the girls in the classes where we made such awards.

□ 1110

In an aside, I would like to welcome China as a new nation among space-faring nations. There is an old Chinese saying, as there always is, that women hold up half the sky, and this recognition that American women have been participating in space long before 1983 is very, very appropriate at this point in time.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Oregon for his resolution. I want to rise today in support of House Resolution 421, which honors the accomplishments of the so-called Mercury 13 women whose efforts in the early 1960s demonstrated the capabilities of American women to undertake human space exploration.

At a time when there were many prejudices against women, the Lovelace Clinic in Albuquerque, New Mexico, began testing female pilots to undertake human exploration of space under the same rigorous, physical and psychological standards as NASA's male astronauts.

In 1960, the first of the Mercury 13, Geraldyn "Jerrie" Cobb went to Lovelace Clinic, and by the end of 1961, 13 women had successfully completed this rigorous training. Following their testing program, the 13 women were prepared to continue their contributions to America's space program at the Naval School of Aviation Medicine in Pensacola, Florida and undergo advanced aeromedical examinations using jet aircraft and military equipment, but their program was canceled.

The careers and accomplishments of these great American women served as an inspiration for many other young women that followed in their careers in aviation, astronautics, science and engineering.

This resolution recognizes the accomplishments of Myrtle Cagle, Geraldyn "Jerrie" Cobb, Jan Dietrich, Marion Dietrich, Mary Wallace "Wally" Funk, Jane Briggs Hart, Jean Hixson, Gene Nora, Stumbough Jessen, Irene Leverton, Sarah Lee, Gorelick Ratley, Bernice Trimble Steadman, Geraldine "Jerri" Sloan Truhill, and Rhea Hurrle Allison Woltman.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 421 and again thank the gentleman from Oregon.

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

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin, Dr. KAGEN, and thank him for his leadership in bringing this legislation to the floor.

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues from Oregon and Florida. I appreciate their support on this important resolution.

I rise today in support of House Resolution 421, to honor the first American women to participate in the United States space program. Known as the Mercury 13, they were extremely accomplished pilots and aviators and were selected from a pool of women to become astronauts. Conducted in secret at the Lovelace Clinic in Albuquerque, New Mexico, they excelled in the same physical and psychological tests as the male candidates for astronaut school did, the Mercury 7.

Although many of these women outshined and outperformed their male counterparts, they were never allowed to fly into space. The prejudice of the day grounded their mission before they could reach the stars, but it did not ground their dreams.

In 1961, just before their final phase of training at the Naval Aviation Center in Pensacola, Florida, the Mercury 13 women received notice that the program had been canceled. Twenty-two years later, NASA sent our first American woman into space, Sally Ride.

In these past decades, the groundbreaking achievements of the Mercury 13 women have often been overlooked. Author Martha Ackmann wrote this about the Mercury 13 and their quest for flying into space:

"While the Mercury 13 did not get their shot at space—at least not yet—

they refused to let someone else trim their dreams. They fought for what they wanted, what they believed in, and spoke out against discrimination.”

The Mercury 13 women, as already stated, were Jerrie Cobb, Gene Nora Jessen, Wally Funk, Irene Leverton, Myrtle “K” Cagle, Jane Hart, Jerri Truhill, Rhea Hurrle Woltman, Sarah Ratley, Bernice “B” Steadman, Jean Hixson, Jan Dietrich, and Marion Dietrich.

I had the honor of meeting several of these very tough and spirited women at the University of Wisconsin in Oshkosh in a commencement ceremony, and I was privileged and honored to present to the Mercury 13 women an honorary degree, an honorary doctorate. Today, I have the extreme privilege to honor these phenomenal and extraordinary women on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and their pioneering spirit that has advanced the rights of women everywhere. As these Mercury 13 women have demonstrated, the sky is not the limit.

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform my friend from Oregon that I have no further speakers and am prepared to reserve my time until it is appropriate to close.

Mr. WU. There are no further speakers on this side, either, if the gentleman would care to close.

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank my colleagues for their support for the great history of the Mercury 13. I should say since that Mercury 13 program, there have been 34 women that have flown aboard the space shuttle, including four who made the ultimate sacrifice in the *Challenger* and *Columbia* accidents.

In order to honor such dedication after the *Columbia* accident, America committed to a vision for space exploration that will return Americans to the Moon. Undoubtedly, several women will make that journey. I look forward to that moment when the first American woman steps on the Moon and shares her experience with the rest of the world.

This resolution by the gentleman from Oregon and others recognizes the first 13 women that helped propel an entire gender and an entire nation into space.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WU. I thank the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. Speaker, again, I would like to recognize the good work of my colleague from Wisconsin, Dr. KAGEN, for bringing this legislation to the floor. It is timely and it is timely recognition of a space program that includes everyone from America and now, because of the international space station and international space efforts, includes many people from around the world.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer strong support for House Resolution 421, honoring the extraordinary accomplishments and

courageous journey of the Mercury 13 women. Though largely unrecognized in history, these 13 female pilots displayed determination, bravery and strength in their quest for space exploration.

Selected from a large group of women, the Mercury 13 pilots endured and passed the same grueling physical and psychological tests as the Mercury 7 male astronauts. These women however, were tested not only on their ability to withstand the toils of space exploration but also on their capacity to overcome extensive discrimination in both their careers and personal lives. When championing their cause, the women were repeatedly told by government officials that any effort to put a woman in space was a waste of time and money. Given this lack of U.S. support, Valentina Tereshkova, a Russian engineer, became the first woman in space on June 16, 1963. It would be many years later, in 1983, that Dr. Sally Ride would become the first American woman in space.

Although the women of Mercury 13 were barred from space travel, disappointment did not lessen their pioneering spirit and quest for equality. We must follow their lead. Given our country's shortcomings in 1963, it is our responsibility today to ensure that future generations of women are granted equal opportunities to follow their dreams.

These courageous women demonstrate that the sky is not the limit and that as a Nation we must ensure that all individuals, regardless of gender, race or ethnicity, are encouraged to venture into the fields of math, science, technology and engineering. I believe we must instill the spirit of the Mercury 13 into our children today, by supporting innovative programs such as the National Science Foundation that promote technology in the classroom. By creating an environment in this country that fosters innovation and growth, we will ensure our businesses and workforce can stay competitive in the global economy of the 21st century. From new education technology and better math and science teachers to train the next generation of innovators, to the promotion of new sources of energy and the expansion of markets for our products, this comprehensive agenda will create a strong foundation to build the economy of the future.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to capitalize on this opportunity to extend an honor to the women of Mercury 13 and to ensure we never again allow gender inequality to restrict our citizens' ambition and potential.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 421.

This resolution recognizes the brave “Mercury 13” women who in the early 1960s undertook the human exploration of space.

The members of the “Mercury 13” include Myrtle Cagle, Geraldyn “Jerrie” Cobb, Jan Dietrich, Marion Dietrich, Mary Wallace “Wally” Funk, Jane Briggs Hart, Jean Hixson, Gene Nora Stumbough Jessen, Irene Leverton, Sarah Lee Gorelick Ratley, Bernice Trimble Steadman, Geraldine “Jerri” Sloan Truhill, and Rhea Hurrle Allison Woltman.

The “Mercury 13” women successfully passed the same physical and psychological tests as those of their male counterparts, the “Mercury 7.”

Just before leaving for the next phase of training at the Naval Aviation Center in Pensacola, Florida, they were told not to come.

In 1961, their efforts marked a milestone in American history and these women paved the way for those who would follow in their footsteps.

The Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas has been the leading NASA center for more than 40 years and continues to encourage women to participate in the area of space exploration.

H. Res. 421 is an important way to help young women understand the importance of space and science.

As of today, there have been 34 women in space, and although this is a great accomplishment, there should be more.

It is my hope that this resolution encourages girls to pursue what they may feel is impossible.

The “Mercury 13” continue to inspire women of all ages to go above and beyond, so that they can fulfill their dreams. The sacrifices of these women deserve to be honored.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 421, a resolution to honor the achievements of women in space exploration.

In the 1960s, a courageous group of women challenged themselves, and the stereotypes of our Nation, to become the First Lady Astronaut Trainees.

These women were all accomplished pilots with a dream to explore the unknown.

Thirteen of these women—“the Mercury 13”—were chosen to be part of America's space team, breaking boundaries with their passion and determination.

Though the program was discontinued before these women could actually fly in space, they paved the way for future female astronauts through their hard work and relentless efforts.

Finally, NASA got the message and began recruiting women again, starting with the class of 1978 astronauts and culminating in the first American woman in space in 1983.

Without the efforts of the Mercury 13, women with skills and interest in science and exploration would have had a much tougher time breaking through gender barriers.

The Mercury 13 women saw roadblocks as challenges to overcome.

I hope that all of the young women in my district and across America may be inspired to make change by their example.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. WU. 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 Oregon (Mr. WU) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 421.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING ASTRONAUT WALTER MARTY SCHIRRA AND EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON HIS PASSING

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 446) honoring the life and