

I urge my colleagues to support this important bill, but I hope everyone recognizes that this bill only represents a partial fix.

Mr. McDERMOTT. 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 Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2608.

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.

NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 527) recognizing the month of November as "National Homeless Youth Awareness Month".

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 527

Whereas an estimated 1,300,000 to 2,800,000 youths in the United States are homeless for at least one night each year, with many staying on the streets or in emergency shelters;

Whereas homeless youth are typically too poor to secure basic needs, are often unable to access adequate medical or mental health care, and are often unaware of supportive services that are available;

Whereas an average of 13 homeless youth die each day due to physical assault, illness, or suicide;

Whereas some homeless youth are expelled from their homes or run away after physical, sexual, or emotional abuse by their parents or guardians, or are separated from their parents through death or divorce;

Whereas other youth become homeless due to a lack of financial and housing resources as they exit juvenile corrections or foster care, including 25 percent of foster youth who experience homelessness within two to four years after exiting foster care;

Whereas awareness of the tragedy of youth homelessness and its causes should be heightened to better coordinate current programs with the many families, businesses, law enforcement agencies, schools, and community and faith-based organizations working to help youth remain off the streets; and

Whereas November would be an appropriate month to recognize as National Homeless Youth Awareness Month: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports helping vulnerable youth through current programs authorized under title IV of the Social Security Act;

(2) encourages the promotion through such programs of assistance for especially foster youth in staying off the streets, staying in school, and obtaining their high school diplomas and further education and training;

(3) applauds the initiative of public and private organizations and individuals dedicated to helping these programs prevent homelessness among youth, and provide aid when prevention fails; and

(4) should recognize "National Homeless Youth Awareness Month" to support and further encourage such efforts.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

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

Mr. Speaker, as we walk around our hometowns and cities, who thinks about the young people we pass hanging around in front of a store or a park or street corner? Some people simply avert their eyes and walk a bit faster, focusing on something else. Others, they quickly step by and try to get by them.

Can we tell which of them are begging, borrowing or stealing to eat? Do we stop and consider if these kids are selling drugs or their own bodies in order to buy food or pay for shelter?

Too few of us are willing to ask whether these young people might be homeless, and the fact is too many of them are homeless on the streets of our hometowns. As many as 2.8 million kids are homeless right now, right in front of our eyes, if we choose to look and see.

Some of these homeless kids are fleeing an unsafe home. Others are running from a child welfare system that fails them too frequently. And others are on the street for a myriad of other reasons. Whatever the reason, they are alone, afraid and vulnerable, unsure where to turn for help or to whom they can trust.

Sometimes help arrives too late. On an average, 13 homeless youth die every day from assault, suicide or sickness. It happens in our hometowns across America, and we need to take a stand. We can be the lifeline that pulls these young people back from the brink.

The Income Security and Family Support Subcommittee is in the process of conducting hearings on the ways America can ensure that vulnerable children look to us for help instead of to the streets where the pushers and pimps profit on our inadequacy in protecting these vulnerable youngsters. Federal resources like the Social Security Block Grant; title IV of the Social Security Act; and moneys provided under the Runaway, Homeless and Missing Children Protection Act do help vulnerable and homeless children. But our resources are falling short. It is like standing on the shore with a lifeline that only reaches 25 feet when the person drowning is 50 feet from shore. We are coming up short in spite of our best intentions.

The Federal Government should be doing more to prevent youth homelessness and provide a pathway towards self-sufficiency when children fall through the cracks. We can do a better job of partnering with State and local governments, nonprofits and faith-based organizations to provide assistance to vulnerable families and youth.

Imagine you are in the foster care system, and suddenly you are 18 and you are out of the system. You are on your own. You didn't have parents. You didn't have a family. That is why you were in foster care. And suddenly we throw these kids into adult life. In many cases, they wind up homeless.

In addition to meaningful reforms in Federal programs, I think the House of Representatives can also empower private and public organizations, citizens who employ their talent and compassion to prevent youth homelessness and provide help to homeless youth when prevention fails.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us, House Resolution 527, would say that, for 1 month out of the year, America is going to recognize that youth homelessness is an important challenge that we must face as a Nation. More importantly, it will say to every homeless young person that you are not alone anymore. The People's House sees you, and we intend to help. Organizations like Stand Up For Kids, which coordinates a nationwide effort to scour the streets searching for kids and providing resources for them, is one inspiration behind this measure. But it is the kids that should remind us of our duty to provide for and protect American youth and to pass this resolution.

Let this be the last day that we walk along the streets of our hometowns and not see the young people who are homeless young Americans.

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

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Last month, Representative McDERMOTT and I, along with eight of our House colleagues on both sides of the aisle, introduced a resolution to designate November as "National Homeless Youth Awareness Month." This action followed a hearing on "disconnected youth" held by the Committee on Ways and Means Income Security and Family Support Subcommittee, on which I serve as ranking member.

Disconnected young people include young people who often drop out of school, don't work and wind up on the streets. These young people may have family conflict issues, may experience abuse and neglect, or may be or have been in the past involved in the foster care system. Research completed by the University of Chicago suggests there were nearly 25,000 homeless youth in my home State of Illinois in 2004, including 6,353 in the northern Illinois region where the congressional district I represent is located.

Despite an infusion of millions of dollars in Federal assistance and dedicated interests of many adults, too many children today are troubled, disconnected from their families and others who would like to help and, unfortunately, wind up on streets. Federal initiatives such as the Runaway and

Homeless Youth program, the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Discretionary Grants program, and the Chafee Foster Care Independence program have been directed at these problems in recent years.

Yet better serving these children and preventing more youth from winding up on the streets will require a better use and coordination of current program funds. We also need to recognize, as one witness at our subcommittee's recent hearing put it, that "strengthening families is the best way to prevent the suffering and social disconnection among our young people."

Even as we applaud those young people, including foster youth, who overcome tremendous challenges to succeed in school and beyond, it is hard to overstate the importance of strong families to the raising of young people who grow up to be productive adults.

Last year in the Deficit Reduction Act, we included specific funds to support private groups that work to strengthen families and promote healthy marriage, which is the foundation for raising healthy children. I am eager to see how these efforts pay off, including by reducing the turmoil in homes that result in too many children ending up on the streets.

We must also acknowledge that kids are connected, and especially as they get older, through their schools. That really means through their circle of friends, teachers, coaches and other mentors they rely on as they become more independent and develop the habits and skills needed for life on their own. Kids in foster care already have suffered the trauma of being removed from their parents. In addition to being bounced from home to home, many foster children suffer too from being bounced from school to school. Studies show high school students who change schools even once are less than half as likely to graduate as those who do not change schools. So it is no wonder that there is "a 20 percentage point difference between the high school graduation rates of foster youth and their peers," according to the Kids Count organization.

At our subcommittee hearing, we also heard from Representative MICHELE BACHMANN of Minnesota. She and her husband have helped raised 23 foster children, and she discussed the importance of achieving stability in their lives and especially stability at home and at school.

In addressing the issue of youth homelessness, we should start by doing whatever we can to ensure that young people in the foster care system complete at least high school. That will vastly improve their chances of getting a decent job and supporting themselves. One way to do that would be to provide more youth in foster care the opportunity to stay better connected to their schools, including by remaining in a single school whenever pos-

sible. That might mean offering scholarships so that those in private schools can stay in that school or so those who might benefit from private school could do so. Or it could involve something as simple as bus vouchers so kids can continue going to their current public or private school even if they are sent to live in a foster home across town. Such efforts will increase the chances for foster youth to graduate and can create the foundation for a productive and happy life that is the American Dream. That will also mean far fewer kids winding up on the streets, as is the goal of this resolution introduced today. We should all support that.

And I urge all Members to support this bipartisan resolution.

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN), a leader on this issue.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois for yielding, and I honor and commend both the gentleman from Illinois and his counterpart for this important legislation.

And the gentleman is correct. My husband and I were privileged to be involved with raising 23 foster children. I am happy to report that each of them graduated from high school. They are launched into the world, and they are leading their lives. And, again, it was a privilege for me and my husband and also for our five biological children to be a part of their success story.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I rise today in support of this very important bill because it recognizes the month of November as "National Homeless Youth Awareness Month." The problem of homelessness here in this country is a tragic one and we hope a preventable one, but the issue of homeless youth is especially devastating.

More than 2 million children and youth, Mr. Speaker, in our country are homeless for at least one night every year. It is almost impossible for many, not only just Minnesotans but for many Americans, to get their arms around that figure.

Many of these children have suffered various forms of abuse, which is also difficult to understand, or maybe were just thrown out on the street by their families. While others have spent years moving from home to home to home in various foster care systems.

In our own personal situation, we took in teenagers. We didn't take babies. And we were the last stop in a kid's life. Once they were placed in our home, that was it. We were their last stop. And it was our joy to be able to then launch them off into the world. I have a special interest in these latter cases because of our experience and because of the joys that we had in learn-

ing from these wonderful human beings.

These children often came from unstable families. And once they are placed, unfortunately, we saw firsthand they tend to get lost in the shuffle of a new home. It is difficult when you are a foster child and you are placed in a new home. You are not sure what your place is. You are not sure how you belong. And especially when you are in a new school, you kind of sometimes feel like you are second class even if your foster parents love you and don't want you to feel that way.

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Students often begin to feel as though no one really cares about them. And you know, Mr. Speaker, that's one thing my husband always said; we have to show these children that there is at least one adult in their life that's crazy about them. And if we can offer them that much, maybe that can be our part in their world.

In some of the worst cases, these children may even experience more abuse in what should be a safe place in foster homes. Not all foster homes are perfect, unfortunately. And even in the best cases, once a foster child turns 18, which is true for all of our children, except one, they're removed from the system, removed from the foster home, and they are made to live on their own, even though many of them aren't ready. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, many children, I would say just from an anecdotal point of view, are less prepared than children who come from a biological home to be able to make it on their own when they're age 18.

And so unfortunately, as a result, 25 percent of foster children leaving care experience homelessness within 4 years of leaving their foster home. Just think, 25 percent, one-fourth of all foster children, when they leave that foster home, become homeless. Regardless of their backgrounds, once they become homeless, many youth find then that they are unable to lift themselves out of that situation.

While we can all kind of vaguely imagine what homelessness is like, I recently had the opportunity to hear the testimonies of two people who experienced homelessness, including a very courageous statement by the singer Jewel, absolutely lovely young woman, and her story was heartwrenching. She described how she had to wash her hair in a fast-food bathroom and what it was like for her to watch people as they looked down on her as a homeless teenager. She described her inability to find adequate shelter or food, as well as the feeling of hopelessness that she felt while fending for herself on the streets.

Despite these foster children's best efforts, continuing to go to school or finding a way to be able to hold a job becomes near close to impossible because they face a constant threat of illness, of violence, even worse things.

What struck me the most about children who experience homelessness is that through everything they experienced, all they wanted is to just not be written off by people who saw them only as homeless kids and not as the people, the human beings that they really are and the potential that they had. They're good kids, Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure you would agree; they just have been dealt a bad hand.

A child never deserves to be left in the street. Congress has to ensure that those who have been cast out will be cared for and will be given the chance to grow into successful adults. It's time that we shed light on the problem of homeless youth and children.

This is an important bill. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this resolution which we are now considering.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 527, which seeks to promote greater public awareness of effective homeless youth prevention programs and the need for safe and productive alternatives, resources, and support for youths in high-risk situations. This resolution designates November as "National Homeless Youth Awareness Month." I'd like to thank the leadership for allowing this resolution to come to the House Floor as it highlights a very tragic and important issue.

In the district that I represent in southern Nevada, Dr. Fred Preston of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, conducted homeless enumerations in 1999 and 2004. In 2004, Preston reported an estimate of 7,887 homeless people, up from the 6,700 counted in a 1999 survey. A Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth study released last year estimates that there are 1,700 homeless youths in the valley. According to figures provided by the Clark County Department of Family Services, 483 youth a month, on average, received placements at the temporary emergency "Child Haven" facilities during 2005. That figure represents a 61.5 percent increase in average monthly referrals since 2000. These astonishing statistics highlight the need for our support of those important programs that seek to prevent these types of incidents.

Many of the conditions that lead young people to become homeless are preventable through interventions that can strengthen families and support youth in high-risk situations. Successful interventions are grounded in partnerships among families, community-based human service agencies, law enforcement agencies, schools, faith-based organizations, and businesses.

Preventing young people from becoming homeless and supporting youth in high-risk situations is a family, community, and national

concern. Please join me in encouraging all Americans to play a role in supporting the millions of young people who are homeless or who are at-risk of being so each year. H. Res. 527 supports efforts to promote greater public awareness of effective homeless youth prevention programs and the need for safe and productive alternatives, resources, and support for youth in high-risk situations.

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. 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 Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 527.

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.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Am I correct that the first two suspensions have been addressed and the third is scheduled for now and House Resolution 287 is the fourth?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will want to consult with leadership on the schedule.

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2900) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to revise and extend the user-fee programs for prescription drugs and for medical devices, to enhance the postmarket authorities of the Food and Drug Administration with respect to the safety of drugs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2900

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 "Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.

Sec. 2. Table of contents.

TITLE I—PRESCRIPTION DRUG USER FEE AMENDMENTS OF 2007

Sec. 101. Short title; references in title.

Sec. 102. Definitions.

Sec. 103. Authority to assess and use drug fees.

Sec. 104. Fees relating to advisory review of prescription-drug television advertising.

Sec. 105. Reauthorization; reporting requirements.

Sec. 106. Sunset dates.

TITLE II—MEDICAL DEVICE USER FEE AMENDMENTS OF 2007

Sec. 201. Short title; references in title.

Subtitle A—Fees Related to Medical Devices

Sec. 211. Definitions.

Sec. 212. Authority to assess and use device fees.

Sec. 213. Annual reports.

Sec. 214. Consultation.

Sec. 215. Additional authorization of appropriations for postmarket safety information.

Sec. 216. Effective date.

Sec. 217. Sunset clause.

Subtitle B—Amendments Regarding Regulation of Medical Devices

Sec. 221. Extension of authority for third party review of premarket notification.

Sec. 222. Registration.

Sec. 223. Filing of lists of drugs and devices manufactured, prepared, propagated, and compounded by registrants; statements; accompanying disclosures.

Sec. 224. Electronic registration and listing.

Sec. 225. Report by Government Accountability Office.

Sec. 226. Unique device identification system.

Sec. 227. Frequency of reporting for certain devices.

Sec. 228. Inspections by accredited persons.

Sec. 229. Study of nosocomial infections relating to medical devices.

TITLE III—PEDIATRIC MEDICAL DEVICE SAFETY AND IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

Sec. 301. Short title.

Sec. 302. Tracking pediatric device approvals.

Sec. 303. Modification to humanitarian device exemption.

Sec. 304. Encouraging pediatric medical device research.

Sec. 305. Demonstration grants for improving pediatric device availability.

Sec. 306. Amendments to office of pediatric therapeutics and pediatric advisory committee.

Sec. 307. Postmarket Studies.

TITLE IV—PEDIATRIC RESEARCH EQUITY ACT OF 2007

Sec. 401. Short title.

Sec. 402. Reauthorization of Pediatric Research Equity Act.

Sec. 403. Government Accountability Office report.

TITLE V—BEST PHARMACEUTICALS FOR CHILDREN ACT OF 2007

Sec. 501. Short title.

Sec. 502. Reauthorization of Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act.

TITLE VI—REAGAN-UDALL FOUNDATION

Sec. 601. The Reagan-Udall Foundation for the Food and Drug Administration.

Sec. 602. Office of the Chief Scientist.

Sec. 603. Critical path public-private partnerships.

TITLE VII—CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Sec. 701. Conflicts of interest.

TITLE VIII—CLINICAL TRIAL DATABASES

Sec. 801. Clinical trial registry database and clinical trial results database.

Sec. 802. Study by Government Accountability Office.