

academic performance, able to get along better with their families, 46 percent less likely to begin using illegal drugs, 27 percent less likely to begin using alcohol and 52 percent less likely to skip school. The positive relationships and reinforcement that mentors provide is clearly effective.

I applaud the efforts of the mentors in our nation who encourage and motivate our youth to realize their worth and become productive citizens. I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking and supporting them by passing this resolution, H. Res. 29.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 29, which has been introduced in recognition of the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month for 2007. Young people today are confronted with many challenges in life. They can find the confidence to overcome many of these challenges through a mentor.

The benefits of a mentor are immeasurable. We take this opportunity today through consideration of this resolution to honor those mentors who unselfishly give of their time to encourage and support students across our country. Mentors provide important guidance and friendship to students and they serve as positive role models in our community. Mentors listen and above all, they care.

Mentors leave an indelible imprint on our minds and hearts. I, as well as many of my colleagues, had mentors that helped us shape our aspirations and achieve our goals. The confidence and support that they provide is something that every young person deserves.

Unfortunately, there are not enough mentors for the millions of children who want or need them. Currently, as this resolution notes, approximately 15 million young people are in need of mentors across our country. As we celebrate National Mentoring Month, let us commit ourselves to raising awareness and to promoting the rewards of mentoring for mentors, our children, our communities and our country.

I also take this opportunity today to commend the young people who participate in mentoring programs. Their involvement in mentoring partnerships demonstrates their personal commitment to improve the lives of others. Let us continue to encourage them by providing additional opportunities and resources to enhance and reinforce their mentoring work. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 29.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those voting have responded in the affirmative.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. 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.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 51) honoring the contributions of Catholic schools.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 51

Whereas America's Catholic schools are internationally acclaimed for their academic excellence, but provide students more than a superior scholastic education;

Whereas Catholic schools ensure a broad, values-added education emphasizing the life-long development of moral, intellectual, physical, and social values in America's young people;

Whereas the total Catholic school student enrollment for the 2005–2006 academic year was about 2,400,000 and the student-teacher ratio was 15 to 1;

Whereas Catholic schools teach a diverse group of students;

Whereas more than 27 percent of school children enrolled in Catholic schools are from minority backgrounds, and nearly 14 percent are non-Catholics;

Whereas Catholic schools produce students strongly dedicated to their faith, values, families, and communities by providing an intellectually stimulating environment rich in spiritual, character, and moral development;

Whereas in the 1972 pastoral message concerning Catholic education, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops stated: "Education is one of the most important ways by which the Church fulfills its commitment to the dignity of the person and building of community. Community is central to education ministry, both as a necessary condition and an ardently desired goal. The educational efforts of the Church, therefore, must be directed to forming persons-in-community; for the education of the individual Christian is important not only to his solitary destiny, but also the destinies of the many communities in which he lives."; and

Whereas January 28 to February 3, 2007, has been designated as Catholic Schools Week by the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals of Catholic Schools Week, an event co-sponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and established to recognize the vital contributions of America's thousands of Catholic elementary and secondary schools; and

(2) congratulates Catholic schools, students, parents, and teachers across the Nation for their ongoing contributions to education, and for the key role they play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for this Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to H. Res. 51 into the RECORD and to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Without objection, Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) and request that he control the balance of my time.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 51 honoring National Catholic Schools Week and the tremendous contributions that Catholic schools make to our country. Since 1974, Catholic Schools Week has celebrated the important role that these institutions play in America and their excellent reputation for providing a strong academic and moral education, as well as teaching community responsibility and outreach.

I am proud to sponsor this resolution as my first resolution of this new Congress, and I would also like to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) for his work on this resolution. Unfortunately Mr. FOSSELLA today has been unable to make it. He is stuck in New York today. But he would like to be here also to speak of his support for this resolution on Catholic Schools Week.

This year's theme of Catholic Schools Week is "Catholic Schools: The Good News in Education." This theme has multiple meanings for Catholic schools. At the center of Catholic education is the "Good News" or Gospel of Jesus and salvation. Jesus taught love and service. And the history of Catholic schools reveals an ongoing emphasis on the Gospel values of reaching out and serving others.

But the "good news" in Catholic education is also the news of success in shaping the lives of so many young men and women. Nationally about 2.4 million young people are enrolled in nearly 8,000 Catholic schools. These schools have more than 160,000 full-time professional staff, boasting a student/teacher ratio of 15:1. On average, Catholic school students surpass other students in math, science and reading in the three grade levels of the NAPST test. The graduation rate for all Catholic high school students is 95 percent, and 83 percent of Catholic high school graduates go on to college. These are amazing statistics in America today.

Catholic schools are also highly effective in educating minority students and disadvantaged youth. The percentage of minority students in Catholic schools has more than doubled in the

past 30 years, today representing more than one-quarter of all those enrolled. And almost one in seven students in Catholic schools is not Catholic. The success of Catholic schools does not just come from selectivity. On average, Catholic schools accept about nine out of every 10 students who apply.

One of the reasons for the “good news” of Catholic schools is that in addition to learning reading, writing and arithmetic, students also learn responsibility and how to become persons of character and integrity.

Community service is a priority in Catholic schools; 94 percent of schools have a service program, with the average student completing 79 hours of service.

I was born, raised and lived in the Chicago Archdiocese, which has one of the most successful school systems in the country. Today more than 106,000 students attend 276 schools. In my district alone there are five Catholic high schools and 34 grammar schools, including one of the best in my home parish of St. John of the Cross.

The success of students in archdiocesan schools is phenomenal, with the high schools having an amazing graduation rate of over 99 percent, and 95 percent of graduates from Catholic schools go on to college. This is certainly a record to be proud of.

My wife and I are each products of 12 years of Catholic education. My wife in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, at St. Patrick's Grade School and Bishop McCourt High School; myself in Chicago at St. Symphorosa Grammar School and St. Ignatius College Prep. Like so many others, I understand how important Catholic schools are in providing a spiritual, moral and intellectual foundation. My 12 years of Catholic education provide me with the knowledge, discipline, desire to serve, and a love of learning that enabled me to go on to earn my Ph.D. and become a teacher before I was elected to Congress.

As we recognize Catholic Schools Week, we must pay special tribute to the dedicated teachers and administrators who sacrifice so much, usually getting paid much less than they could to dedicate their lives to teaching at Catholic schools. I have fond memories of my teachers, who taught me not only the value of a good education, but also the values of faith and service. Although it was 35 years ago that I started school, I can still fondly remember all my teachers, from first grade, Sister Mildred; second grade, Miss Ivers; and on and on. And I will never forget Sister Diane, my coach on the Student Congress in high school. And to this day, when I speak to a crowd, I always remember her sitting there nodding her approval as I gave my speeches, as I was a nervous young kid in high school. Millions of other Americans have similar memories of teachers who gave their heart and soul and made such a big difference in the lives of their students.

Mr. Speaker, as an important complement to public schools and other private institutions, Catholic schools contribute a great deal to America. They have made a big difference in my life and in the lives of countless others. As Father William Davis, Interim Secretary for the Conference of U.S. Catholic Bishops, said, “High achievement rates, high retention rates, high moral values, and high student and parent satisfaction are the distinctive marks of a Catholic school. That's the good news and we want to share it.”

For this good news, America's Catholic schools deserve our praise and our support, and to share our praise and support, I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution.

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 51, offered by the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. DAN LIPINSKI. This resolution increases the awareness of Catholic education while honoring the contributions of America's Catholic schools. They are dedicated to not only educating their students academically, but to developing their moral, intellectual, physical and social values.

January 28 through February 3, 2007, is Catholic Schools Week, an annual tradition in its 33rd year and jointly sponsored by the National Catholic Education Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The purpose of this resolution and Catholic Schools Week is to celebrate the vital role Catholic elementary and secondary schools play in providing a values-added education with high standards of quality and excellence to millions of children in America.

As President George W. Bush has noted, Catholic educators share the basic conviction that every child can learn, which is the grounding principle behind the No Child Left Behind Act.

Catholic schools have also played a vital role in the gulf coast's path to recovery after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. They worked as quickly as possible to reenroll their students, while also opening their doors to thousands of public school students displaced by the storm.

Catholic schools continue to demonstrate their faith in every student and commitment to excellence with overwhelming results. According to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic schools have a greater than 99 percent graduation rate, and about 97 percent of Catholic high school graduates go on to postsecondary training at 4-year colleges, community colleges, or technical schools.

I know firsthand of the significance of Catholic schools in that my new daughter-in-law, Jennifer Miskewicz Wilson of Fairfield, New Jersey, was influenced by a Catholic education.

I appreciate the great work being done by Catholic schools, their admin-

istrators and teachers, as well as their parents and volunteers. Catholic schools carry out their servant mission by building the academic achievement, character and values of their students. I commend my colleague from Illinois for introducing this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I would like to congratulate and thank Mrs. DAVIS and Mr. LIPINSKI for their leadership on the past two resolutions.

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to say in closing that I thank the gentleman from South Carolina, that I thank Mr. LIPINSKI, the gentleman from Illinois as well, for speaking out so eloquently on the critical role that Catholic schools play in our society today.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 51 to honor the contributions of Catholic Schools to our nation's educational system. Too many children in our country are not getting the education they need and deserve. Catholic schools provide many students with a wonderful education and, in many cases, a quality alternative to overburdened public schools.

I am grateful for the work of the 39 Catholic schools that are run by the Diocese of Bridgeport which is based in Connecticut's Fourth Congressional District, and serves 10,988 students from diverse backgrounds. These schools offer elementary and secondary education, as well as after-school programs. They present students with an alternative to public schools, and provide a strong sense of faith and discipline.

I commend the teachers, administrators, students and parents for their role in Catholic education, and the key role they play in creating a brighter, better educated nation.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 657, which has been offered by Mr. LIPINSKI from Illinois. I thank my colleague for introducing this resolution honoring Catholic Schools Week, 2007.

Catholic Schools Week is an annual national celebration of the important role that Catholic elementary and secondary schools across the country play in providing quality education for American youth. The mission of these institutions—to build solid foundations for lives of confidence, faith, and service—has had a tremendous impact in shaping family values and community life across the country, and particularly in my community in Western New York.

Beginning the last Sunday in January, the nation's nearly 8,000 Catholic schools will celebrate Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 28 through Feb. 3. This year's theme is “Catholic Schools: the Good News in Education” and focuses on the role Catholic Schools play both in educating students and teaching them the value of virtues such as integrity and dignity. Through education and community service, Catholic schools produce students strongly dedicated to their faith, values, families and communities by providing an intellectually stimulating environment rich in spiritual, character, and moral development.

Together, more 160,000 Catholic school teachers nationwide teach 2.4 million students,

of which more than 27 percent are from minority backgrounds and nearly 14 percent are non-Catholics. An astounding 99 percent of these students will graduate, and 97 percent of those graduates go on to college. As these students become adults, their intelligence and character will benefit communities in Western New York and throughout the nation.

In my hometown of Buffalo, neighborhoods are often known by the names of their Catholic Schools and Parishes, and the many families that are active in Catholic schools are enriched by the values they espouse. Indeed, I have spent my life as a first-hand witness to the beneficial work of Catholic schools. My mother was a teacher at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and my two children, John and Maeve, attend Catholic School in South Buffalo. My family and I are personally grateful for the contributions that America's Catholic schools have been making to families like ours, and American society at large, for more than four centuries.

I thank the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for cosponsoring this week-long event.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleagues in supporting this resolution, and I thank my colleague Mr. LIPINSKI for his leadership on this issue.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 51, which honors the contributions of Catholic schools. Catholic schools not only ensure that their students are equipped with a superior scholastic education, but also emphasizes the moral, physical, intellectual and social development of America's youth. This bill honors and supports the goals of Catholic Schools Week, an event co-sponsored by the National Catholic Education Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Education is a very important value that should be emphasized to American young people. This bill congratulates Catholic schools, students, parents, and teachers for their role in ensuring that American students remain competitive in a global marketplace while emphasizing their character development.

I commend Congressman LIPINSKI for sponsoring this bill which promotes and encourages education. Education is the pathway to a better future and an American ideal is for students of every background and race to have the opportunity to access equal education. Catholic schools have strived to maintain diversity with more than 27 percent of school children enrolled in Catholic schools from minority backgrounds.

Supporting this bill sends a message that we care about the education of American students. Not only do Catholic schools educate Catholic youth, but 14 percent of those children who attend Catholic schools are non-Catholic. We must keep in mind that Catholic schools educate America's young people and ensure that they have a brighter future. Catholic schools have ensured that they are well equipped to face the rigorous challenges after graduation while contributing to their character development and helping to raise responsible citizens who give back to our communities and the world.

Thus I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting and honoring the contributions of Catholic schools.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I stand here in support of H. Res 51, a resolution that honors the contributions of Catholic schools.

As we get ready to celebrate Catholic Schools week, it's important to highlight and celebrate the contributions of the nearly 8,000 Catholic schools that exist in our Nation.

Catholic education has long been characterized by a commitment to high and appropriate standards in all aspects of its educational mission.

The history of Catholic schooling embodies a constant effort to promote academic excellence for a diverse group of students in an environment permeated by religious values and beliefs.

Aside from America's Catholic schools being internationally acclaimed for their academic excellence, catholic school students also learn responsibility, and how to become persons of character and integrity.

Father William Davis of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops said, "High achievement rates, high retention rates, high moral values and high student and parent satisfaction are the distinctive marks of a Catholic school."

In my district and the surrounding areas, Catholic education is rather prevalent. The San Bernardino diocese contains at least 32 Elementary schools and 2 High schools. A new Preparatory high school is also in the works for the Coachella Valley area.

Catholic schools foster a sense of community. They encourage their students to be loving family members; and to be responsible adults within the workplace, as leaders of the world and as inhibitors of their communities.

I commend Catholic schools for holding high educational standards, instilling good moral values, and community sentiments.

Let us recognize and honor the valuable traits Catholic schools possess.

I urge the rest of Congress to stand with me, and support H. Res. 51.

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as an original cosponsor and in strong support of House Resolution 51, "Honoring the Contributions of Catholic Schools."

As a product of Saint Anselm and Archbishop Ryan, I know the vital role that Catholic schools, students, parents, and teachers play towards building a stronger nation. I know that I would not be here today without the guidance of Sister McFadden, the assistance of Ms. Erwin, or the countless other teachers, priests and nuns who helped shaped me into the man I am today.

Our Catholic schools instill a strong sense of community and service in their students: service to our God, to our families, to our towns and cities. And it is this spirit of service that leads so many to strengthen our communities: in our hospitals, schools, businesses and even in these halls of Congress.

President John F. Kennedy, the first and only Catholic President—and one of my political heroes—said: "With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own."

Mr. Speaker, though I have not been in this Chamber long, I have relied on the lessons I learned in the classrooms of St. Anselm and Archbishop Ryan to do what I believe is right.

And I am honored that in the first 100 hours of the 110th Congress we have passed bills to lift millions out of poverty by raising the minimum wage and to protect our environment by investing in alternative energy.

But Mr. Speaker, the commitment to justice, peace and service taught in Catholic schools resonates far outside this chamber and is felt in countless, yet tangible ways in every corner of the nation. And it is only through everyday men and women simply trying, as President Kennedy so eloquently stated, to make God's work their own, is America the nation it is today.

That is why Mr. Speaker, as a proud former student of Catholic schools, I urge my fellow representatives to support this resolution honoring the contributions of these fine institutions to our communities and Nation.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to Catholic Schools not only in my Home Congressional District of Staten Island and Brooklyn, but also the entire nation as we honored Catholic Schools Week from January 28–February 3, 2007.

America's Catholic schools educate nearly 2.5 million students a year, providing the nation's young men and women with a broad academic background emphasizing the lifelong development of moral, intellectual physical and social values.

Catholic school initiatives that reach out to disadvantaged young people have touched a diverse group of students who sometimes find themselves trapped in underachieving schools. It is not surprising to me that more than 27 percent of Catholic school students are from minority groups and nearly 14 percent are non-Catholics. Parents recognize the importance of a quality education and are willing to sacrifice to ensure their children have every opportunity to succeed in the world.

Catholic Schools Week pays tribute to the dedication, character, compassion, and values that embody Catholic education in this country. I believe it is important to recognize the outstanding contributions Catholic Schools make in our country today. Their commitment to the educational standards and values ensure our children will have the right moral framework to help lead our great Nation in the future.

I would like to recognize all Catholic Schools in the 13th Congressional District of New York: Academy of St. Dorothy, Blessed Sacrament, Holy Rosary, Immaculate Conception, Notre Dame Academy, Monsignor Farrell High School, Moore Catholic School, Mother Franciscan, Notre Dame Academy Elementary, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Our Lady Help of Christians, OL Mount Carmel/St. Benedicta, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Our Lady Star of the Sea, Sacred Heart, St. Adalbert, St. Ann, St. Charles, St. Christopher, St. Clare, St. John Villa Academy, St. Joseph, St. Joseph by the Sea High School, St. Joseph Hill Academy, St. Joseph-St. Thomas, St. Margaret Mary, St. Mary, St. Patrick, St. Paul, St. Peter's Boys, St. Peter's Girls, St. Peter's Elementary, St. Rita, St. Roch, St. Sylvester, Seton Foundation For Learning, St. Teresa, Most Precious Blood, Fontbonne Hall Academy, Our Lady of Angels, Our Lady of Grace, Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Anselm, St. Bernadette, St. Ephrem, St. Finbar, St. Frances Cabrini, St. Patrick School, Sts. Simon & Jude, Visitation Academy, Xavarian High School, Xavarian Genesis Program.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 51, a resolution to recognize our Nation's Catholic schools and honor their important contributions to our students and our communities. I thank the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. LIPINSKI, for offering this important measure.

Roughly 2.3 million students attend more than 7,500 U.S. Catholic schools—more than one-fourth of them minority students. Year in and year out, these schools have made remarkable contributions to our Nation's intellectual growth. For example, on average, ninety-five percent of Catholic school students graduate, with eight out of every ten of Catholic high school graduates going on to pursue a higher education.

While these schools are widely-known for their academic excellence, their contributions go far behind grade point average and graduation rates. Rather, Catholic schools also emphasize the moral, physical, and social values of our Nation's young people. And for that, their contributions simply cannot be quantified.

Next week, our nation's Catholic schools, their students, and their families will be marking Catholic Schools Week for the 33rd year. Catholic Schools Week celebrates the quality of the education available to all students in Catholic grade schools and high schools across the U.S., and we wish them all the best during their celebration.

As we prepare to reauthorize the No Child Left Behind Act and continue to work to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their more fortunate peers, we also should recognize that if it weren't for our nation's Catholic schools and the dedicated teachers who serve them, the achievement gap today would be even wider.

With this in mind, Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution to honor Catholic schools, students, parents, and teachers for their ongoing contributions to education, as well as for the key role they play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for our Nation.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I express my strong support for House Resolution 51 offered by Mr. LIPINSKI of Illinois. As both a Catholic and product of Catholic schools, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this resolution which recognizes January 28th to February 3rd, 2007, as Catholic Schools Week.

Connecticut's Second Congressional District is home to nearly 30 Catholic elementary and secondary schools. From the southeastern corner of the district in Pawcatuck and Saint Michael's School, to the district's northwestern corner and the Enfield Montessori School, Catholic schools are an important part of the fabric of education in eastern Connecticut. The Archdiocese of Hartford and Diocese of Norwich deserve credit for making its schools accessible throughout the State.

As a graduate of Northwest Catholic High School in West Hartford, Connecticut, I know firsthand the academic rigor and discipline that Catholic schools demand. They provide their students with strong scholastic backgrounds and prepare them for life's many moral challenges.

Catholic schools deserve recognition for their contributions to our country. Today more than 2.4 million students are enrolled in Catholic schools, and 27 percent of those students are from minority backgrounds. Further-

more, Catholic schools emphasize strong community development and service. In my hometown of Vernon, Connecticut, students at St. Joseph School and St. Bernard school are active in the community visiting nursing homes and collecting money and clothes for the less fortunate.

I thank the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for designating January 28th to February 3rd, 2007 as Catholic Schools Week. And I thank Mr. LIPINSKI for offering this important resolution. The country's Catholic schools are certainly meritorious of such recognition.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 51, a resolution to honor the contributions of Catholic schools. This timely resolution comes before us during the annual commemoration of Catholic Schools Week, and just days before the National Appreciation Day for Catholic Schools on Wednesday, January 24, 2007. This year's theme, "Catholic Schools: The Good News in Education" accurately describes the positive contribution Catholic schools have made to providing children with quality education within the United States and throughout the world.

The work of the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops toward coordinating Catholic Schools Week and toward raising general awareness of the contributions Catholic schools have made to our communities is commendable. Together, their efforts have ensured that Catholic Schools Week has remained a success since its inception in 1974.

Catholic schools have fulfilled an important role in this country. The advent of Catholic schools in this country can be traced back as far as 1606, when the priests from the Franciscan order opened a school in Florida. Today, Catholic schools offer comprehensive programs and educational, spiritual, and moral guidance to approximately 2,400,000 students at nearly 8,000 schools across the United States.

The number of racial and ethnic minority students enrolled in Catholic schools in the United States has more than doubled in the past 30 years. Racial and ethnic minority students now comprise 27 percent of the student population at Catholic schools. These statistics are evidence of the commitment to diversity fostered by Catholic schools in the United States. Catholic schools are also known for their academic excellence. Catholic secondary schools in the United States graduate 99 percent of their students, 97 percent of which go on to attend college.

I represent Guam. The Roman Catholic Church has long been an intrinsic part of Guam's culture. In fact, Padre Diego Luis de San Vitores, a Spanish Jesuit missionary, established a mission in the village of Agaña in 1665. Guam's population is approximately 85 percent Roman Catholic. The positive influence of the Roman Catholic Church on Guam is evidenced as a result its service to the needy, its dedication to the community, and its education of our youth.

In 1946, Bishop Appollinaris Baumgartner, recognizing the need for quality education on Guam, invited the Sisters of Mercy from North Carolina to Guam. The Sisters of Mercy established The Academy of Our Lady. The Academy of Our Lady became the first all girls'

Catholic high school on Guam and continues to educate young women today. Three years later, Bishop Baumgartner invited the School Sisters of Notre Dame to Guam. The School Sisters of Notre Dame founded Notre Dame High School, which continues today to provide high-quality Catholic education to young men and women on Guam. Father Dueñas Memorial High School is named in honor of the courageous Father Jesus Baza Dueñas, who was executed by the Imperial Japanese forces occupying Guam during the Second World War for refusing to betray the location of an American sailor hiding on our island. Father Dueñas Memorial High School continues his legacy of courage and integrity. All three of these Catholic high schools offer rigorous curricula to prepare students for college while instilling strong moral values and an understanding of the Catholic faith.

Archbishop Felixberto Camacho Flores, Guam's first Chamorro Bishop, continued Bishop Baumgartner's legacy of shaping the character of Guam's faithful by promoting Catholic education opportunities on our island. Under Archbishop Flores's leadership, the number of Catholic schools serving the people of Guam increased, education programs expanded, and school facilities were modernized. In addition to these three Catholic high schools, Guam is home to four nursery schools, six elementary schools, and six middle schools that teach the Catholic faith in addition to other academic curriculum. Our community knows well the contributions that Catholic schools make toward providing a quality educating to our children.

Catholic schools on Guam and around the country excel in their mission of providing quality and character education to children. Their influence has helped form socially responsible and morally upright graduates who possess the skills, character traits and compassion that help produce good citizens and effective community leaders. On this occasion of the 33rd annual Catholic Schools Week, I recognize and commend the Catholic schools on Guam and throughout the country for their commitment to instilling the principles of academic excellence, strong moral values, and a dedication to and fulfillment of Catholic ideals in our children's daily lives. In particular I recognize in a very special way all of the administrators, the faculty, the staff, the students, the parents, and their families of the greater Catholic School community on Guam. Their work is a testament to the strength of Catholic education on Guam. I also recognize the unfailing leadership of Archbishop Anthony Sablan Apuron, OFM Cap., D.D., the Metropolitan Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Agaña, and Ms. Cynthia S. Agbulos, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of Agaña.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 51.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those voting have responded in the affirmative.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. 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.

□ 1430

CONGRATULATING ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 57) congratulating Illinois State University as it celebrates its sesquicentennial.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 57

Whereas Illinois State University marks its sesquicentennial with a year-long celebration, beginning with Founder's Day on February 15, 2007;

Whereas Illinois State Normal University was founded by Jesse W. Fell in 1857 as Illinois' first public university and was established as a teacher education institution;

Whereas Abraham Lincoln, then an attorney, drafted the bond that guaranteed that the citizens of Bloomington, Illinois, would fulfill pledges to finance the University;

Whereas more than 2,000 staff members provide outstanding support to the educational mission of Illinois State University; and

Whereas Illinois State University has more than 165,000 alumni living around the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives congratulate Illinois State University as it celebrates its sesquicentennial.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to House Resolution 57 into the RECORD and to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in full support of House Resolution 57, a resolution congratulating Illinois State University on 150 years of educating students.

Illinois State Normal University was founded in 1857 as Illinois' first public university and opened with an enrollment of just 43 students. The university's very beginnings were touched by history. Four years prior to his election as President, Abraham Lincoln himself drafted the original bond guaranteeing that the citizens of Bloomington, Illinois, would finance Illinois State.

Originally established as a teachers' college, Illinois State University now

offers undergraduate degrees in more than 160 fields of study and 39 graduate programs.

In 2005, the university enrolled more than 20,000 students, and 83 percent of its new freshmen students were in the top half of their high school graduating class.

Public colleges, as we know, provide a great service by offering affordable options of higher education and encouraging access for minority and low-income students. This role is increasingly important as the cost of attending college continues to increase.

Illinois State University has embodied this spirit of access to higher education in public service. It is not more clear than in its mission statement. And that mission statement reads: "We devote all of our resources and energy to creating the most supportive and productive community possible to serve the citizens of Illinois and beyond."

Illinois State University has graduated many notable alumni who have given back to the university, the State of Illinois, and this country in so many ways. There are an estimated 155,000 Illinois State University alumni living around the world, and many of these students have gone on to great accomplishments, including Thomas Edison's State College president George Pruitt; two-time Academy Award nominee John Malkovich; and former U.N. Ambassador for the U.S., Donald McHenry.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Illinois State University on 150 years of service to their students and alumni, the State of Illinois, and the Nation.

I urge my colleagues to resoundingly pass this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 57, a resolution congratulating Illinois State, as it celebrates on February 15 its 150th anniversary of its founding. I would like to thank my good friend, Mr. WELLER of Illinois, for introducing this resolution and recognizing the important role Illinois State University plays in educating the citizens of Illinois and many other States in the Nation.

With more than 20,000 students, Illinois State University is a large-scale university with a small-college feel. Of the 20,000 students, there are 3,000 students enrolled in graduate degree programs. In addition to a number of graduate certificates, Illinois State offers 63 undergraduate programs and over 47 master's degrees, specialist and doctoral degree programs.

Illinois State University has been ranked as one of the 100 best values in public education by Kiplinger's Personal Finance magazine. ISU actually jumped four spots, from 83 to 79, in Kiplinger's newest edition and was only one of two State schools to make the list.

Sixty-six percent of Illinois State University students receive financial

aid, and the school has a low default rate of 2 percent, well under the national default rate of 4.5 percent.

Illinois State also recognizes the importance of educating students to become good teachers. Founded by Jesse Fell in 1847, Illinois State was the first public university in Illinois and was quickly established as a teachers' education institution.

Now, 150 years later, the university is the second largest producer of teacher education degrees in the country. In fact one in seven Illinois teachers holds a degree from Illinois State. Mr. Speaker, Illinois State University is a remarkable institution, and I would like to congratulate all of those students, the alumni and past and present employees on all that they have accomplished over the past 150 years.

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI).

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution honoring Illinois State University on its 150th anniversary. I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) for sponsoring this resolution.

I want to add my voice as a Representative who has many hundreds of students and alumni from Illinois State University. I want to congratulate all of those associated with the university through those 150 years.

With all of the years of success that they have had, it is a great value, a great part of our public university system in the State of Illinois. As a former college professor, I understand the importance of an education. I know how difficult it is today, especially, to pay for education. Schools like Illinois State give the opportunity for students in Illinois to get a great education at a great value and allow them to pursue so many things as they move forward.

So today I just want to congratulate the students, the alumni, the teachers, the administrators, everyone at Illinois State University on their 150th anniversary.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER), the author of this resolution.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 57, a resolution honoring and congratulating Illinois State University on its upcoming 150th-year anniversary. I introduced this resolution with my good friend and colleague, Congressman TIM JOHNSON, with the support of the Illinois delegation.

I am proud to note that the Illinois State University campus is located in the 11th Congressional District which I have the privilege of representing.

On February 15, Illinois State University will start a year-long celebration marking the day that the founder, Jesse W. Fell, took up the campaign of creating the first public institution of