

west of the Mississippi River. That institution, that public institution of higher learning has fulfilled its calling and its mission for the last 150 years, at the highest quality of achievement that we could ask for. I congratulate President Judith Ramaley for her work. I also congratulate Vice President Jim Schmidt. He's the Vice President of Advancement.

There are some things going on at Winona State University, like the National Child Protection Training Center, the work they're doing educating our teachers, nurses, law enforcement officials that I think are equally as important.

But I think it's important to understand that in a well-balanced education like our student athletes are getting at Winona State University, stressing the extra-curriculars and the teamwork that goes to that, and the striving for excellence is important, so I'd like to talk just a bit about this time.

A little over a month ago, during our own March Madness in Minnesota, Winona State defeated Augusta State 87-76. This was the second national championship in the last 3 years, and three straight trips to the national championship. We're really proud of this dynasty that's being developed amongst these student athletes.

In addition to their national championship, they've won nine conference titles in a row. They've also won three straight Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference titles.

In 2006 and 2007 they broke the Division II record of 57 straight victories. In 2008 the Warriors finished with a record of 38-1, an NCAA Division II record. Over the past 3 years, their record is 105-6.

Five seniors have been together throughout this entire run, and they should be congratulated. They'll all be graduating this year, and I'd like to congratulate each one of them individually. John Smith, Jonte Flowers, Quincy Henderson, Shane Neiss and Brent Riese. Together, those five individuals compiled a 129-17 record in 4 years.

Of course all of this wouldn't be possible without the leadership of coach Mike Leaf, who's done an outstanding job of working with the character as well as the accomplishments of these fine young athletes. I'm extremely proud to have Winona State University in the district that I represent; extremely proud of the student athletes that represent Southern Minnesota so well.

I ask today for, hopefully, unanimous consent from my colleagues to recognize them on this great achievement.

I would also make, as a side note, Winona State boasts some famous alumnas. One of them is my colleague on the minority side, Mrs. BACHMANN, and we're very proud to have her here, and Winona State for producing our Congresswoman from up in the Sixth District.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank and congratulate the gentleman from Minnesota with respect to Winona State University's great year and great record over the last 3 years.

By sort of coincidence, I happened to watch part of this game on television, I think the last half of the game, and they had a remarkable comeback as they beat the Augusta State University team. They are really a superb basketball team.

I had the pleasure of playing a little bit of Division III basketball many years ago. And either basketball's improved tremendously in those intervening years, or Division II is a heck of a lot better than Division III. These guys could really play basketball, and they were extremely impressive in terms of what they did.

I also congratulate the young men for their academic prowess. This is a college of some distinction. For that, they and all administrators deserve congratulations as well. We congratulate the head coach, Mike Leaf, who was named the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference coach of the year four times, and national coach of the year two times.

This is a team which has won two national titles and three straight North Central Region titles from 2006, 2007 and 2008, and four straight regular season championships and three straight conference tournament championships. Not many teams at any level of sports can make claims such as that.

The college, as the sponsor has indicated, is a significant institution in Minnesota, and does a wonderful job in its programs preparing young people for the rest of their lives.

We congratulate the President, Judith Ramaley, and the Athletic Director, Larry Holstad, the head coach, as I've indicated, and all the friends and supporters of a fine university which had a tremendous year this year in basketball. But just recognizing the tremendous school which they are and for which they deserve great credit.

I urge everybody to support the resolution, and I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1133, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

AMERICORPS WEEK

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1173) recognizing AmeriCorps Week.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1173

Whereas the AmeriCorps national service program, since its inception in 1994, has proven to be a highly effective way to engage Americans in meeting a wide range of local needs, national response directives, and promote the ethic of service and volunteering;

Whereas over \$5,000,000,000 in AmeriCorps funds invested in nonprofit, community, educational, and faith-based community groups since 1994 have leveraged hundreds of millions of dollars in additional funds and in-kind donations from other sources;

Whereas each year, AmeriCorps provides opportunities for 75,000 citizens across the Nation to give back in an intensive way to our districts, our States, and our Nation;

Whereas a total of 542,000 citizens since 1994 across the Nation have taken the AmeriCorps pledge to "get things done for America" by becoming AmeriCorps members;

Whereas those same individuals have served a total of more than 705,000,000 hours nationwide, helping to improve the lives of our Nation's most vulnerable citizens, protect our environment, contribute to our public safety, respond to disasters, and strengthen our educational system;

Whereas AmeriCorps members last year recruited and supervised more than 1,700,000 community volunteers, demonstrating AmeriCorps value as a powerful volunteer catalyst and force multiplier;

Whereas AmeriCorps members nationwide, in return for their service, have earned nearly \$1,430,000,000 to use to further their own educational advancement at our Nation's colleges and universities;

Whereas AmeriCorps members, after their terms of service end, remain engaged in our communities as volunteers, teachers, and nonprofit professional in disproportionately high levels;

Whereas AmeriCorps members served 4,100 nonprofit organizations, schools, and faith-based and community organizations last year; and

Whereas 2008's AmeriCorps Week, observed May 11 through May 18, is an opportune time for the people of the United States to salute current and former AmeriCorps members for their powerful impact, thank all of AmeriCorps' community partners in our Nation who make the program possible and bring more Americans into service: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) encourages all citizens to join in a national effort to salute AmeriCorps members and alumni, and raise awareness about the importance of national and community service;

(2) acknowledges the significant accomplishments of the AmeriCorps members, alumni, and community partners;

(3) recognizes the important contributions to the lives of our citizens by AmeriCorps members; and

(4) encourages citizens of all ages to consider serving in AmeriCorps.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert relevant material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in full support of H. Res. 1173, which recognizes the contributions of the national service program known as AmeriCorps. Since 1994, AmeriCorps has engaged over 500,000 citizens of all ages in national service programs, giving 705 million hours of service to our Nation and their fellow citizens. AmeriCorps, which is composed of AmeriCorps State and national programs, the National Civilian Community Corps, or NCCC, and the Volunteers in Service to America, or VISTA programs, engages 75,000 people each year in intensive, results-driven service to help communities tackle the toughest problems of education, poverty, illiteracy and the relief and recovery efforts after disasters.

□ 1545

AmeriCorps participants improve the lives of millions of our most vulnerable citizens by implementing critical health services, building low-income housing, making neighborhoods safer, and protecting the environment.

AmeriCorps VISTA participants are America's poverty fighters, 6,000 strong, and fulfill their service term in low-income communities by creating businesses, expanding access to technology, recruiting literacy volunteers, strengthening anti-poverty groups, and creating sustainable programs that help people rise out of poverty.

AmeriCorps NCCC participants serve as first responder in times of national need and have responded to every nationally declared disaster since 1994: floods, fires, tornadoes, and storms, and helped communities prepare for the next emergency. In fact, 10,000-plus AmeriCorps members have served millions of Katrina survivors in the gulf and managed a quarter million other Katrina volunteers.

The impact of AmeriCorps goes beyond the community in which a participant serves; it impacts the AmeriCorps member who is doing the service. The alumni of AmeriCorps programs are significantly more likely to go into public-service careers in government and the nonprofit sectors, especially minorities and people from low-income backgrounds.

So, Mr. Speaker, this week is AmeriCorps Week. This is a week in which we as a Nation should thank those who have given of themselves and who served our Nation through AmeriCorps to improve the lives of our

Nation's vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens and improve communities across the country. We salute AmeriCorps members and alumni for giving of themselves to benefit others and their powerful impact on our Nation's communities and the lives of our citizens and thank all involved in making AmeriCorps a successful program.

I ask that my colleagues join me in full support of H. Res. 1173 and salute those current and former AmeriCorps members through passage of H. Res. 1173.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1173, recognizing AmeriCorps Week.

Throughout the history of the United States, Americans have valued an ethic of service. As Alexis de Tocqueville wrote over a century and a half ago, this ethic of service "prompts Americans to assist one another and inclines them willingly to sacrifice a portion of their time and property to the welfare of the State." AmeriCorps gives Americans an opportunity to make a difference in their own lives and in the lives of others by meeting critical needs in the community.

In 1990, President George Herbert Walker Bush signed the National Service Act, a network of national service programs that engage Americans in intensive service to meet the Nation's vital needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed the National and Community Service Trust Act which established the Corporation for National and Community Service and brought the full range of domestic community service programs under the umbrella of one central organization.

In September of 1994, the first class of AmeriCorps members, 20,000 strong, began serving in more than 1,000 communities. Today, AmeriCorps offers 75,000 opportunities for adults of all ages and background to address a myriad of needs in communities all across America such as tutoring and mentoring disadvantaged youth, fighting illiteracy, improving health services, building affordable housing, and managing after-school programs, just to name a few.

This year's theme for AmeriCorps Week is "Getting Things Done." This organization is doing just that. Since its inception, 542,000 citizens have taken the AmeriCorps pledge and have served a total of more than 705 million hours in 4,100 nonprofits throughout the country. Last year, AmeriCorps members recruited and supervised more than 1.7 million community volunteers demonstrating AmeriCorps value as a volunteer channel. In return for their service, members have earned \$1.4 billion to further their educational advancement in our Nation's colleges and universities and our communities.

Volunteerism is a way for Americans to connect to their communities, learn more about the problems facing their communities, and to simply make a

difference. This week, we salute current and former AmeriCorps members for their powerful impact, and we thank all community partners who make the AmeriCorps program possible and bring more Americans into service.

I want to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. PLATTS, and Mr. PRICE for introducing this resolution and ask my colleagues to support the resolution.

I reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as she might consume to the distinguished lady from California and the sponsor of this resolution, Representative MATSUI.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) for yielding me this time.

I rise today to offer the "Recognizing AmeriCorps Week" resolution and give special thanks to AmeriCorps volunteers and organizations.

This week marks AmeriCorps Week, a nationwide acknowledgment and celebration of all that America volunteers have done for our country. The AmeriCorps program is vital to the growth and prosperity of our Nation. AmeriCorps members can be found in our small towns and in our big cities. They're motivated young men and women from every background imaginable.

For the past 15 years, more than 540,000 men and women have given over 705 million hours of service to our country and the citizens. Equally valuable, these men and women are experts in mobilizing local volunteers, allowing millions more to serve their communities in an organized and effectual way.

Like AmeriCorps volunteers, AmeriCorps Week is important because it inspires others to become involved. By recognizing the program and its accomplishments, we motivate individuals to become engaged and add one more person to the growing list of those offering optimism and aid.

Throughout this week, AmeriCorps organizations across this country are hosting hundreds of special events, making it even easier to become involved. In the gulf coast, for example, Habitat for Humanity and the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Work Project will build tens of homes in a single week. This single event will involve 700 AmeriCorps members and thousands of other volunteers.

Additionally, this year's AmeriCorps Week pays special attention to the life-long contribution of AmeriCorps alumni. A recent study of AmeriCorps show that alumni of the program are much more likely to remain involved in the community long after their service has ended. Nearly 87 percent of former AmeriCorps members will go on to work in public service. They become our future leaders, public servants, government employees, and nonprofit organizers. Simply put, AmeriCorps

members learn to give for the rest of their lives.

AmeriCorps Week also provides a platform to highlight the valuable community organizations that deserve our support. Earlier this week, critical new AmeriCorps grants were announced. This funding provides necessary resources to some of America's most innovative and effective community organizations.

Those who support this resolution and AmeriCorps Week will be in good company. Dozens of State governors have issued AmeriCorps Week proclamations from local leaders to professional baseball teams. Thousands of diverse Americans are expressing their support for the AmeriCorps programs and its volunteers. These supporters recognize that AmeriCorps members do more than volunteer their time. They are ambassadors of hope, good will, and personal initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me, my fellow National Service Caucus cochairs, and the 40 bipartisan cosponsors of this resolution in support of AmeriCorps Week and these amazing volunteers.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) such time as he may consume.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, when there were the great debates on TV between Vice President Nixon and then-Senator John F. Kennedy, while my family were Republicans and, as a young person in 8th grade, John F. Kennedy spoke to me when he talked about serving our country and the world by being a Peace Corps volunteer. I thought, wouldn't it be amazing to go to college and afterwards join the Peace Corps; and that's what I did with my wife. And that experience changed my life. That experience had a tremendous impact on my life. In fact, Peace Corps volunteers will tell you it was the greatest time of their life, not that the rest of our lives hasn't been good.

And when President Clinton, building on what President Bush 41 had done on national service, said, We need to create AmeriCorps, his administration reached out to Republicans; and it was an amazing experience to work with President Clinton and his administration because they said they wanted this to be a bipartisan effort, and they listened to Republicans.

Instead of a one-size-fits-all national program, they did something Republicans really like, and that is they made it a local and State effort. And the problem with that is that you could not only have really great programs, you might have some that weren't so good. And it would give people an opportunity to criticize AmeriCorps, as some critics did, because there were literally hundreds and hundreds of various programs meeting local and State needs.

But to President Clinton's credit and to his people who were bringing this

program forward, in spite of the fact a majority of Republicans did not support it, they still allowed us to have significant input.

I have nothing but respect for AmeriCorps, nothing but respect for the fact that we are talking, in some cases, young people who have never had a work experience, and we're giving them experience with individuals who can tutor them, in nongovernment organizations. What a wonderful way for these young people to begin to become adults and experience the incredible fulfillment that comes from being of service to others.

I have never understood why some Republicans have criticized AmeriCorps because they said you get paid. Well, Peace Corps volunteers had a living wage. We were able to feed ourselves and we were provided housing. It's something that you don't have under AmeriCorps. There it's a minimum wage, but no housing. They have a stipend for education. Republicans tend to think that you should earn what you get, and this is a program where you earn what you get. You can't pocket the money. You have to put it into bettering yourself with education, which is a very logical thing to do. Frankly, it's something that most Republicans would have argued for: not being given something; earning it.

So these AmeriCorps individuals, which we call volunteers, are getting the best of the best. They are growing up with a meaningful job, not a long-term job, they're earning educational credits, they're getting an education, and they're, for the rest of their lives, going to have that incredible memory of service that I think only strengthens individuals and our country.

So I'm really grateful that we can recognize AmeriCorps for what it is, an outstanding program initiated by President Clinton to his credit, and to his credit, still working with Republicans in spite of the fact they didn't deliver a majority of the votes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield back the balance of our time and encourage everybody to support the resolution.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would urge passage of this resolution. I, too, agree that when we give of ourselves, we give the very best.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, in the Peace Corps we say, "Once a volunteer, always a volunteer." There was a time when I thought that those words were just a slogan. However, over the years I've watched the friends I made in the Peace Corps in Colombia continue to volunteer in their communities and around the world. And this continuity of volunteerism is not unique to the Peace Corps.

In fact, it has become clear to people who understand public service and volunteerism, that to "give back" is a habit. And you can get more of it, if you open up more opportunities to people involved in volunteer service. There is a virtuous cycle in volunteerism and it is a cycle that we do well to encourage.

AmeriCorps is one of the great innovations in public policy that has created opportunities for Americans all across the country to volunteer. From working in inner city schools to working in food banks in small towns, AmeriCorps opens the doors for people to volunteer and in so doing provides a stepping stone to a life of service.

I commend AmeriCorps for all it does and for all the doors to service it has opened. So, today as the House of Representatives recognizes AmeriCorps, I encourage all those who can do so to find a way to volunteer in their community and to give back.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1173.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

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HONORING PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 789) honoring public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities providing services for foster children, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 789

Whereas over 500,000 children in the United States are currently in foster care which is twice as many as 15 years ago;

Whereas the majority of these children and youth have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect;

Whereas foster children experience a number of unique challenges based on instability in their home and school environments;

Whereas just over half of all foster children complete high school, 30 percent continue to rely on public assistance into adulthood and 25 percent will experience homelessness at one point in their lives;

Whereas numerous public child welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations and private entities work tirelessly to recruit loving foster families and improve the lives of foster children;

Whereas these groups strive to consider the best interest of each child and focus on keeping families together when possible;

Whereas they provide invaluable resources to foster families as well as teachers, counselors, physicians, clergy, and others who