

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3959 and to insert extraneous material thereon.

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

There was no objection.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 916) honoring the contributions of Catholic schools.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 916

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 2006-2007 academic year was more than 2,300,000 and the student-teacher ratio was 15 to 1;

Whereas Catholic schools teach a diverse group of students;

Whereas more than 25 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 the Catholic high school graduation rate is 99 percent, with 80 percent of graduates attending four-year colleges and 17 percent attending two-year colleges or technical schools;

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 27 to February 2, 2008, 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 (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased at this time to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI), the author of this bill.

Mr. LIPINSKI. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 916, honoring the tremendous contributions that Catholic schools have made to our Nation.

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 again. And I would like to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) for once again working with me on this resolution.

This year's theme of Catholic Schools Week is "Catholic Schools Light the Way." This theme focuses on the leadership that Catholic schools provide to our Nation, producing graduates who light the way for a brighter future for all Americans and for humankind. The theme also highlights the spiritual foundation of Catholic schools by reminding students that they are called to "light the way" for others.

Nationally, about 2.3 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 tested by the NAEP test. The graduation rate for Catholic high school students is 99 percent, and 97 percent of Catholic high school graduates go on to college or technical schools. 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 depend on selectivity. On average Catholic schools accept nine out of every 10 students who apply.

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 I live in 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 in West-ern Springs.

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; and myself 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 provided 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 I began in Catholic schools 35 years ago, I still can fondly remember my teachers at St. Sym's, from Sister Mildred in the first grade to Sister Xavier in the eighth grade. And I still fondly remember Sister Diane, my coach on the Student Congress Team in high school. Millions of Americans have similar memories of sisters, priests, and lay teachers who gave their hearts and souls and made such a big difference in the lives of their students.

Mr. Speaker, Catholic schools have made a big difference in my life and in the lives of countless others. As an important complement to public schools and other private institutions, Catholic schools contribute a great deal to America. And let us not forget that every student who is taught in a Catholic school saves taxpayers money because they are not part of the local public school system.

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. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 916, offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI). This resolution increases the awareness of Catholic education while honoring the contributions of America's Catholic schools.

January 27 through February 2, 2008 has been designated Catholic Schools Week, an annual tradition in its 34th year and jointly sponsored by the National Catholic Education Association as well as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. With this resolution we recognize the vital role Catholic elementary and secondary schools play in providing an education with high standards of quality and excellence to the nearly 2.4 million students enrolled in Catholic schools across the country.

According to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic schools have a graduation rate of over 98 percent, and about 97 percent of Catholic high school graduates go on to post-secondary training at 4-year colleges, community colleges, or technical schools. This success can be attributed to the importance Catholic educators place on character and morals. By making the development of moral and social values an integral part of the curriculum, Catholic schools are ensuring that their students are not only good academicians but also good citizens.

The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2008 is "Catholic Schools Light the Way." This theme highlights the mission of Catholic schools to provide a faith-based education that supports the whole child academically and spiritually and prepares students for future success.

Catholic schools demonstrated an enormous amount of character and compassion in their response to the devastating hurricanes that hit the gulf coast 3 years ago. In the wake of this national disaster, more than 300,000 students were displaced from their homes, schools, and communities. Catholic schools opened their doors and hearts and welcomed these students into their classrooms. They provided these children with the opportunity to continue their studies without stopping to consider the cost of that education. Instead, the Catholic schools knew their first priority was to educate these children. In addition, the Catholic schools in New Orleans have proved to be most resilient by becoming some of the first schools in the hurricane-damaged area to reopen their doors to students.

I appreciate the great work done by Catholic schools, their administrators and teachers, as well as the parents and volunteers. Catholic schools carry

out their servant mission by building the academic achievement, character, and values of their students.

I again commend the gentleman from Illinois for introducing this resolution and urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY. I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding and I thank Ms. SÁNCHEZ and Mr. LIPINSKI as well, and I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 916 honoring the contributions of Catholic schools across the country, for the upcoming commemoration of National Catholic Schools Week from January 27 to February 2.

Mr. Speaker, as a graduate of Catholic elementary and high schools, Sacred Heart Academy and Aquinas High School in Augusta, Georgia, I am keenly aware of the contributions that they provide to the 2.3 million students across this country they teach every year. These include 1,176 students at three Catholic schools in my district, the 11th of Georgia: St. Catherine of Siena in Kennesaw, Georgia; St. Joseph's in my hometown of Marietta, Georgia; and St. Mary's in Floyd County, Rome, Georgia.

Not only do Catholic schools, like Sacred Heart and Aquinas, provide a strong and competitive academic environment, they also teach moral and ethical standards, skills for living and self esteem, and a Christian integration of spirit, mind, and body in each of their students.

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Upon graduating from Aquinas, I thought that the Catholic school curriculum would be what best prepared me for my future. But, Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I was wrong. While the strenuous academics at Sacred Heart and Aquinas did lay the foundation for success at Georgia Tech and the Medical College of Georgia, it was the faith and ethical standards taught at these schools that truly prepared me for life's struggles.

Mr. Speaker, while opening and running my medical practice, the respect for life at Sacred Heart and Aquinas led me to value and care for life at all stages from conception on. And now that I have left my medical career to serve as Member of this great body, I find my lessons from these Catholic schools more valuable than ever on a daily basis.

We are all confronted with difficult questions that affect millions of lives. If it were not for the moral standards and the faith in God taught at Sacred Heart and Aquinas, I do not believe that I could properly represent the people of northwest Georgia.

So, Mr. Speaker, Catholic schools in northwest Georgia and all across our

great country provide an incredible valuable service to our education system and truly prepare their students for a bright future.

I urge all of my colleagues, support H. Res. 916.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, if I could inquire from my colleague how many more speakers he has remaining.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. I have two more speakers.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. We will continue to reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand before you today in support of House Resolution 916 honoring the contribution of Catholic schools to the education system of this country.

In Ohio, approximately 12 percent of school children are educated by private institutions with the vast majority going to Catholic schools. These schools provide the structure and value system that are important to their families as their children receive not only a quality education but a strong moral and social foundation.

Most importantly, the choice of a Catholic education allows children to have a religious bearing in their education. Many parents make great sacrifices for their children's education by sending them to Catholic school, because at the same time they are not only paying for that Catholic education, but they also have to pay taxes to the public schools.

I applaud the hard work and dedication of the staff at the Catholic schools, as well as the parents who seek this education for their child's betterment. I am pleased to support House Resolution 916 today and to support our Catholic schools in Ohio and across this great country.

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

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT).

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 916, a resolution recognizing Catholic Schools Week and honoring the contributions that Catholic schools make to our Nation's country and to the youth of this Nation in particular. Having been a product of the Catholic school system in Cincinnati, Ohio, myself, having attended Holy Family School and then St. Catherine School and then LaSalle High School, and having had both of our children attend Our Lady of Lourdes School, my wife attended Mother of Mercy, as did our daughter in high school, my son is a senior at St. Xavier High School, and coincidentally they happened to win the State football championship in Ohio this year for the second time in the last 3 years, I

can say firsthand that Catholic school systems in our community and all over the country are providing significant leadership in the great education for our youth.

I also happened to be a school teacher at St. Joseph School in the west end in Cincinnati after I graduated from college. And Catholic schools provide a comprehensive and wide-ranging education to all of the students. Not only do Catholic schools promote the intellectual and physical cultivation of our most important asset, our country's youth, but they also lay the groundwork for a strong, moral upbringing resulting in well-rounded contributing members of our society.

The Cincinnati Archdiocese consists of 117 schools totaling over 47,000 students. I am proud to say that several of these schools are located in Ohio's First District, including two schools, Our Lady of the Visitation and St. James School in White Oak who recently received the 2007 Blue Ribbon School of Excellence Award from the Department of Education.

I want to urge my colleagues to support this legislation. I want to thank those here today for their leadership in bringing this forward.

And I might note, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia mentioned the issue of life and the moral issues that are instilled in many of us from our Catholic upbringing. I happen to be the principal sponsor of the ban on partial birth abortion, and we had many, tens of thousands of people who came here yesterday to advocate on behalf of innocent, unborn children. And we had many come by our office yesterday, older high school students, St. Xavier High School students, St. Ursula, Mother of Mercy, Our Lady of Lourdes, many schools came by. And I want to thank them for doing that and their showing that the morals, the values that they are being taught in those schools really are sinking in. And I just want to thank those in the leadership position here for bringing forth this issue. And I think it is appropriate that we honor the Catholic school systems all across the country for the invaluable work that they do for our country.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I would urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H. Res. 916.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker. I too rise in support of H. Res. 916 to honor the contributions of Catholic schools throughout the country and to support the goals of Catholic Schools Week. I believe we should continue to support all schools that graduate our youth in high percentages and prepare them for a productive future.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, Catholic schools enrolled over two million of our Nation's children during the 2006–2007 school year. With minority enrollment at 25 percent and non-Catholic enroll-

ment at 14 percent this past year, Catholic schools continue to teach students of all backgrounds.

The high-school graduation rate of Catholic schools is an impressive 99 percent, with 80 percent going on to a 4-year college and 17 percent going to a 2-year or technical college. These rates are extraordinary and are to be commended.

Next week, January 27th through February 2nd is designated as Catholic Schools Week by the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The purpose of Catholic Schools Week is to show support for the Catholic schools, including St. Emydius in Lynwood and St. Helen's in South Gate, and to their 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.

I believe we should continue to support all schools that graduate our youth in high percentages and prepare them for a productive future.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 916.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to the Catholic Schools not only in my home Congressional District of Staten Island and Brooklyn, but also the entire Nation as we honor Catholic Schools Week from January 27–February 2, 2008, which is sponsored by the National Catholic Education Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

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 25 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.

As a product of Catholic education, I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

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 Francisciska, Notre Dame Academy Elementary, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Our Lady Help of Christians, Our Lady of 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.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 916, recognizing the goals of Catholic Schools Week and the success of Catholic education to the personal advancement and academic achievements of students across the United States.

I thank our colleague from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) and our colleague from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) for their work in sponsoring this worthy resolution and for their leadership on behalf of Catholic education.

The Catholic Church, and its religious orders and congregations across the United States, serve an important and invaluable role in elementary and secondary education for our youth. Many Catholic schools are model schools in the communities they serve and in which they are located. Character education and a well-rounded, balanced and challenging curriculum complemented by a variety of extracurricular activities, a dedicated teaching staff and administration, and a caring community of parents and friends, are the hallmarks of Catholic schools.

Catholic education is centered on families and communities, and it is, like the church, universal in its approach and teachings. Today, Catholic schools are diverse learning communities where a growing number of students and faculty from various faiths, backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and cultures are enrolled. This diversity adds to the richness of the learning opportunities Catholics schools provide for our young people and our families.

Students enrolled today in Catholic schools excel in math and science as well as in grammar and the arts. Students learn with and from support provided by the greater Catholic community and they are taught in an environment where Christian values and strong moral guidance are present.

I join my colleagues on this occasion in acknowledging the value of Catholic education for our communities and for our young people. The work of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Catholic Educational Association, and the Dioceses of the Catholic Church across the country, and the Religious Orders supporting instruction and development at Catholic Schools, is important to the continued success of Catholic education.

The theme of Catholic Schools Week this year appropriately emphasizes and reflects a strong attribute of Catholic education: leadership. "Catholic Schools Light the Way," focuses on the leaders that Catholic Schools educate for the benefit of our communities, our country, and our world. Today, graduates

from Catholic schools enter college and embark upon careers as leaders prepared to contribute to their communities and to make a difference for all humankind.

On this occasion I recognize the Catholic community in my district, on my home island of Guam, for all of the collective efforts undertaken in support of Catholic schools. Today, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Agaña remains committed to serving the people of Guam and most especially our youth. Under the direction of the Most Reverend Anthony Sablan Apuron, OFM Cap, DD, Metropolitan Archbishop of Agaña, Catholic educational institutions on Guam continue to provide quality academic instruction to our students. The contributions of the Catholic school system to the people of Guam are reflected in the success of our local leaders in the clergy, government, and private sector who are alumni of our Catholic schools. The dedication shown by the Archdiocese of Agaña to academic excellence and to Catholic education on our island strongly reflects the theme of leadership for Catholic Schools Week, which we will join others across the country in celebrating next week.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 916.

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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 908) supporting the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 908

Whereas youth mentoring establishes a structured and trusting relationship between young people and caring individuals who offer guidance, support, and encouragement;

Whereas a growing body of mentoring research provides strong evidence that mentoring programs are successful in reducing delinquency, substance use and abuse, and academic failure;

Whereas research also shows that formal mentoring that is focused on developing the competence and character of the young person promotes positive outcomes such as improved academic achievement, self-esteem, social skills, and career development;

Whereas mentoring provides a supportive environment in which young people can grow, expand their vision of the future, and achieve goals that they never thought possible;

Whereas more than 4,000 mentoring programs in communities of all sizes across the United States focus on building strong, effec-

tive relationships between mentors and mentees;

Whereas public-private mentoring partnerships bring State and local leaders together to support mentoring programs by preventing duplication of efforts, offering training in best practices, and helping mentoring programs make the most of the limited resources available to benefit the Nation's youth;

Whereas the Corporation for National and Community Service has convened—

(1) the Federal Mentoring Council, which brings together several Federal agencies to coordinate approaches to mentoring within the Federal Government; and

(2) the National Mentoring Working Group, consisting of experts in mentoring from nonprofit organizations and foundations, to share information and ideas about mentoring programs;

Whereas more than 15,000,000 young people in the United States fall into a mentoring gap and still need mentors;

Whereas coordinated national, State, regional, and local efforts need Federal support to connect more youth with the powerful benefits that result from mentoring;

Whereas designation of January 2008 as National Mentoring Month will help call attention to the critical role mentors play in helping young people realize their potential;

Whereas the month-long celebration of mentoring will encourage more organizations across the United States, including schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith institutions, foundations, and individuals to become engaged in mentoring;

Whereas National Mentoring Month will—

- (1) build awareness of mentoring;
- (2) encourage more people to become mentors; and
- (3) help close the Nation's mentoring gap; and

Whereas the President issued a proclamation declaring January 2008 to be National Mentoring Month and calling on the people of the United States to—

- (1) recognize the importance of mentoring;
- (2) look for opportunities to serve as mentors in their communities; and
- (3) observe the month with appropriate activities and programs: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month;

(2) acknowledges the diligent efforts of individuals and groups who promote mentoring and who are observing the month with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of and volunteer involvement with youth mentoring;

(3) recognizes with gratitude the contributions of the millions of caring adults and students who are already volunteering as mentors; and

(4) encourages more adults and students to volunteer as mentors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield as much time as she may consume to the author of this bill, the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM).

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, as a cochair of the Congressional Mentoring Caucus, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 908, supporting the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month.

Thank you, Chairman KILDEE and Chairman MILLER, for bringing this legislation so quickly to the floor. I would also like to thank the other Chairs of the mentoring caucus, Ms. Davis of California, Mr. KELLER of Florida and Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, who are the original cosponsors of this legislation.

The term "mentor" is from a Greek story in mythology. Odysseus asked his friend, Mentor, to teach and watch his young son, Telemachus, as he was off to fight in the Trojan War. This special relationship between Telemachus and his mentor was centered on education, friendship and advice, something we all need from time to time. Mentoring was then, and continues to be, a special caring and supportive relationship between two people based on mutual trust and respect.

Mentoring relationships are between a mentor, an adult, and a mentee, a young adult or child, that focuses on the need of that young person. Caring adults, parents, teachers, counselors, religious leaders, they are all mentors, and they are all able to influence a child's life, and they are able to do that because they provide a foundation of love, support and guidance.

Millions of individuals across this country serve as mentors to young men and women, encouraging them to develop strong characters and have healthy identities of themselves, so that as an adult they will be able to contribute back to our society.

In a review of 10 mentoring programs, there are indicators that one-on-one mentoring significantly enhances positive youth development in ways that we can measure: better school performance, better social skills, but most importantly, the ability for them to want to continue on with higher education and college. And that is according to a recent national youth conference that was held at the University of Minnesota.

In Minnesota alone, there are 335 mentoring organizations. One of them, the Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota, was formed in 1994 as a community initiative to promote mentoring for Minnesota's youth, particularly for those who are at risk and may not have an opportunity to have many positive role models in their life. This program has made a significant positive improvement in the lives of those children.

Another wonderful mentoring program is Big Brothers and Big Sisters.