

will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken at a later time.

RECOGNIZING THAT WE ARE FACING A GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 344) recognizing that we are facing a global food crisis, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 344

Whereas according to the United Nations, over 850,000,000 people in the world are chronically or acutely malnourished, and over 300,000,000 of these are children;

Whereas the 2000 United Nations Millennium Development Summit called for halving the proportion of hungry people in the world by the year 2015, but progress reaching this goal has been slow, and, according to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, only the Latin American and Caribbean region has been reducing the prevalence of hunger quickly enough to reach this target;

Whereas every year, malnutrition caused by chronic hunger leads to the death of an estimated 5,600,000 children under 5 years old;

Whereas, according to UNICEF, an estimated 146,000,000 children, or roughly one in every four children under 5 years old, are underweight;

Whereas hunger and malnutrition weaken the immune system, and as a result treatable diseases pose a greater risk to malnourished children;

Whereas even temporary deprivation of essential nutrients can have a lasting impact on children's physical growth and intellectual potential;

Whereas children who are only mildly underweight are twice as likely to die of infectious diseases as children who are better nourished, and children who are moderately or severely underweight are 5 to 8 times more likely to die of infectious diseases;

Whereas according to a study conducted by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, 45 percent of children who died after contracting measles were malnourished, as were 60 percent of children who died after contracting severe diarrhea;

Whereas chronic hunger and undernutrition can lead to growth retardation (stunting), affecting an estimated 168,000,000 children under the age of 5 in developing countries;

Whereas some 42 percent of children under the age of 5 are stunted in the least developed countries, compared to 30 percent globally;

Whereas women whose growth was stunted face ongoing health complications as adults, are more likely to have obstructed labor, are at greater risk of dying during childbirth, and are more likely to deliver children who are premature and stunted;

Whereas stunted growth has also been linked to diminished work capacity and higher propensity to diseases, including diabetes and heart disease, in adults;

Whereas the global community is currently facing a food crisis, with food prices doubling over the past 3 years and rising 65 percent between January and April 2007 alone, and the World Bank has estimated that the emergency situation could push 100,000,000 people in low-income countries deeper into poverty;

Whereas in times of food crisis, families often must cut more expensive foods, such as meat, fruit, and vegetables, from their diets, instead relying on less nutritious staples such as rice and maize, foods without the nutrients necessary for proper child growth;

Whereas, on June 3, 2008, through June 5, 2008, more than 180 countries, including more than 40 heads of state and more than 100 ministers, attended and participated in the High Level Conference on World Food Security in Rome, Italy;

Whereas at the High Level Conference on World Food Security, the participating countries pledged to increase their assistance for developing countries, in particular least developed countries and those that are most negatively affected by high food prices; and

Whereas the G8 member states declared at the 2008 Hokkaido Toyko Summit their commitment to addressing urgent needs of the most vulnerable people suffering from the global food crisis and to increasing investment in long-term agricultural development and for programs that respond to the underlying causes of food insecurity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) in emergency situations, children have different needs than those of adults, and nutritional deficiencies disproportionately affect children;

(2) in the context of the current global food crisis, the nutritional needs of children must be a humanitarian priority; and

(3) the United States and the other G8 member states should continue to monitor the impact of the global food crisis on children and commit to increasing their assistance to respond to the global food crisis, and specifically, responding to the needs of children impacted by the global food crisis.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me indicate to my friends and colleagues that I thank the chairman of the full committee on Foreign Affairs, Mr. BERMAN, and the ranking member, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, for their collaborative effort in this legislation that I am now offering today, and it is interesting that we bring this legislation to the floor of the House at a time that we have watched the Caribbean being ravaged by one hurricane after another.

One of the most unfortunate scenes or incidences that have occurred is the constant beating, if you will, of the island of Haiti, the nation of Haiti, a long-time ally and friend of the United States.

My legislation speaks to prioritization of children during the food crisis and this global food crisis that has been occurring over the last couple of months. Now, more than ever, with the ravaging of Haiti through the Hurricanes Ike and Gustav, we know that children are suffering. There are places in Haiti where rescue teams for food and water cannot even rise or locate or be able to reach. Therefore, I rise today to speak to an issue as fundamental as our basic needs as human beings, and that is the travesty that we must address. But, unfortunately, we have to do so.

We are facing a global food crisis, now compounded by natural disasters. Furthermore, this food crisis is not only having a wide impact in countries far away, but also right here at home in our hemisphere.

In a nation with plenty, many of our children are going to bed with nothing to eat. Tackling worldwide hunger is a moral imperative which threatens the political and economic stability of a multitude of developing nations. The recent dramatic increase in food prices will continue to have a destabilizing affect in already unstable regions of the world where so many lives are already vulnerable to ongoing conflicts and political turmoil.

According to the United Nations, over 850 million people in the world are chronically or acutely malnourished, and over 300 million of these are children. The statistics are both shocking and tragic. Can you imagine the impact now with the natural disasters. Globally, a child dies every 7 seconds. Malnutrition caused by chronic hunger leads to the death of an estimated 5.6 million children under 5 years old, and roughly 1 in every 4 children under 5 years old is underweight.

Rising food prices have precipitated a crisis situation. On March 20 of this year, the U.N. World Food Program made an urgent appeal to the United States and other food aid donors for an additional \$500 million to fill a funding gap caused by rising food and fuel prices. Since then, this gap has expanded. It is now an estimated \$755 million.

As food prices rise, children are the first to suffer. Hunger is a condition of poverty. Living below poverty puts tremendous strains on a household, giving families barely enough money to purchase healthy and nutritious foods, as well as other essentials of life. Nutrition research shows that as income goes down, the nutritional adequacy of the household's diet goes down as well.

According to the data released by the U.S. Census Bureau, 50.9 million people, or 17 percent of all Americans, if we can imagine, lived on less than 125 percent of Federal poverty level in 2007.

This is the “borrow from Peter to pay Paul.” This is people who probably are suffering, even with food stamps. This means they are income-eligible for most Federal nutrition programs like food stamps and other child nutrition programs. These programs can help families and children stretch their food dollars and get access to healthy foods.

To set the poverty level, the U.S. Census Bureau uses a set of income thresholds based on the Consumer Price Index. In 2007, the Federal poverty guideline for a family of four was \$21,203. The new Census data shows that 37.3 million persons, or 12.5 percent of our population, lived in poverty. My friends, it is happening worldwide, including the United States of America.

Children continue to be the poorest age group in the country, with 13.3 million children, or 18 percent of all children under age 18, were poor; a larger percentage than any other group; 20.8 percent of related children under age 6 in families lived in poverty; 9.7 of all Americans 65 and over, or 3.6 million elderly, were poor; and the poverty rate for non-Hispanic whites was 8.2 percent, 24.5 for African Americans, 21.5 for Hispanics, and 10.2 for Asians.

As the Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I am particularly concerned about the devastating impacts that hunger and malnutrition have on children. Mr. Speaker, I have been in the feeding camps of Africa. I have watched as they have come in trucks to be able to deliver the food. I am sympathetic, and I understand when people are hungry, but the stampede of adults stampeding past children, or even sometimes the children being used to get more food and not having it distributed, is an issue.

Lack of adequate nutrition stunts children's growth, leaves them more vulnerable to numerous diseases, and affects their ability to learn. Even temporary deprivation of essential nutrients can have a lasting impact on children's physical growth and intellectual potential. Under current conditions, more and more children face the prospect of growing up malnourished.

On May 7, with the help of 46 of my colleagues, I introduced H. Con. Res. 344, recognizing the global food crisis, the disproportionate effect rising food prices have on children, and calling for the prioritization of the nutritional needs of children.

My resolution calls for the United States and other G8 nations to continue to monitor the impact of the global food crisis on children and commit to increasing their assistance to respond to the global food crisis, and, specifically, responding to the needs of children impacted by the global food crisis.

I hope in the passage of this legislation that a statement can go forward to those who are helping in sending humanitarian aid to Haiti and others in the Caribbean that we get a focus on the children during this, if you will, this disaster.

It is important to note that along with the Global Health Caucus and the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, we held a briefing on the effect of the global food crisis on children. We heard from UNICEF, the World Food Programme, Save the Children, World Vision, Christian Children's Fund, and the Congressional Hunger Center, and Danny Glover, all emphasizing the importance of this issue. Therefore, I look forward to continuing to focus on this, with rising food prices, families in needs, the loss of nutrition, and yes, the amount of children that suffer.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to note that when we think, we should think of children who are constantly suffering, being able to have cups of milk, which emphasizes why it is important to ensure that children don't look like this who are here and around the world.

My predecessor, Congressman Mickey Leland, died in Ethiopia, as I always say, on the side of an Ethiopian mountain, because he was trying to end world hunger. In his name and those who have gone on, the Congressional Hunger Center, it is important to recognize the children.

I want to thank my colleagues, Representatives MCGOVERN, PAYNE, MCCOLLUM, and BLUMENAUER, for their work on hunger and water issues, and I ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak of an issue so fundamental to our basic needs as human beings that it is a travesty that we must address it—but unfortunately we do. We are facing a global food crisis. Furthermore, this food crisis is not only having a widespread impact in countries far away, but also right here at home and in our hemisphere.

In a nation with plenty, many of our children are going to bed with nothing to eat. Tackling worldwide hunger is a moral imperative which threatens the political and economic stability of a multitude of developing nations. The recent dramatic increase in food prices will continue to have a destabilizing effect in already unstable regions of the world where so many lives are already vulnerable to ongoing conflicts and political turmoil.

According to the United Nations, over 850 million people in the world are chronically or acutely malnourished and over 300 million of these are children. The statistics are both shocking and tragic: globally, a child dies every 7 seconds, malnutrition caused by chronic hunger leads to the death of an estimated 5,600,000 children under 5 years old, and roughly one in every four children under 5 years old is underweight.

Rising food prices have precipitated a crisis situation. On March 20 of this year, the U.N. World Food Program made an urgent appeal to the United States and other food aid donors for an additional \$500 million to fill a funding gap caused by rising food and fuel prices. Since then, this gap has expanded, and is now an estimated \$755 million. As food prices rise, children are the first to suffer.

Hunger is a condition of poverty. Living below poverty puts tremendous strains on a household, giving families barely enough

money to purchase healthy and nutritious foods, as well as other essentials of life. Nutrition research shows that as income goes down the nutritional adequacy of the household's diet goes down as well.

According to data released by the U.S. Census Bureau, 50.9 million people, or 17 percent of all Americans, lived on less than 125 percent of the Federal poverty level in 2007. This means they are income-eligible for most Federal nutrition programs, like food stamps and other child nutrition programs. These programs can help families and children stretch their food dollars and get access to healthy foods.

To set the poverty level, the U.S. Census Bureau uses a set of income thresholds based on the Consumer Price Index. In 2007, the Federal poverty guideline for a family of four was \$21,203.

The new Census data shows that 37.3 million Americans—or 12.5 percent of our population—lived in poverty in 2007. Children continued to be the poorest age group in the country: 13.3 million children, or 18 percent of all children under age 18, were poor—a larger percentage than any other age group; 20.8 percent of related children under age six in families lived in poverty; 9.7 percent of all Americans 65 and over, or 3.6 million elderly, were poor. The poverty rate for non-Hispanic whites was 8.2 percent, 24.5 percent for blacks, 21.5 percent for Hispanics, and 10.2 percent for Asians.

As Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I am particularly concerned about the devastating effect that hunger and malnutrition have on children. Lack of adequate nutrition stunts children's growth, leaves them more vulnerable to numerous diseases, and affects their ability to learn. Even temporary deprivation of essential nutrients can have a lasting impact on children's physical growth and intellectual potential, and, under current conditions, more and more children face the prospect of growing up malnourished.

On May 7, 2008, with the support of 46 of my colleagues, I introduced H. Con. Res. 344, legislation recognizing the global food crisis and the disproportionate effect rising food prices have on children, and calling for the prioritization of the nutritional needs of children.

My resolution calls for the United States and the other G8 member states to continue to monitor the impact of the global food crisis on children and commit to increasing their assistance to respond to the global food crisis, and specifically, responding to the needs of children impacted by the global food crisis.

In addition, the Congressional Children's Caucus, together with the Global Health Caucus and the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, held a briefing on the effect of the global food crisis on children. Members of Congress heard from panelists from UNICEF, the World Food Programme, Save the Children, World Vision, Christian Children's Fund, and the Congressional Hunger Center, as well as special guest Danny Glover, to galvanize the United States Congress to take action on this important issue.

As a senior member of the Congressional Black Caucus, I will be hosting the Children Issue Forum on September 25, 2008. The panel will be on the Global Food and Water Crisis. I will again convene experts on this crisis, not only to look at how we arrived at such

disastrous food levels but how we solve this issue.

As a result of rising food prices, families throughout the world, particularly in developing nations but also here in the United States, are increasingly facing a decision between quantity and quality when buying food. With incomes stretched thinner by the day, many families must either buy significantly smaller quantities of food, or purchase less nutritious food. In times of food crisis, families face cuts in expensive foods, such as meat, fruit, and vegetables.

The loss of these nutritious foods, in favor of cheaper staples such as rice and maize, is extremely detrimental to children's development, putting them at greater risk of disease or stunted growth. The full extent of the consequences of deprivation of vital nutrients during essential stages of growth is not known. However, it is clear that once children's growth is stunted by malnutrition, they do not catch up to their peers.

While it is important that we respond to the emergency we currently face, our solutions must take a long-term view as well. We cannot simply provide increased food aid; we must address the root causes of chronic hunger by addressing systemic problems with food production and food prices in the developing world. If we do not, we risk finding ourselves facing recurring food crises in the coming years.

In the midst of this current food crisis, I am reminded of my distinguished predecessor, Congressman Mickey Leland. In 1989, Congressman Leland lost his life in Ethiopia, fighting the same battle against global hunger that we continue to face today. It is tragic that, in the year 2008, we still have not learned to draw the links between hunger, violence, and instability. I thank my colleagues Representatives MCGOVERN, PAYNE, MCCOLLUM and BLUMENAUER for their work on hunger and water issues. But we cannot leave this to only a few Members, we must all work together now, and we must find a way to win the war on hunger.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 344, which recognizes the impact that the global food crisis will have on vulnerable children in the developing world. This resolution reminds us all that the children of impoverished families are suffering even more today as a result of the rapid worldwide increase in prices of basic foods in recent months, such as wheat.

All of us are facing rising food and energy costs in our own homes and families, but for many around the world those changes are a matter of life and death. When we see newspaper photos of dying children, we see the urgency of this crisis for countless families throughout our world.

I am pleased that the President and the Congress have taken concrete steps to help poor people facing this dire reality by increasing America's food aid. Notwithstanding the challenges we face in our own communities, it is a testament to the enduring generosity of the American people that we remain

the largest donor of food assistance in the world. Americans give of their wealth throughout the world, especially to people in need.

Many of the poorest people in developing countries work extremely hard to earn just a dollar or two every day, and then have to survive off that meager sum, managing somehow to find affordable food. It may be hard for some of us to imagine how difficult that is in other countries.

This resolution describes the food crisis and the many complications that children suffer as a result of lack of proper nutrition. It notes that 5½ million children under the age of 5 die each year due to malnutrition caused by chronic hunger. It reminds us that even if malnourished children don't starve to death, they face a heightened risk of dying of numerous infections, as well as lifelong impacts on their physical growth and intellectual potential.

With that in mind, this resolution states the nutritional needs of children must be a humanitarian priority in our response to the current global food crisis. I commend the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) for introducing this measure.

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

In closing, I'd like to thank my 46 cosponsors and thank my distinguished friend from Texas for his support of this legislation. As well, having no further speakers, I would like to yield back and ask my colleagues to strongly support prioritizing children and helping us to end or to solve the global food crisis and the negative impact on the world's children and American children.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 344 today and applaud the Congress for finally recognizing the serious human, economic, and moral impact the global food crisis has had on the world community. In particular, I want to recognize the author of this bill, the Gentlewoman from Texas, Ms. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, for her continuing advocacy on behalf of the many millions of hungry people around the world; people whose stories often go untold in our public debate.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the course of action proposed in this resolution. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon should immediately convene a taskforce, composed of the heads of the United Nations aid agencies and the World Bank, to both address this growing crisis and close the \$755,000,000 funding gap for the World Food Programme. The 850,000,000 chronically or acutely malnourished human beings living on this planet demand nothing less.

If anything, the heavy toll borne by Haiti and other Caribbean nations during this hurricane season has only added to the urgency of holding such a meeting. Unless the world community crafts a serious, comprehensive aid plan that can be deployed in a quick and effective manner, the lack of access to clean water and food in these nations will lead to an untold and unacceptable loss of human life.

I also want to remind my colleagues that the global food price surge is hitting Americans here at home. According to the Department of Labor, prices for staples such as bread, milk, eggs, and flour are rising sharply, surging in the past year at double-digit rates. Milk prices, for example, increased 26 percent over the year. Egg prices jumped 40 percent. Chronic hunger and malnourishment are ailments that affect more than just the citizens of third-world foreign locales; they affect our neighbors, our children, and our parents.

In the long-term, our country must confront our contribution to this crisis. Although we have little control over sky-rocketing oil prices, we have the power to re-evaluate and improve our agricultural policy in ways that will ease the pain at the register for food consumers, both here and abroad. In particular, slashing some farm subsidies and ending *de facto* price controls that mainly benefit massive corporate farms would go along way towards lowering food prices. Our country can only afford to pay our farmers not to produce when prices are low and food is ample. In times like these, such subsidies may be a luxury we cannot afford.

In the meantime, I encourage the Congress to speak with one voice and endorse the multilateral engagement proposed in this resolution. While it alone will not solve this complex problem, it is a necessary and needed component of a successful and comprehensive strategy.

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 344, which recognizes that we are facing a global food crisis. And I applaud Congresswoman JACKSON-LEE for bringing needed focus to the vast and spreading hunger epidemic.

In the last 3 years, global prices for basic staples such as rice, wheat and corn are up more than 80 percent. Many trends converged on this moment to lift global food prices to historic heights. Bad weather in developing countries, a shift toward biofuels in the West, underinvestment in agriculture by international donors, and growing demand in countries like China and India all contributed to the present challenge.

The result has been devastating for the poor. In some places, there is no food. In other places, food has become unaffordable. In Haiti, desperate people—moms and dads and kids—are literally eating mud to survive. They are making cakes of clay, salt and shortening because they cannot afford real food.

Over 1 billion people already live on less than 1 dollar per day. Skyrocketing food prices are forcing 100 million more people into deep poverty, erasing decades of progress in fighting poverty and creating a moral call to action a just Nation cannot ignore. Food riots have erupted in critical countries including Pakistan, Indonesia, Egypt and Afghanistan, destabilizing governments and threatening U.S. national security.

All of America's investments in global development are undermined by the food crisis. PEPFAR's drugs won't save starving people. Programs in education and child survival are essential, but they have little impact when most basic human need goes unmet.

The United States has responded with a generous commitment of emergency food aid. Yet, emergency aid will never get us ahead of what threatens to be an enduring challenge. Some of the trends that created the crisis may

ease, but others including climate change and growing demand for food will only accelerate. Congress must recognize that the nature of international hunger has changed due to changes in the global economy and environment. We must agree a new approach is needed from our government and international partners. And we must commit to a long-term strategy that prioritizes new and substantial funding to improve agricultural productivity in developing countries.

America's investments in global agriculture declined for years while other program budgets soared. In 1985, 12 percent of all U.S. official development assistance went toward agriculture. Thirty years later in 2005, agriculture's share was only 3 percent. This shift in resources is difficult to justify since the poorest countries have rural economies. When American aid is based on the recipient country's priorities, countries ask for agricultural support. More than half of all the funds committed by the Millennium Challenge Corporation to date are targeted toward agriculture and rural infrastructure.

American foreign assistance requires a more balanced approach that recognizes food security as a necessary precondition for all successful development efforts. This is the moment when our country should reclaim its traditional leadership role in fighting global hunger. The stakes are too high for half-measures. There will be no peace, no justice, no progress in a hungry world.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. 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 Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res 344, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. 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 motion will be postponed.

□ 1245

SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RED CROSS TO THE MILITARY

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 937) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the emergency communications services provided by the American Red Cross are vital resources for military servicemembers and their families, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 937

Whereas the emergency communications services provided by the American Red Cross

are free for military families experiencing a crisis;

Whereas the Red Cross can provide notification of emergencies and other important events to over 1,400,000 active duty personnel, and 1,200,000 members of the National Guard and Reserves, on behalf of their family members;

Whereas in an emergency, the Red Cross reaches out to verify the emergency and provides third-party objective information to commanding officers;

Whereas the Red Cross provides timely and accurate information 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and such information can assist a commander's decision whether to release a service member from duty in order to join with his or her family in a time of hardship;

Whereas whether that service member is a reservist in 2 weeks of Arctic training in Alaska, a sailor on a ship in the Indian Ocean, or a member of an advanced team on patrol in Iraq, the Red Cross messaging system can communicate messages between family members when and where other civilian services cannot;

Whereas whether it is a birth or death notification, the Red Cross bears the emotional mission to deliver accurate and timely messages between family members;

Whereas the Red Cross ensures the delivery of the message and provides the family with the needed support until the service member returns home; and

Whereas the Red Cross provides services through 756 chapters in the United States and on 58 military installations around the world to United States Armed Forces personnel, including our troops in Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Iraq: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives appreciates the vital emergency communications services provided by the American Red Cross between military service members and their families during emergencies or other important events.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and yield myself such time as I may consume.

First let me commend my colleague from Texas, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, for introducing this important resolution and for his work in support of the American Red Cross. All of us have watched the American Red Cross reform itself, but we have also known that its brand name has represented the aid to help, the anchor in the time of storm.

In times of emergency and other important events, the American Red Cross has the important and at times difficult duty of notifying military

servicemembers on behalf of their families about such events. The Red Cross provides critical information to commanding officers to help them decide whether to release a servicemember from duty in order to join with his or her family in time of crisis.

Regardless of whether it is a birth notice or a tragedy, such as the devastating floods in the Midwest, the Red Cross ensures the timely delivery of vitally important messages and ably provides the families of military servicemembers with the support and assistance they need until the servicemember returns home. This resolution recognizes the critical mission that the American Red Cross undertakes in providing information about these events to military servicemembers. We are all thankful to the Red Cross for carrying out this important work.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in support of House Resolution 937. This measure recognizes the vital communication services provided by the American Red Cross to U.S. servicemen and servicewomen serving overseas. Seven days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, the American Red Cross provides notification of family emergencies and other important events as to birth and death notices to our forces that are in the field in lands far away.

Whether it be in Iraq or Afghanistan or aboard a ship in the Indian Ocean, the Red Cross messaging system can communicate between members of military families where other civilian means of communication cannot. American Red Cross officials are able to verify emergencies and relay information that is critical to a commander's decision whether to release a servicemember to allow him or her to return home during a time of family hardship. In addition to providing notification, the Red Cross often provides families in crisis with support until a servicemember can return home.

I want to thank the author of this resolution, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), for giving us this opportunity to commend the American Red Cross for its outstanding service to our country's troops and their families. The people of the United States are grateful for the dependable support that the American Red Cross has provide us in times of crisis for the past 127 years.

I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 937.

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I reserve my time.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), the author of this resolution.