

WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD

Mrs. BOXER. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 517 submitted earlier today by Senator SALAZAR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 517) designating the week of April 13-19, 2008, as "Week of the Young Child."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DODD. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the "Week of the Young Child." With 20 million children under the age of 5 in this country, these children are our country's future, and we must support and invest in our future. Providing children with access to quality early education programs will help to ensure that all children are not only ready for school, but ready to succeed and reach their full potential.

In Connecticut, early care and education centers were established to provide quality early education to children of low- and moderate-income families. These centers, which are in communities all over the State, would not exist without a combination of State and Federal funds. Connecticut's centers are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and seek to support and promote the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development of children.

The Children's Center of New Milford, CT, is one of these funded early care and education centers. The center offers quality care on a sliding-fee scale to approximately 80 families. In addition to providing educational and social opportunities, the center also provides 80 percent of a child's daily nutritional needs including breakfast, a hot lunch, and an afternoon snack.

Many of the parents helped by the center provide the workforce for small and large companies. They are employed by fast food stores, department stores, grocery stores, local restaurants, and nursing homes. Without the funded centers, these parents would not be able to afford childcare, and their children would not be able to benefit from the various educational, social, and emotional supports the centers provide.

One Connecticut parent wrote to me about how a quality pre-K program has changed her child's life saying: "My three year old loves books. My three year old interacts well with others. My three year old knows how to express himself without anger. My three year old will grow up to be a good citizen. My three year old is a product of good parenting and a quality pre-K program. As a single working parent, I rely on a pre-K program to fill the gaps when I am unavailable to nurture and teach my child."

I also heard from an elementary school Spanish teacher who discussed

the benefits he has seen when children who come from non-English speaking families attend quality pre-K programs saying: "The ability to learn with peers and children who do speak English at home helps these children so that they are not further behind their peers when they start kindergarten."

Funding quality early education programs such as these is essential to support the children, parents, communities, and future of our Nation. I thank Senators SALAZAR and COCHRAN for their leadership with regard to the resolution designating the "Week of the Young Child" and proudly support them in their valuable efforts.

Mrs. BOXER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 517) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 517

Whereas there are 20,000,000 children under the age of 5 in the United States;

Whereas numerous studies, including the Abecedarian Study, the Study of the Chicago Child-Parent Center, and the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study, indicate that low income children who have enrolled in quality, comprehensive early childhood education programs—

(1) improve their cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional development; and

(2) are less likely to—

(A) be placed in special education;

(B) drop out of school; or

(C) engage in juvenile delinquency;

Whereas the enrollment rates of children under the age of 5 in early childhood education programs have steadily increased since 1965 with—

(1) the creation of the Head Start program carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.);

(2) the establishment of the Early Head Start program carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.); and

(3) the enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.);

Whereas many children eligible for, and in need of, quality early childhood education services are not served;

Whereas only about one-half of all preschoolers who are eligible to participate in Head Start programs have the opportunity to do so;

Whereas less than 5 percent of all eligible babies and toddlers in the United States receive the opportunity to participate in Early Head Start;

Whereas only about 1 out of every 7 eligible children receives assistance under section 658C of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858a) to—

(1) enable the parents of the child to continue working; and

(2) provide the child with safe and nurturing early childhood care and education;

Whereas, although State and local governments have responded to the numerous benefits of early childhood education by making

significant investments in programs and classrooms, there remains—

(1) a large unmet need for those services; and

(2) a need to improve the quality of those programs;

Whereas, according to numerous studies on the impact of investments in high-quality early childhood education, the programs reduce—

(1) the occurrence of students failing to complete secondary school; and

(2) future costs relating to special education and juvenile crime; and

Whereas economist and Nobel Laureate, James Heckman, and Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Ben S. Bernanke, have stated that investment in childhood education is of critical importance to the future of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of April 13-19, 2008, as "Week of the Young Child";

(2) encourages the citizens of the United States to celebrate—

(A) young children; and

(B) the citizens who provide care and early childhood education to the young children of the United States; and

(3) urges the citizens of the United States to recognize the importance of—

(A) quality, comprehensive early childhood education programs; and

(B) the value of those services for preparing children to—

(i) appreciate future educational experiences; and

(ii) enjoy lifelong success.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2007

Mrs. BOXER. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 12:45 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday, April 17; that following the prayer and the pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for use later in the day, and the Senate then resume consideration of H.R. 1195, the highway technical corrections bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mrs. BOXER. For the information of all Senators, we are working on an agreement to have votes in relation to amendments tomorrow. Those votes could be as early as 1:45 p.m.

As a reminder, today cloture was filed on the Boxer substitute No. 4146 and H.R. 1195. Under the rule, the filing deadline for first-degree amendments is 1 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday, April 17.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 12:45 P.M. TOMORROW

Mrs. BOXER. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:32 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 17, 2008, at 12:45 p.m.