

So, the Government Information Transparency Act requires the OMB to set up a single interactive data standard for reported information—a standardized, universal, and machine-readable format that will be made available to the general public. The use of a single data standard will still allow agencies to be flexible in how they require information to be submitted. Sophisticated companies might be asked to submit large data files; small companies and nonprofits could fill in Web-based forms that would automatically encode each element on their reports. The result: every report would be computer-readable, and the underlying data could be more easily extracted, searched, and analyzed.

Financial and business information in a uniform format will be more transparent, and thus more accessible for public critique. Fraudulent transactions and irresponsible risk-taking can be more easily detected, search costs are reduced, and companies will be put under greater pressure to explain the underpinnings of the financial statements they release. Instead of assigning an immense oversight responsibility to a handful of federal employees, we can now enable the public to act as citizen-regulators. And because information reported to different agencies will become compatible, investors, watchdog groups, and analysts will have powerful new searches at their disposal.

The Government Information Transparency Act also requires a single data standard for federal financial information, to bring the same interactivity and compatibility to the disclosures put out by federal agencies. By making this kind of information more accessible to the general public, we are unleashing the very best government watchdogs—the American people themselves—to expose waste, fraud, and abuse of their tax dollars.

For business and financial information, the sunlight of transparency has always been the best disinfectant. Our Government Information Transparency Act, added to S. 303, will make that sunlight brighter and clearer than ever.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, in closing, I would just ask all Members to join with Senator VOINOVICH, Chairman TOWNS, and Ranking Member ISSA in support of this 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 Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 303, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH RUNAWAY PREVENTION

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 779) recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of National Runaway Prevention Month, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 779

Whereas the prevalence of runaway and homelessness among youth is staggering, with studies suggesting that every year, between 1,600,000 and 2,800,000 youth live on the streets of the United States;

Whereas running away from home is widespread, and youth aged 12 to 17 are at a higher risk of homelessness than adults;

Whereas runaway youth most often are youth who have been expelled from their homes by their families; physically, sexually, and emotionally abused at home; discharged by State custodial systems without adequate transition plans; separated from their parents by death and divorce; too poor to secure their own basic needs; and ineligible or unable to access adequate medical or mental health resources;

Whereas effective programs supporting runaway youth and assisting youth and their families in remaining at home succeed because of partnerships created among families, community-based human service agencies, law enforcement agencies, schools, faith-based organizations, and businesses;

Whereas preventing youth from running away from home and supporting youth in high-risk situations is a family, community, and national priority;

Whereas the future well-being of the Nation is dependent on the opportunities provided for youth and families to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for youth to develop into safe, healthy, and productive adults;

Whereas the National Network for Youth and its members advocate on behalf of runaway and homeless youth, and provide an array of community-based support to address their critical needs;

Whereas the National Runaway Switchboard provides crisis intervention and referrals to reconnect runaway youth to their families and link youth to local resources that provide positive alternatives to running away from home; and

Whereas the National Network for Youth and National Runaway Switchboard are cosponsoring National Runaway Prevention Month in November to increase public awareness of the life circumstances of youth in high-risk situations, and the need for safe, healthy, and productive alternatives, resources, and support for youth, families, and communities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—
(1) recognizes the importance of youth runaway prevention; and

(2) urges support for greater public awareness efforts and effective runaway youth prevention programs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the House Committee on Oversight and

Government Reform, I am pleased to present House Resolution 779 for consideration. This resolution recognizes the importance of youth runaway prevention and at-risk youth programs. House Resolution 779 was introduced by my friend and colleague, Representative JUDY BIGGERT of Illinois, on September 25, 2009, and was favorably reported out of the Oversight Committee December 10, 2009, by unanimous consent. Notably, this measure enjoys the support of 55 Members of Congress.

Madam Speaker, according to the National Runaway Switchboard, between 1.6 million and 2.8 million young people run away from home every year. As additionally noted by The New York Times in an October 25, 2009, article on this issue of runaway youth, this societal problem is growing. Specifically, The New York Times reported that the number of contacts made by federally financed outreach programs with runaways increased to 761,000 in 2008, and that was up from 550,000 in 2002, the year that the current methods of counting began.

Notably, National Runaway Switchboard reports that among those young people at greatest risk of running away and facing homelessness are those that have been expelled from school, those that have suffered domestic abuse, and those that have been discharged by State custodial systems without the benefit of an adequate transitional planning program. Additionally, young people who have separated from their parents by death or divorce, live in poverty, and/or are unable to access adequate or mental health resources are similarly at risk of running away and becoming homeless. And the National Runaway Switchboard also reports that youth homelessness affects males and females equally, although females are more likely to seek help through shelters and hotlines.

Despite these concerning reports and statistical programs, there are efforts, such as The National Network for Youth and the National Runaway Switchboard, that provide effective support to runaway youth and assist young people and their families in remaining together by developing partnerships with families, community-based agencies, schools, and faith-based organizations.

These two programs offer invaluable services, including advocacy on behalf of the runaway youth and their families, crisis intervention, and various forms of community-based support to address critical needs. In addition, the two programs have worked together to cosponsor National Runaway Prevention Month, which occurs in November, and attempts to increase public awareness of the life circumstances of youth in high-risk situations and the need for safe, healthy, and productive alternatives, resources and support for runaway youth and their families.

Madam Speaker, in light of the prevalence of the problem of runaway youth as well as youth homelessness,

let us take this opportunity to join Mrs. BIGGERT of Illinois to pass House Resolution 779 and recognize the important role that youth runaway prevention and at-risk youth programs play in addressing these issues.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to join Mrs. BIGGERT in supporting H. Res. 779, and I reserve the balance of our time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 779, the resolution recognizing the goals and ideals of National Runaway Prevention Month. This initiative is sponsored by my good friends at the National Runaway Switchboard and the National Network for Youth.

As the gentleman from Massachusetts mentioned, between 1.6 and 2.8 million youth run away from home each year. According to the National Runaway Switchboard, crisis calls citing economic distress have increased 200 percent since 2006. Incredibly, one in every 50 children will experience homelessness at some point in their lives. And although some youth will return within a few days of running away, others will remain on the streets, never to return. In far too many cases, these children will fall prey to the worst forms of exploitation, including the sex industry. In fact, 30 percent more youth are using the sex industry as a means of survival today than in the year 2000.

There are many reasons why children run away from home. Some are expelled from their homes by their families or separated from their parents because of death or divorce. In other cases, the child may be fleeing from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse at home. Having run away, these youths are now homeless, without means to secure their own basic needs, and are often ineligible or unable to access medical or mental health resources.

There are many individuals and organizations that are doing whatever they can to assist America's runaway youth by providing food, shelter, clothing, and counseling. Others are working with families to prevent a child from running away in the first place. And still others are intervening and advocating on behalf of the children and giving them options other than running away.

With congressional support, the National Runaway Switchboard provides crisis intervention and referrals to reconnect the runaway youth with their families.

□ 1700

It also helps link young people to local resources that provide positive alternatives to running away.

Founded in the Chicago area in 1971, the NRS now provides comprehensive crisis intervention services for at-risk youth nationwide, including a 24-hour crisis hotline.

In 1974, the National Network for Youth was founded to coordinate the work of community-based organizations that now represent hundreds of youth-oriented organizations and advocate at the Federal level, provide information on available services, and train organizations in best practices.

I want to thank Mr. WOLF, Mr. STUPAK and Ms. LOFGREN, my fellow co-Chairs of the Congressional Caucus on Missing, Exploited and Runaway Children for joining me on this important effort, and I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) for managing this bill. And I want to thank Mr. ISRAEL, who has worked with me on this important resolution for years.

It is fitting for Congress to endorse the goals and ideals of National Runaway Prevention Month and to highlight the effort of those organizations that work so hard to help the youth of America who have left or who are considering leaving their homes for a dangerous and uncertain life on the street.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

If the gentleman has no further speakers, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today in support of H. Res. 779, "Recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of National Runaway Prevention Month." I would like to thank my colleague Representative JUDY BIGGERT for introducing this very important piece of legislation.

It is appalling that in the United States of America, the greatest country in the world, there is a staggering number of runaway and homeless youth. Studies suggest that every year, between 1,600,000 and 2,800,000 youth live on the streets of the United States. Running away from home is a widespread epidemic, and youth aged 12 to 17 are at a higher risk of homelessness than adults. What is terrifying is that traffickers exploit abused runaways or so-called "throwaways"—children abandoned by their parents and living on the streets.

Runaway youth most often are youth who have been expelled from their homes by their families; physically, sexually, and emotionally abused at home; discharged by State custodial systems without adequate transition plans; separated from their parents by death and divorce; too poor to secure their own basic needs; and ineligible or unable to access adequate medical or mental health resources.

There are effective programs supporting and assisting runaway youth. These programs succeed because of partnerships created among families, community-based human service agencies, law enforcement agencies, schools, faith-based organizations, and businesses. We must support and create more of these organizations in order to save the future of this nation.

Preventing youth from running away from home and supporting those in high-risk situations should be a family, community, and national priority. The future well-being of the Nation is dependent on the opportunities provided for youth and families to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for youth to develop into safe, healthy, and productive adults.

I want to recognize the National Network for Youth and its members for advocating on behalf of runaway and homeless youth, and for providing an array of community-based support to address their critical needs. Additionally I would like to recognize the National Runaway Switchboard for providing crisis intervention and referrals to reconnect runaway youth to their families and link youth to local resources that provide positive alternatives to running away from home.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and to support National Runaway Prevention Month in November to increase public awareness of the life circumstances of youth in high-risk situations, and the need for safe, healthy, and productive alternatives, resources, and support for youth, families, and communities.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Mrs. BIGGERT for her leadership on this very important issue, and I want to urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 779.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 779, 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. LYNCH. Madam 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.

COMMENDING THE REAL SALT LAKE SOCCER CLUB

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 942) commending the Real Salt Lake Soccer Club for winning the 2009 Major League Soccer Cup.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 942

Whereas the Real Salt Lake soccer club won the 2009 Major League Soccer Cup, defeating the Los Angeles Galaxy at Qwest Field in Seattle, Washington on November 22, 2009;

Whereas Real Salt Lake played through 2 sudden-death overtimes and a penalty-kick shootout to defeat the Galaxy;

Whereas forward Robbie Findlay scored a goal in the second half to tie the game and force an overtime period;

Whereas defender Robbie Russell scored the decisive fifth goal in the seventh round of the shootout to win the game;

Whereas goalkeeper Nick Rimando blocked 4 shots, including 2 in the shootout, and was named the Most Valuable Player of the game;

Whereas head coach Jason Kreis is the youngest coach to win a Major League Soccer Cup, and coached Real Salt Lake to its second post-season appearance since joining the team in 2007; and