

Flu. They are the first to come to our aid in a crisis and the last to leave a burning building. They teach our children, pass our laws and bind our wounds. Without them, our lives would come to a halt. For their dedicated and continued service to the nation, I encourage my colleagues to join me in support of public servants everywhere and in support of Public Service Recognition Week.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. I thank the gentleman for supporting this measure. I appreciate his support.

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. 299.

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. 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.

ELIJAH PAT LARKINS POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1271) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2351 West Atlantic Boulevard in Pompano Beach, Florida, as the "Elijah Pat Larkins Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1271

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. ELIJAH PAT LARKINS POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2351 West Atlantic Boulevard in Pompano Beach, Florida, shall be known and designated as the "Elijah Pat Larkins Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Elijah Pat Larkins Post Office Building".

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

I am pleased to present H.R. 1271 for consideration. This legislation will designate the United States postal facility located at 2351 West Atlantic Boulevard in Pompano Beach, Florida, as the "Elijah Pat Larkins Post Office Building," in honor of a man who dedicated over 25 years of his life to public service.

Born to farm worker parents in the then-segregated city of Pompano Beach, Florida, on April 29, 1942, Elijah Pat Larkins graduated from Blanche Ely High School in 1960, and subsequently attended Tennessee State University.

In 1962, Mr. Larkins embarked on a career as a community housing activist, first serving as a housing director with a Pompano community action agency. In 1969, Mr. Larkins was one of the two honorees in the State of Florida to receive the prestigious Ford Foundation Fellowship, which afforded him the opportunity to attend the National Housing Institute in Washington, D.C., and become a federally-certified housing development specialist.

In 1972, Mr. Larkins brought his new expertise back to his community by creating the Broward County Minority Building Coalition, an organization dedicated to ensuring the participation of minority-owned companies in south Florida's construction sector.

In 1982, Mr. Larkins first won elected office, becoming only the second African American elected to the Pompano Beach City Commission, and only the eighth African American local elected official in Broward County. He proceeded to serve 19 consecutive years.

Notably, Mr. Larkins served an unprecedented seven terms as the first African American mayor of Pompano Beach. He also served three terms as vice mayor, elected by his fellow city commissioners.

Under Mr. Larkins' leadership, the city of Pompano Beach initiated a variety of successful efforts to advance modern affordable home development and promote the growth of small and minority-owned businesses.

In addition to elected service, Mr. Larkins played an active role in a variety of social and religious organizations, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Broward County Boys and Girls Club, the United Way, and the Urban League.

Regrettably, illness forced him to retire from public service in May of 2008. In February of 2009, he passed away at the age of 66, after a 16-month battle with brain cancer.

As noted by Mr. Larkins himself, he always had a great affinity and love for the city of Pompano Beach, and it was his hope that he would be remembered for giving all that he had to public service.

Mr. Speaker, let us honor this dedicated public servant through the pas-

sage of this legislation by dedicating the Pompano Beach Postal Facility in honor of Elijah Pat Larkins. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 1271, designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2351 West Atlantic Boulevard in Pompano Beach, Florida, as the "Elijah Pat Larkins Post Office Building."

Elijah Pat Larkins dedicated his entire life to public service, and the citizens of Pompano Beach, Florida, are better off today because of his tireless service. In 2008, the Florida League of Cities recognized him for 25 years of public service.

Mayor Larkins was the first of 10 children born to a farmer and homemaker in Pompano on April 29, 1942. Nicknamed "Prez," and voted class president every year from 5th to 12th grade, he graduated from what is now Blanche Ely High School.

He grew up in a segregated society, but spent a lifetime in public service fighting for equal rights, and was elected Pompano Beach's first African American mayor in 1985, and subsequently served a record seven terms. Prior to that, he served 19 consecutive years as City Commissioner.

A Ford Foundation Fellow, Mayor Larkins was a federally-certified housing development specialist who created the Broward County Minority Builders Coalition, and was a director of his own, not-for-profit, Malar Construction, Inc., in Fort Lauderdale.

In fact, throughout his career in public service, he made significant contributions in housing, working tirelessly to ensure that safe and adequate housing was available to all. While mayor, he also helped transform the city's economy from agricultural to urban, all while mentoring local civic-minded residents and minority activists.

In addition to his many professional achievements, he took an active role in countless public service, social, and religious organizations, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Broward County Boys and Girls Club, the Juvenile Justice Intensive Halfway House, and Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church. In fact, he was affiliated with more than a dozen national, State, and local political and service groups.

Mayor Larkins was twice married to retired schoolteacher Bettye Lamar Larkins, with whom he had a son, Gerald Todd. He also had another son, Tory Larkins, from a prior relationship. He is also survived by his nine younger siblings and his mother, Alberta Griffin.

In recognition of Mayor Larkins' commitment to public service and tireless efforts on behalf of the citizens of Pompano Beach, I urge all members to join me in supporting H.R. 1271, which will designate the United States Postal

Service Facility located at 2351 West Atlantic Boulevard in Pompano Beach, Florida, in his honor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. I just want to note that the lead sponsor of this resolution to name this post office after Elijah Pat Larkins is our friend and great Congressman from Florida, Mr. HASTINGS. I just want to recognize his leadership in bringing this to the floor. I thank him for his energy and his leadership.

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 pass the bill, H.R. 1271.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 382) supporting the goals and ideals of National Charter Schools Week, to be held May 3 through May 9, 2009.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 382

Whereas charter schools deliver high-quality education and challenge our students to reach their potential;

Whereas charter schools provide thousands of families with diverse and innovative educational options for their children;

Whereas charter schools are public schools authorized by a designated public entity that are responding to the needs of our communities, families, and students and promoting the principles of quality, choice, and innovation;

Whereas in exchange for the flexibility and autonomy given to charter schools, they are held accountable by their sponsors for improving student achievement and for their financial and other operations;

Whereas 40 States, the District of Columbia, and Guam have passed laws authorizing charter schools;

Whereas approximately 4,700 charter schools are now serving approximately 1,400,000 children;

Whereas over the last 15 years, Congress has provided substantial support to the charter school movement through startup financing assistance and grants for planning, implementation, and dissemination;

Whereas over 365,000 children are on charter school waiting lists nationally;

Whereas charter schools improve their students' achievement and can stimulate improvement in traditional public schools;

Whereas charter schools must meet the student achievement accountability requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in the same manner as traditional public schools, and often set higher and additional individual goals to ensure that they are of high quality and truly accountable to the public;

Whereas charter schools must continually demonstrate their ongoing success to par-

ents, policymakers, and their communities, some charter schools routinely measure parental satisfaction levels, and all give parents new freedom to choose their public school;

Whereas charter schools nationwide serve a higher percentage of low-income and minority students than the traditional public system;

Whereas charter schools have enjoyed broad bipartisan support from the Administration, Congress, State Governors and legislatures, educators, and parents across the United States; and

Whereas the 10th annual National Charter Schools Week, to be held May 3 through May 9, 2009, is an event sponsored by charter schools and grassroots charter school organizations across the United States to recognize the significant impacts, achievements, and innovations of charter schools: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of the 10th annual National Charter Schools Week;

(2) acknowledges and commends charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education and improving and strengthening our public school system; and

(3) calls on the people of the United States to conduct appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities to demonstrate support for charter schools during this weeklong celebration in communities throughout the United States.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend and insert extraneous material on House Resolution 382 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the designation of May 3–May 9, 2009, as “National Charter Schools Week,” and to recognize the growing charter school movement in our Nation.

The charter school movement is grounded in the concepts of community empowerment and parental involvement. The core idea behind charter schools is simple, yet powerful; seeking to serve the unique needs of all children, local communities, parents and educators come together to design, create, and manage schools that provide a high quality education through innovation, flexibility, autonomy, and a focus on results.

Sometimes people ask me, what is a charter school? A charter school is simply a governance model. It is site-based government, where the decisions of who runs the school and the curriculum are left up to the folks most directly involved with the outcome.

Charter schools date back to 1991, when Minnesota enacted the first char-

ter school legislation. California followed suit in 1992. My home State of Colorado soon joined the growing movement in 1993.

Since their inception, charter schools have grown by leaps and bounds to address the various needs of our Nation's public school students. Diverse charter schools across the country offer innovative instruction. With site-based control and flexibility, charter schools can make timely decisions about how to structure the school day, which curriculum best suits the needs of their students, and what type of staff and staff development will enrich their school community. Additionally, charter schools form important community partnerships with parents and businesses.

This week, charter schools across the country will celebrate the 10th annual National Charter Schools Week. This year's theme, “Promoting Innovation and Excellence,” was inspired by President Obama. It celebrates and encourages charter schools to continue to share their successes as part of the effort to reform public education in our country.

As a former chairman of the Colorado State Board of Education and the founder and superintendent of a system of charter schools that empower new immigrants and English language learners to succeed and live the American Dream, I have seen firsthand how innovation in the education system can achieve remarkable results. I also cofounded a charter school serving youths who are homeless or in unstable living conditions, the Academy of Urban Learning.

I know how the power of educational opportunity can transform lives and serve the most at-risk youth. All of the entrepreneurial creativity around charter schools has been an important part of serving all Americans across our country.

Today, there are almost 4,700 charter schools operating in 40 States that have charter school legislation, as well as the District of Columbia. Their combined force serves over 1.4 million students, and 61 percent of charter schools report waiting lists. These waiting lists of nearly 365,000 students nationally are enough to fill over 1,100 new charter schools. To answer this growing need, between 300 and 400 new public charter schools open each year, and nearly 150,000 new students enroll in charter schools annually.

The growing charter school movement is providing opportunities for many historically underserved communities. Nationally, charter schools disproportionately serve minority and low-income students. In fact, 58 percent of charter school students are minorities and 52 percent qualify for free and reduced lunch. Many charter schools are able to achieve impressive academic results.

In the charter school that I ran, 85 percent of the students are English language learners. In Colorado, 78 percent