

I commend those who have worked with us at the local, State and Federal level, as well as the community partners in Shelby County and across the State of Tennessee, who have made this a priority. I thank the gentleman for his leadership on the issue.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 260, 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. COHEN. 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.

RECOGNIZING THE PERSISTENTLY HIGH RATES OF DROWNING FATALITIES AMONG CHILDREN

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 57) expressing the importance of swimming lessons and recognizing the danger of drowning in the United States, especially among minority children, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 738

Whereas in recognition of the severity of the crimes associated with domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, on September 13, 1994, President Bill Clinton signed the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (hereinafter referred to as "VAWA") as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994;

Whereas subsequent reauthorizations of VAWA include the Violence Against Women Act of 2000 (hereinafter referred to as "VAWA 2000"), signed by President Bill Clinton, and the Violence Against Women Act and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 (hereinafter referred to as "VAWA 2005"), signed by President George W. Bush;

Whereas VAWA was the first comprehensive legislative package designed to end violence against women;

Whereas the protections and provisions afforded by VAWA were subsequently expanded and improved by VAWA 2000, which created a legal assistance program for victims and expanded the definition of domestic violence crimes to include dating violence and stalking;

Whereas VAWA and interventions funded by that Act have reduced the incidence of domestic violence, have lowered sexual assault rates, and have averted societal costs by reducing the need for emergency and medical responses;

Whereas VAWA has succeeded in bringing communities together to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and

stalking, including combined efforts by law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, victim services, and community-based programs to develop long-term plans for addressing such crimes locally and statewide;

Whereas VAWA has provided crucial Federal support to Indian tribes to combat the problems of sexual and domestic violence in Indian country;

Whereas VAWA brings innovative practices to the field by funding demonstration projects and training, and supporting the development of specialized courts and police teams;

Whereas the Sexual Assault Services program, authorized by VAWA 2005, enabled the 1,300 rape crisis centers in the United States to reduce waiting lists, reach out to underserved communities, and provide more comprehensive services to survivors of sexual assault;

Whereas VAWA provides a means for many victims of domestic violence who were dependent on their batterers for immigration status to self-petition and obtain legal immigration status on their own, and to access legal services to flee violence and recover from trauma;

Whereas organizations throughout the United States have received grants under VAWA to provide legal assistance to young victims of dating violence;

Whereas VAWA has provided crucial Federal support for efforts by criminal justice officials and victim service providers to hold offenders accountable and to keep stalking victims safe;

Whereas the continued support of VAWA and subsequent Acts combating violence against women is essential to best serve the 3,400,000 individuals in the United States who are stalked each year; and

Whereas September 13, 2009, marked the 15th anniversary of the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 15th anniversary of the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994;

(2) continues to support the goals and ideals of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and its subsequent reauthorization Acts; and

(3) recognizes the need to continue vigorous enforcement of the provisions of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and similar Acts and programs to deter and prosecute crimes of violence against women.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 57, a resolution recognizing the persistently high rates of drowning fatalities among children.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were

3,582 unintentional and fatal drownings in the United States in 2005. This figure represents an average of 10 drowning deaths a day.

Children are the most susceptible to fatal drowning incidents. In fact, drowning is the second most common cause of unintentional death among children ages 1 to 14.

On top of this startling statistic, for every child who fatally drowns in the United States, there are four near-drowning incidents that require emergency care. These accidents can lead to brain damage and result in permanent disabilities ranging from loss of memory to the loss of all basic functions.

Drowning rates among minority children greatly exceed those of their non-minority counterparts. The fatal drowning rate for African-American children is over three times that for Caucasian children. American Indian and Alaskan Native children have rates over two times as high as Caucasian children.

Contributing to these disparities is limited access to swimming lessons. African Americans and Latinos are more likely to live below the poverty line, putting lessons that can cost hundreds of dollars per course out of reach.

House Resolution 57 not only condemns the persistently high rates of drowning among children, but it also recognizes the hard work of organizations that promote access to swimming education and teach skills that will help save lives.

I urge my colleagues to help bring awareness to this serious issue, and join me in supporting final passage of House Resolution 57.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in support of House Resolution 57 expressing the importance of swimming lessons and recognizing the danger of drowning in the United States. With almost 10 unintentional and fatal drowning deaths each day in our country, it is important to recognize those most vulnerable to drowning, and it is usually our precious children under the age of 14 who have not yet learned to swim. Swimming education programs in communities and swimming lessons for those as young as 4 years old could help lower the number of fatal drownings each and every year.

The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act, which was signed into law in December 2007 by President Bush, has led to increased pool and spa safety requirements and education.

I thank the gentlewoman from Florida who has joined us on the floor for her excellent leadership and outstanding work on that issue. It is one that was important to all of us in dealing with the FTC and the regulations. We commend you, and we thank you for your work.

Effective prevention strategies like the Pool and Spa Safety Act and non-profit initiatives like the U.S.A. Swimming Foundation's "Make a Splash"

program have been successful in teaming up with local communities to offer all children access to swimming education and lessons.

I want to thank the sponsor of this bill, Representative ALBIO SIRE from the Garden State of New Jersey, for his work on this resolution. I stand in support of the legislation, and I hope that my colleagues will join me.

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), as long as she doesn't mention anything about the Tennessee-Florida game on Saturday.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I will reserve that option until later on in the week as the stakes get higher.

I thank the gentleman from Tennessee. I rise today in support of House Resolution 57, and thank the gentlelady from Tennessee for her kind words. We are in support of this legislation today to express our support for the importance of swimming lessons and recognizing the persistently high rates of drowning fatalities among children.

Drowning is, as you have heard, the leading cause of unintentional deaths in America to children ages 1 to 4. Last year alone, 13 children in Broward and Miami-Dade counties, which are in my congressional district, died as a result of accidental drowning in swimming pools and spas.

In fact, a recent report issued in May by the Consumer Product Safety Commission indicates that the average number of drowning deaths involving children younger than 5 in pools and spas has actually increased from a yearly average of 267 from 2002 to 2004 to 283 from 2003 to 2005.

I have been involved in the issue of pool safety throughout my career, and worked hard with many of my colleagues in this body and in the Florida legislature to pass swimming pool safety legislation and drowning prevention legislation. The passage of the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act which was signed into law by President Bush on December 19, 2007, was a milestone in our efforts. The goal of that law is to improve the safety of all pools and spas by increasing the use of layers of protection and promoting uninterrupted supervision to prevent child drowning and entrapments.

Although I have been pleased to see public pools around the Nation come into compliance with the new regulations, it is clear that we must continue to raise awareness about the necessity of swimming lessons for all of our children.

Unfortunately, African Americans, Latinos, and other minority groups are more likely to live below the poverty line, putting expensive swimming lessons out of reach for too many kids. That is why we must encourage communities around the country to provide

free lessons to low-income children as part of an overall child safety program.

I want to commend the organization Swim Central in my home county of Broward for the exceptional example that they provide in doing just that, providing swimming lessons for more than 30,000 children, to kids in Broward County since the year 2000.

House Resolution 57 not only condemns the persistently high rates of drowning among children, but it celebrates the hard work of organizations that are offering access to swimming education and are teaching skills that will help save lives.

I thank my friend and colleague, Congressman SIRE, for introducing this important resolution and urge my colleagues to help bring awareness to this serious issue by joining me in support of its passage.

Mr. SIRE. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to discuss a serious issue that affects all children: unintentional drowning.

This summer millions of children took to the water as the weather warmed and pools opened all over the United States, but not all children receive the proper, life saving education that can play a critical role in drowning prevention. Minority children, more often than other children, do not participate in swimming lessons or do not have access to swimming lessons.

Roughly 3,500 people fatally drown each year in the United States—that is about 10 people a day—and more than 25 percent of these victims are children 14 and under. In fact, drowning is the second most common cause of accidental death among children. Alarming, fatal drowning rates are 2 to 3 times higher among minority children. According to a study by the University of Memphis, almost 60 percent of African-American and Latino children do not know how to swim as compared to roughly 30 percent of nonminority children. These statistics are not just shocking; they are shameful.

In order to help spread awareness about these startling statistics and how we can better protect our children, Representative WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and I introduced H. Res. 57, a resolution recognizing the persistently high rates of drowning fatalities among children. The resolution expresses the danger of fatal unintentional drowning in the United States, and condemns the high rates of fatal drowning among all children.

This resolution also celebrates the hard work of initiatives that currently provide swimming lessons to underprivileged communities as well as other efforts that help educate children, parents and caregivers about drowning prevention.

The ability to swim is an important and essential skill, and according to Safe Kids USA, in order to help prevent drowning, children should be enrolled in swimming lessons as early as age 4 to learn how to float, tread water, and enter and exit the pool.

The USA Swimming's Make A Splash Program has partnered with organizations in 31 states and has reached out to over 90,000 children to provide access to swimming education.

Together with these organizations, we must promote access to the type of education that can not only improve children's health, but

help save their lives. I urge my colleagues to help bring awareness to this serious issue, and support final passage of H. Res. 57.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 57, which expresses the importance of swimming lessons and recognizes the danger of drowning in the United States, especially among minority children. Though interest in swimming throughout the United States has increased due to national attention to sporting events like the success of the U.S. Olympic Swim Team, drowning is still amongst the leading causes of death of American children. A study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that in 2005 there were 3,582 unintentional drownings in the United States, and average of 10 per day!

According to an article in the NY Times, an even more daunting statistic is that African children and teens ages 5 to 19, are 2.3 times more likely to drown than Caucasian children in this age group. For children 10 to 14, the rate is five times higher. Nearly 6 out of 10 African-American and Hispanic children are unable to swim, nearly twice as many as their Caucasian counterparts, a concern often highlighted by U.S. Olympian Cullen Jones, who is African-American and swam the third leg of the winning men's relay this week. This unprecedented statistic is unacceptable as it is fairly easily preventable, steps such as adult supervision, regularly using life jackets, learning CPR, and fencing of backyard swimming pools can help save the lives of many of our youth according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Some alarming statistics as stated by my very own district of Houston, TX declare that from May of 2005 to May of 2007:

HFD responded to more than 50 drownings, resulting in at least 8 deaths.

Traditionally, apartment pools account for most of the submersions.

60 percent of the pool incidents occurred at apartments.

We also had several bathtub drowning incidents and several in lakes or bayous.

Most of the children involved submersions involved 4 years old and infants (0–1 year old). Although, all age groups had submersions.

Incidents occurred every hour of the day, though 1–2 p.m. and 4 p.m.–7 p.m. had the higher number of incidents.

In 2006, The New York Times story "Everyone Into the Water" reported on why the barriers to swimming for black children are so high. The report stated that "studies have shown that many Africans were avid swimmers when they were brought over as slaves, most slaves born in the United States were not allowed to learn to swim because it was a means of escape. That created generations of non-swimmers and spawned the myth that African-Americans could not swim. Though widely discredited, a 1969 study titled "The Negro and Learning to Swim: The Buoyancy Problem Related to Reported Biological Difference," was printed in The Journal of Negro Education and fed the stereotype. The problem was compounded by segregation, which kept blacks out of many pools and beaches. The USA Swimming Foundation is trying to address the problem through its Make a Splash program, which is working to educate parents and increase swimming rates among all children. Donors who want to help can sponsor swimming lessons for children.

The passing of H. Res. 57 expresses the importance of providing access to swimming lessons for all communities in the United States as an integral part of drowning prevention. This Resolution celebrates the work of initiatives like USA Swimming Foundation's "Make A Splash" and Safe Kids USA to educate parents and caregivers on water safety and drowning prevention messages. H. Res. 57 also encourages the public and private funding to support current and future initiatives that provide all children access to swimming education.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congresswoman WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Congressman SIREs for their hard work on this, and my counterpart from Tennessee for her excellent work.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 57, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: "A resolution recognizing the persistently high rates of drowning fatalities among children."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 738) recognizing the 15th anniversary of the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 57

Whereas the success of the United States Olympic swim team, including the record-breaking eight gold medals won by Michael Phelps, has brought great attention to swimming;

Whereas a New York Times article entitled "Despite Olympic Gold, Swimming Statistics Are Grim", highlighted the irony of the United States Olympic glory in light of a shocking number of drownings in the United States;

Whereas the New York Times has also highlighted the discrepancies in swimming education between African-American children and White children in the article "Everyone Into the Water";

Whereas according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there were 3,582 unintentional and fatal drownings in the United States in 2005 representing an average of 10 drowning deaths each day;

Whereas for every child who fatally drowns in the United States, there are four near-drowning incidents that require emergency

care and can lead to brain damage resulting in permanent disabilities ranging from loss of memory to the loss of all basic functions;

Whereas children are the most susceptible to fatal drowning incidents with one out of four victims being 14 years old or younger;

Whereas drowning is the second most common unintentional cause of death among children ages 1 to 14;

Whereas minority drowning rates greatly exceed the rates of White children;

Whereas according to the CDC, the fatal drowning rate for African-American children between the ages of 5 and 14 is over three times higher than the rate for White children, and the rate for American Indian and Alaska Native children is over two times higher;

Whereas according to a study by the University of Memphis, almost 60 percent of African-American and Latino children do not know how to swim as compared to roughly 30 percent of White children;

Whereas long-existing stigmas regarding minorities and swimming have contributed to the lack of swimming education in minority communities, and nonswimming minority families are far less likely than nonswimming White families to enroll in swimming lessons;

Whereas according to the United States Census Bureau, in 2007, 33.7 percent of African-Americans, 28.6 percent of Latinos, and 12.5 percent of Asian-Americans lived below the poverty line as compared to 10.1 percent of Whites, and swimming lessons can cost hundreds of dollars per course;

Whereas the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act was signed into law in December 2007 addressing the pressing need for increased pool and spa safety requirements and education to prevent accidental deaths by drowning;

Whereas effective drowning prevention strategies require several approaches such as supervision, fully gated pools, CPR training, and swimming skills;

Whereas the ability to swim is an important and essential skill, and according to Safe Kids USA, in order to help prevent drowning, children should be enrolled in swimming lessons as early as age 4 to learn how to float, tread water, and enter and exit the pool; and

Whereas nonprofit initiatives, like the USA Swimming Foundation's program "Make A Splash", are working hard to meet the need for swimming lessons by partnering with local communities to offer all children access to swimming education: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses the importance of access to swimming lessons for all communities in the United States as an integral part of drowning prevention;

(2) recognizes the danger of fatal unintentional drowning in the United States;

(3) condemns the persistently high rates of fatal drowning among all children, and the particularly high rates of fatal drowning among minority children;

(4) celebrates the passage of the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act;

(5) celebrates the work of initiatives like USA Swimming Foundation's "Make A Splash" and Safe Kids USA to educate parents and caregivers on water safety and drowning prevention messages; and

(6) encourages public and private funding to support current and future initiatives that provide all children access to swimming education.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) and

the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which 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 Florida?

There was no objection.

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Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 738 recognizes the 15th anniversary of the passage of the Violence Against Women Act.

Signed into law on September 13, 1994, by President Bill Clinton, the Violence Against Women Act, also known as VAWA, recognizes the severity of crimes associated with domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

This historic legislation was the first comprehensive policy package designed to dramatically reduce violence against women. Its protections and provisions were subsequently expanded and improved in the Violence Against Women Acts of 2000 and 2005.

When VAWA was reauthorized in 2000, it improved the foundation established in VAWA 1994 by creating a legal assistance program for victims and by expanding the definition of domestic violence crimes to include dating violence and stalking. I could not be more proud of these accomplishments, and I am honored to be here today to help recognize this significant program's 15th year of success.

VAWA-funded interventions have lowered both domestic violence and sexual assault rates. Not unimportantly, since the 1994 passage of VAWA it is estimated that more than \$14 billion in societal costs have been averted by reducing the need for emergency and medical responses.

This important legislation has also succeeded in bringing communities together to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Currently, law enforcement, prosecution, the courts, victim services, and community-based programs work together on the grassroots and State-wide levels to develop long-term plans for addressing the four categories of crime.

VAWA funding of demonstration projects, trainings, and development of specialized courts and police teams has led to the creation of new techniques to successfully prevent violence against women. For example, the Sexual Assault Services program created in VAWA 2005 enabled our Nation's 1,300 rape crisis centers to reduce waiting lists, reach out to underserved