

So I urge adoption of this legislation, and I will enter into the record three letters.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, May 12, 2010.

Hon. BOB FILNER,
Chairman, House Veterans Affairs Committee,
Cannon House Office Building, Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN FILNER: On behalf of the 2.1 million members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Auxiliaries, I would like to offer our very strong support for your legislation H.R. 5014, which would clarify and protect all VA health care programs under Title 38, Chapter 17 and 18 to constitute as minimum essential health care coverage.

VFW applauds your efforts to clarify this critical issue. We sincerely appreciate your commitment to America's veterans and their families and we look forward to continuing to work with you on issues of concern.

Very Truly Yours,

ROBERT E. WALLACE,
Executive Director.

THE AMERICAN LEGION,
Washington, DC, May 12, 2010.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives, The Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: The American Legion fully supports the amended language to H.R. 5014, to clarify the health care provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs that constitutes minimum essential coverage.

After careful review, The American Legion believes this legislative change would provide the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with the continued authority to provide timely access to the nation's best quality of health care for veterans and their eligible family members consistent with the recently enacted Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, especially those covered under chapters 17 and 18 of title 38, United States Code.

The American Legion applauds your leadership on this critical issue and your continued support of America's veterans' community.

Sincerely,

PETER S. GAYTAN,
Executive Director.

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA,
Silver Spring, MD, May 12, 2010.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House, The Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER, Please know that Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) endorses and supports enactment of H.R. 5014, which effectively clarifies for veterans that the health care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs does in fact constitute the minimum essential coverage required under the recently enacted Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

This should put to rest, finally, any and all qualms of any and all veterans and their families who might feel uneasy that the provisions of the new law might adversely affect their health care through the VA. Passage of H.R. 5014 should reassure them, and we look forward to its swift enactment.

Thank you again for your continuing commitment to our nation's veterans.

Sincerely,

JOHN ROWAN,
National President.

I yield back the balance of my time.
The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr.

LEVIN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5014, 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. LEVIN. 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.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY FOR FLOOD VICTIMS IN SOUTHEAST

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1337) expressing the sympathy and condolences of the House of Representatives to those people affected by the flooding in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi in May 2010.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1337

Whereas, beginning on May 2, 2010, the State of Tennessee was hit by unprecedented rainfall that resulted in the massive flooding of areas in and around Nashville;

Whereas according to the National Weather Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the two-day rainfall totals of 13.53 inches more than doubles the previous record of 6.68 inches set in September, 1979;

Whereas the storms causing the rainfall claimed the lives of dozens of people across Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi;

Whereas the storms destroyed homes and displaced thousands of people across Tennessee;

Whereas the flooding affected travel along hundreds of roads throughout Tennessee, including interstate highways 40 and 24;

Whereas the storms closed schools and universities across the region;

Whereas Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen has worked with Federal, State, and local officials and agencies to coordinate rescue and recovery efforts;

Whereas, on May 3, 2010, Governor Bredesen declared a state of emergency for 52 counties, requesting Federal assistance for areas that were affected by the storms;

Whereas, on May 4, 2010, President Obama declared that a major disaster exists in the State of Tennessee and directed the Federal Emergency Management Agency to work closely with Tennessee to monitor the response efforts relating to the storms and flooding and identify and respond to any immediate emergency needs for the citizens and communities of Tennessee that are impacted by the devastating floods;

Whereas citizens and emergency responders of all stripes worked together to aid their neighbors after the storm; and

Whereas volunteers are giving their time to help ensure that evacuees are sheltered, clothed, fed, and comforted through the trauma caused by the storm: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) offers its deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of those who lost their

lives as the result of flooding beginning on May 2, 2010, in the States of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi;

(2) expresses its condolences to the families who lost their homes and other property in the flooding throughout Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi;

(3) expresses gratitude and appreciation to the people of the State of Tennessee and the surrounding States, who continue to work to protect people from the floodwaters and aid in the recovery efforts;

(4) expresses its support as the Federal Emergency Management Agency continues its efforts to respond to any needs of the citizens and communities affected by the flooding and assists in the recovery efforts; and

(5) honors the emergency responders across Tennessee for their bravery and sacrifice during this tragedy.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within 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.

In the first weekend of May, the great storms came through from the West and struck in Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky. The flooding damage was record-breaking. The damage done in all States was great but in the State of Tennessee was the most severe, my home State. The most destruction, I guess, and the most damages occurred in the district of the Honorable JIM COOPER of Davidson County and environs. But in my own County of Shelby, there was extensive damage.

I joined with my colleagues in calling on our Governor to issue a request for a declaration of emergency, and that was done by Governor Bredesen. The Federal Government has responded in a magnificent manner.

President Barack Obama, in his historic speech to the Democratic National Convention in 2004, said how there was not a red United States of America and there was not a blue United States of America, but there was only one United States of America. And in this particular instance where people suffer in States that are all considered politically red States, the United States of America has responded with all of its resources to help our people, and our people need help.

FEMA's been on the ground. FEMA Director Fugate was in Tennessee in no time. Secretary Napolitano has been to Nashville. Secretary Donovan of HUD and Secretary Locke of Commerce have been to Memphis and to Nashville as well. And others have been there. I had FEMA officials at my town hall meeting on Saturday. They have let

people know that the Federal Government is there to help. The people have been very responsive, and our local governments are responsive.

When I went to Millington on Monday and toured some of the damage there, the people in the neighborhood said that the Shelby County officials had been outstanding in their response. They now feel the Federal Government's officials have been outstanding.

Secretaries Locke and Donovan visited the Ed Rice Community Center that's now a shelter in Frayser, part of my district. They visited in Millington, also. There are people in the Midtown, more of the heart of my district, who had great flooding damage. And people know now to call 1-800-621-FEMA to lodge their notice of their damages and to get on the list to start to have inspectors to come out, which they're doing, to assess the damages and ascertain which individuals are qualified for the \$29,900 in recovery funds that can be had for the damages for their residential establishment and/or their primary vehicle.

The SBA has been there and the head of the SBA, and the SBA is set up to help in losses over \$29,900 and to businesses for their losses as well. City and county governments and State governments will be eligible to qualify for debris removal and for goods that have been distributed.

Overall, the Volunteer State has responded as a Volunteer State should, and from its naming, volunteers have come from everywhere to help the people who have been damaged, and we have been contributing.

Hillary Clinton, quoting an African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child." Well, it takes a village and a government to come together to help its people in times of great distress and natural disaster, and we have seen the Federal Government do that—and this government in particular—and I'm proud that we've done so. And I appreciate the response that I've seen in my State of Tennessee.

And I regret the damage, and I know the people have withstood it well. And I hope it never happens, and we know it will, but the Federal Government's been there.

So with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 1337 was introduced by the Tennessee delegation last week to express the sympathy and condolences of the House of Representatives to those impacted by the recent flooding in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi.

As we all know, earlier this month, Tennessee and Kentucky and Mississippi experienced severe rainfall resulting in unprecedented flooding, and it hit my home State of Tennessee the hardest of all. And while my district, fortunately, was spared from any of this flooding, our official title is United States Representative from

whatever State we're from, and I think that the Tennessee delegation has always worked together and joined together to try to represent the whole State even though we do each run in districts.

And on May 4, the President issued a major disaster declaration for Tennessee authorizing Federal assistance to supplement the State and local response and recovery efforts. And as our colleague, the gentleman from the 9th District, Mr. COHEN, has just stated, the outpouring of support for the people affected by this flooding has just been tremendous in, as he mentioned, our great Volunteer State of which we are so proud.

Unfortunately, as a result of these floods, in these three States dozens of people were killed and hundreds of homes were destroyed. Thousands of people were displaced and forced to take shelter. In Tennessee, the Governor declared 52 of Tennessee's 95 counties as disaster areas, and key landmarks like the Grand Ole Opry House were flooded with several feet of water. In Tennessee, it hit primarily the districts of our colleagues Congressman COOPER and Congresswoman BLACKBURN and Congressman GORDON.

In Kentucky, the Governor declared a state of emergency in 79 of its 120 counties and issued boiled water advisories affecting nearly 83,000 residents.

In Mississippi, nearly 250 homes were destroyed or suffered major damage, and the Governor has requested six counties receive a major disaster declaration.

But even in this tragic situation, we saw and continue to see many examples of heroism. As we have seen in previous disasters, people in the community, first responders, and volunteers have responded and in a big, big way. The State and local officials, along with organizations like the American Red Cross, continue to provide assistance and aid to those affected by this flooding. And FEMA's assistance has and will help supplement these efforts.

I strongly support passage of this resolution and urge all of my colleagues to do the same, and I'm sure they will.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield as much time as the gentleman from Davidson County, Tennessee (Mr. COOPER) needs. He's the primary author of this particular resolution and the distinguished Congressperson from the district that suffered the greatest in our country, Mr. COOPER.

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I thank all of my colleagues for their unanimous bipartisan support of this resolution honoring the people of the three State areas that were affected.

We suffered one of the great rainfalls of modern times, literally doubled the prior record—13 inches of rain in a 2-day period—and that led to a real disaster, particularly in the area of middle Tennessee that I represent.

The mayor of Nashville, Karl Dean, who's done a magnificent job respond-

ing to this crisis, has estimated the damage already at at least \$1.5 billion. But the response of the community has been magnificent.

And the real message of our resolution today is Nashville is open for business. Tourists are welcome. Most all of the sites will be available and ready to welcome you. A few are down temporarily, but we are rebuilding, and we are rebuilding because of the magnificent volunteer spirit of our people. Wherever you went to help a homeowner clean up a mess or to help a business recover, you were greeted with dozens, sometimes hundreds of volunteers.

There's a group called Hands On Nashville that did a wonderful job coordinating these efforts. Churches, other places of worship were magnificent delivering sandwiches to the hungry, sheltering the homeless, taking care of whatever needed to be taken care of in our community. So, the volunteer spirit was magnificent.

Now it's time for the government to step up. Whether it be FEMA or SBA or any other alphabet soup of Federal agencies, it's time for government to do its part.

So we look forward to working with the disaster victims to make sure that everybody is helped to the extent possible because this was an unforeseen and unforeseeable calamity. It affected our district. Unfortunately, it did not get the publicity it deserved because of the New York terrorist incident and the spill in the gulf.

But when Anderson Cooper of CNN came down, his initial headline for a story was "Nashville Flooding." As soon as he saw the magnificent response of our people, he changed that headline to "Nashville Rising." And that's our real message here. We are coming back and we are coming back strong.

So please, come visit Nashville, Tennessee. Spend your tourist dollars in our community. We need your help. And together, we'll restore the rightful place of country music and other forms of music in this country.

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Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Knoxville for yielding the time.

I rise today, and all of the people of Tennessee, so many of the families in my district have lost most or even all of what they had. Some have suffered loss of family members, and we express our sympathies to those families.

You know, homes are gone, businesses are wiped out, schools are flooded. School is even out for the year in some communities. Roads and bridges are absolutely washed away. And the road back for Tennessee is going to be a very long road. It is going to be difficult, also, but Tennesseans are undaunted.

I chose to stay in my district last week. All 15 of my counties are Federal disaster areas, and I wanted to make certain that my staff and I had the opportunity to get into those communities, into those counties, and to assess the needs and make certain that needs were being met.

This photo that I am showing you shows the extent of damage in one of the counties, Cheatham County, there in my district. But you know, it could have been taken over in Mr. DAVIS' district or Mr. TANNER's district or in Mr. COOPER's district. But it shows you what has happened with how roads are completely washed away. This is one of only hundreds and hundreds of roads that have been washed out by the storm. This one, you will see the road actually lies about 60 yards from the roadbed and where it originally was placed. The terrible force of the waters washed it out and onto the foundation of three homes that were completely washed away.

While the rain fell, neighbors stepped up to help neighbors, and those who had dry homes took people into those homes. And then, they started to get ready to rebuild. And what they are doing is forming purchasing pools to buy the supplies and help clear the homes and to rebuild those homes. I can't count the number of empty foundations that I saw across the district last week, or the skeletons of churches and homes and businesses that are now sitting on riverbanks.

I spoke to residents who have nothing, nothing at all, where their home used to be, some who have only parts of a foundation left. One resident was wearing only the clothes on his back. And he didn't talk about what his needs were or how great his loss was. What he talked about was rebuilding that community. And he talked about how he could replace material goods, but also about the richness of people helping people and coming together.

Our local governments, as Mr. COOPER was saying, the State of Tennessee and the Federal Government are responding. Aid that began to hit our urban areas around Nashville and Memphis is now making it out into the rural counties. The road back for those counties is going to be very difficult, but I commend those local elected officials for how they have stepped up, how they had a disaster plan and they also had an implementation plan, and they put it to work and responded in the appropriate way, being there to help all of their local citizens.

I commend FEMA and the administration for the aid that I know will eventually come to Tennessee and to our rural communities. And, most of all, I commend the families who once again have displayed why we are the Volunteer State.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I now yield such time as he may consume to the Honorable BART GORDON, who represents a district just south and south-east of Davidson County.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. I thank my friend from Memphis for yielding, and I thank my friend JIM COOPER from Nashville for bringing forth this good resolution. And I join my friend from Knoxville and Franklin and from our Kentucky neighbors in rising to support H. Res. 1337.

My district in middle Tennessee was among those devastated by historic rainfall and subsequent flooding on May 1 and 2. Seeing this kind of devastation just breaks your heart. Many Tennesseans were displaced, including my mother. While it was just a temporary inconvenience for her, and I am grateful for that, for some it was an ongoing disruption, and for others it was a life-changing event.

Even as many people in Tennessee return to normal routines, those families who were most affected will still be working to rebuild their lives. Those families will continue to need our compassion and support through the coming months. Federal assistance is available and will make a difference for many families, and that is why I encourage everyone in the affected counties to document their damage and contact FEMA. Apply even if you have insurance. If you find out months from now that insurance won't cover any damages, or all your damages, it might be too late to apply for FEMA assistance at that time. My staff in Murfreesboro, Gallatin, and Cookeville are standing ready to help anyone who has questions about how to apply for assistance.

A lot of good-hearted people have been pitching in to lend a hand after they just dried themselves off. Their generosity of spirit is inspiring to see, but it is not surprising. Our communities have rebounded after tornados and storms. This time, we will work together to rise above the floodwaters.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and to keep Tennessee in their thoughts and prayers.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I will close by saying that almost all Tennesseans have friends and relatives, including me, people who were affected by this flooding. And I want to commend all the people from my district who volunteered and who went to the aid of those people who were touched by this tragedy. And I want to commend the gentleman from Nashville, my friend Mr. COOPER, for bringing this resolution to the floor.

Again, I wish to express my sympathy and condolences to all those who were hurt or harmed in some way by this flooding or who have lost family members, and I urge support for this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I, too, thank Mr. COOPER for bringing this resolution, Mr. GORDON for testifying, and Mr. DUNCAN and Mrs. BLACKBURN for their testimony, all the members of the delegation who came together in a bipartisan manner and who I think, by their actions, indicated that they be-

lieve government can and is an effective tool to help people, and can, when used properly, efficiently, and effectively, as FEMA is now, be an important part of a government response to a crisis to help the American people.

As Mr. COOPER said, Nashville is open for business. And Nashville is a great city with a great tourist economy. While the Opryland Hotel may be closed temporarily, the Grand Ole Opry is still in business. There is still lots of music and lots of hotels open, and there is also the Music Highway that can take you right down I-40 to Memphis, and we would love to see you there, too.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, the flood waters in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi have begun to recede, but the thoughts and prayers of all Members of Congress remain with the residents of those States. As thousands of Americans work to put their lives back together in the aftermath of record-breaking flooding, this Congress stands with them.

We are particularly saddened by the tragic loss of more than 20 people. For families who have lost loved ones, the sympathies of all Americans are with them in these tragic times.

The Nation has been particularly affected by the situation in Nashville, where entire neighborhoods were under water. But as Russ Hazelton, resident of Nashville, said, "We have no choice but to solve this problem, and we're going to solve it with enthusiasm . . ." That enthusiasm will be matched by the Federal Government.

President Obama has declared the situation in Tennessee to be a major disaster. Congress will continue to work with those Members whose constituents have been affected by this tragedy to provide the assistance necessary.

With this resolution today, we also honor the efforts of our brave first responders, and State and local government officials, who have risked life and limb and worked tirelessly to safely evacuate people and return communities to normalcy. We stand with them today, and in the days ahead.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 1337, a resolution to express the sympathy and condolences of the House of Representatives to those people affected by the flooding in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi in May 2010.

I express my heartfelt condolences to families and communities who have lost loved ones from these devastating floods in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi. I also express my sympathy for those whose homes were damaged or destroyed. Unfortunately, several times in recent years, I have come to the floor to express sympathy and condolences in the wake of nature's wrath and floods are the most common type of disaster our nation faces.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the men and women who have responded to this disaster, and those who are aiding in the recovery including police officers, firefighters, emergency managers, and emergency medical personnel. Twenty four hours a day, every day of the year, all over this country, when any type of tragedy enters our lives, from a medical emergency facing a neighbor to a large-scale natural disaster, terrorist attack, or other incident, our nation's emergency

responders and charitable organizations are the first on the scene to provide professional services, expert help, aid, and comfort. These well-trained, highly-skilled individuals are truly on the front lines in preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating damages from a variety of hazards.

As the waters recede, we will begin the inevitable and necessary process of rebuilding these homes and communities. As we do, it is important that we re-build safer and better to reduce the risk to lives and property. This is known as "mitigation". In the case of a flood, we can mitigate future risks by elevating the structure or key elements such as furnaces and electrical panels, or in some cases by acquiring the property and converting the land to open space.

Mitigation is an investment. According to two Congressionally-mandated studies, for every dollar invested in mitigation there is a return of at least three dollars. This is an investment that not only benefits the Federal Government, but State and local governments and citizens as well. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, previous mitigation investments have already been shown to pay off in the areas of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi that were flooded in this disaster.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 1337.

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, last week, flood waters devastated many businesses and homes of hardworking families in Tennessee. The torrential downpours and rise of the Cumberland River in Nashville was a 1,000-year event that no one could have predicted because this area is not in a flood plain. Therefore, a vast number of Tennesseans did not have flood insurance, leaving them hurting financially because of the high cost of home repairs and in need of additional support. Many are now homeless after this truly unique and devastating event in our State's history and my heart goes out to all affected, especially those who lost loved ones.

While Tennessee's capitol city and surrounding areas have been severely damaged, the volunteer spirit of its residents has shined. Tennesseans are helping themselves and their neighbors recover and move forward. Clean-up efforts are well underway and fundraisers are being held for the thousands who lost their homes or so many of their belongings. We have a long way to go before our cities and towns are completely restored, and I am committed to doing all I can to help Middle and West Tennessee rebuild after these devastating floods.

Mr. COHEN. 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. 1337.

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.

INTERNATIONAL LEARN TO FLY DAY

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1284) supporting the goals and ideals of International Learn to Fly Day, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1284

Whereas, since the birth of flight, aviation has had a tremendous impact on the imagination, innovation, and economy of the United States;

Whereas many of the Nation's heroes have been pilots, including the Wright brothers, Charles Lindbergh, Amelia Earhart, Charles "Chuck" Yeager, the Nation's astronauts and military aviators, and the flight crew of U.S. Airways Flight 1549, among others;

Whereas every one of these individuals had to learn to fly before they could achieve their greatness;

Whereas there are approximately 600,000 pilots and approximately 230,000 commercial and general aviation airplanes in the United States;

Whereas flight brings joy, inspiration, and a sense of accomplishment to those who fly for recreation, pleasure, and work;

Whereas flight allows the movement of people and commodities across the Nation and around the world quickly and efficiently; and

Whereas the third Saturday in May is an appropriate day to observe International Learn to Fly Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Learn to Fly Day; and

(2) recognizes the contributions of flight instructors, flight schools, aviation groups, and industry in promoting and teaching the Nation's next generation of pilots.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) 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 have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

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 in support of the resolution, H. Res. 1284, as amended, introduced by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BOYD) which supports the goals and ideals of International Learn to Fly Day and recognizes the contributions of flight instructors, flight schools, aviation groups, and industry in promoting and teaching the Nation's next generation of pilots.

International Learn to Fly Day was established on May 15, 2009, to increase interest in flying and to encourage the aviation community to get others involved in aviation. The event was announced at the Experimental Aviation Association's AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Aviation groups, industry partners, flight schools, and flight instructors have come together to create a day dedicated to inspiring national interest in flight.

On International Learn to Fly Day, flight schools, airports, and independent flight instructors will offer free or discounted flight instruction and other educational aviation events. The aviation community will lend its time and expertise to introduce people to the thrill of flying and the opportunity to reflect back on Orville Wright. Airlines must be able to attract the next generation of commercial pilots. International Learn to Fly Day will be an important day to promote the experience of learning to fly, and to attract people to the pilot profession, of which my home city is the home to Federal Express, which employs many fine pilots and will, indeed, many more in the years to come as they continue to deliver cargo to the world.

International Learn to Fly Day will be observed each year on the third Saturday of May. I look forward to this first celebration on May 15, 2010, and urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 1284.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1284, which is a resolution obviously supporting the goals and ideals of International Learn to Fly Day. And I would like to thank Mr. BOYD and Mr. EHLERS for sponsoring this meaningful piece of legislation. Both of these individuals are great advocates of aviation, and they need to be commended for this bill.

Mr. Speaker, aviation plays an important role in America and throughout the world, and it expands business opportunities, creates very well-paying jobs, and it inspires innovation. Without flight instructors, flight schools, aviation groups, and industry promoting and teaching the next generation of pilots, many of these benefits are not going to be realized.

Unfortunately, in recent years the U.S. pilot population has declined. And as a pilot, actually a commercial pilot, myself, it was easy for me because I grew up across the road from the airport. I played in airplane wrecks as a kid. I pumped gas and washed windshields and washed airplanes, any way to mooch a ride and get a lesson. I grew up with it and grew up next to it, so I was able to learn to fly.

I find the news that the pilot population is declining extremely disappointing. In response, the International Learn to Fly Day was established, and it is the third Saturday in