

Whereas Americans honor themselves and the mothers of America when they revere and emphasize the role of the home and the family as the true foundations of the United States;

Whereas by doing so much for the home, the American mother is a source of moral and spiritual guidance for the people of the United States and thus acts as a positive force to promote good government and peace among all mankind; and

Whereas the last Sunday in September of each year is observed as Gold Star Mothers Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and purpose of Gold Star Mothers Day, which is observed in remembrance of the supreme sacrifice made by mothers who lose a son or daughter serving in the Armed Forces; and

(2) urges the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe Gold Star Mothers Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU) and the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHU. 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 gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 1617, a measure supporting the goals and ideals of Gold Star Mothers Day, observed each September in remembrance of the supreme sacrifice made by mothers who lose a son or a daughter serving in the Armed Forces.

H. Res. 1617 was introduced by our colleague gentleman from California, Representative PETER ROSKAM on September 14, 2010. It was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which ordered it reported favorably by unanimous consent on September 23, 2010. The measure enjoys the support of over 50 members of the House.

We here in the House of Representatives regularly take time to honor our brave men and women serving in the armed services, particularly those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. With so many putting themselves in harm's way, I'm very pleased that we can make it a priority to keep them and their families in our thoughts and prayers. The American Gold Star Mothers are a group of women who have all lost a son or daughter serving in the Armed Forces, and today we honor their sacrifice. The Gold Star Mothers provide services and comfort to their members, assist veterans in presenting claims to the VA, and host a number of events throughout the year to show support for our military. We thank them for all they do for our troops and our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, the sacrifices of the Gold Star Mothers should never be far from our thoughts and prayers, and so I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Gold Star Mothers through the passage of H. Res. 1617.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I think that as we were talking about many different items today, I think that as a culture, and especially as a Congress, we always talk about the men and women who serve and those who pay the ultimate sacrifice.

But I think anyone who is a parent, especially those who are mothers, recognize that the only thing worse than running into harm's way is to watch your child run into harm's way. And the greatest loss is not the loss of one's life, but a loss of a child's life. And I think this is quite appropriate that we finally start focusing on the fact that the great sacrifice made on the battlefield is not by the men and women who are fighting, but the mothers who are left behind and must live with whatever results occur on that battlefield, something that they will live with for the rest of their lives. And I think it is quite appropriate that we do this today.

I am sad that we haven't done it before, to really recognize that those greatest heroes in America are the mothers who have raised the children that do the fighting that protect the freedoms and the prosperity, and those mothers who pay the ultimate sacrifice should be recognized, not just here, but much more often.

And so I thank the majority for allowing this to be brought forward. And, hopefully, as a nation, as a culture, we will recognize the contribution mothers make in this great effort.

The military couldn't be the military if it wasn't for the mothers who were willing to raise the children that we put in harm's way. And they are willing and, sadly, forced many times as the Gold Star Mothers are, to live with the repercussions for the rest of their lives of the great loss that they witness and this Nation has ignored for too long. I ask for passage of this bill.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1617.

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. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a

quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL CRANIOFACIAL ACCEPTANCE MONTH

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1603) expressing support for designation of September 2010 as National Craniofacial Acceptance Month.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1603

Whereas there are 100,000 children born each year in the United States with a craniofacial anomaly affecting the head, neck, extremities, or organs;

Whereas craniofacial treatment will often last from infancy to adulthood;

Whereas it is not uncommon for one to undergo multiple surgeries before reaching adulthood;

Whereas most craniofacial conditions affect individuals and their families physically, mentally, and socially;

Whereas in the past 30 years, many medical procedures have been developed to help improve the quality of life for those affected by craniofacial anomalies;

Whereas the number of physicians specializing in treating these rare and complex conditions is very small;

Whereas many groups have developed to help advocate on the behalf of those with craniofacial anomalies and to encourage greater acceptance and support of individuals with craniofacial anomalies; and

Whereas September 2010 would be an appropriate month to designate as National Craniofacial Acceptance Month: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives supports the designation of National Craniofacial Acceptance Month to encourage all citizens to become better informed of craniofacial conditions and advances in medical treatment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU) and the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

□ 1510

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHU. 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 gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 1603, expressing support for National Craniofacial Acceptance Month.

H. Res. 1603 was introduced by our colleague, the gentleman from Arkansas, Representative MIKE ROSS, on July 30, 2010. It was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which ordered it reported favorably by unanimous consent on September 23, 2010. The measure has the support of over 70 members of the House.

Mr. Speaker, there are 100,000 children born each year in the United States with a craniofacial anomaly affecting the head, neck, extremities, or organs. These include cleft lip and cleft palate, the most common congenital craniofacial anomalies seen at birth, as well as other conditions that can cause hearing loss or other complications.

The development of more advanced treatment options for individuals with these conditions can greatly improve their quality of life, but the number of physicians who specialize in treating these rare and complex conditions is very small. People born with craniofacial anomalies often require extensive surgery in childhood and a great deal of support and encouragement along the way, so I am glad that we can do our part to raise awareness of these conditions today through the passage of H. Res. 1603. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, we support the bill, and I will support the gentlewoman from California's motion to approve it. I appreciate the fact that we are able to consider the item at this time.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CHU. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1603.

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. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

AMENDING RULE ON FIREFIGHTER OVERTIME PAY

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3243) to amend section 5542 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that any hours worked by Federal firefighters under a qualified trade-of-time arrangement shall be excluded for purposes of determinations relating to overtime pay.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3243

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

SECTION 1. TREATMENT OF HOURS WORKED UNDER A TRADE-OF-TIME ARRANGEMENTS.

Section 5542 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, any hours worked by a firefighter under a qualified trade-of-time arrangement shall be disregarded for purposes of any determination relating to eligibility for or the amount of any overtime pay under this section.

“(2) For purposes of this section—

“(A) the term ‘qualified trade-of-time arrangement’ means an arrangement under which 2 firefighters who are employed by the same agency agree, solely at their option and with the approval of their employing agency, to substitute for one another during scheduled work hours in performance of work in the same capacity; and

“(B) the term ‘firefighter’ has the meaning given such term by sections 8331(21) and 8401(14), respectively.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU) and the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHU. 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 gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 3243, legislation to promote flexibility in work arrangements and scheduling for Federal firefighters. H.R. 3243 was introduced by Representative JOHN SARBANES, the gentleman from Maryland, on July 16, 2009. The bill was reported favorably by the Oversight and Government Reform Committee on September 23, 2010.

H.R. 3243 allows federal firefighters to trade shifts without triggering mandatory overtime payments and added costs for their agency. The bill simply allows traded time to be excluded from the calculation of overtime. This grants more leave flexibility to these workers, without costing the government any money. The change is consistent with the workplace practices of state and municipal fire departments across the country. Under the bill, any decision to approve the workers' request to switch shifts would remain at the discretion of the employing agency. Trade time will boost federal agencies' ability to recruit and retain trained firefighters. The bill is strongly supported by the International Association of Firefighters.

I thank Mr. SARBANES for his work on this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, we have a substantive bill here, and I appreciate the leadership bringing it up in the committee we are working on.

One of the things we haven't done enough on Government Oversight, and I think the American people say we haven't done enough as a Congress as a whole, is to look at those things that we are doing in the government that are not efficient, not effective, and, frankly, can be very wasteful not just of the taxpayers' money but in their time.

This bill is a commonsense approach. It changes the accounting process and really makes the system much more user friendly for those who are serving.

As the lady from California pointed out, those of us from California know how important the Federal firefighters can be. We just recently had massive fires break out again, and we are sadly looking forward to another season that could be very, very damaging. These firefighters are not just those covering military installations but actually protect homes throughout the country, especially in those fire-prone areas such as California.

I would again just say that I think this is appropriate. It is those little things that add up that the American people have been asking us to do more of, and I think this is one of those bipartisan issues. We can go back to our districts and say there is a lot of stuff we haven't done, we really need to do more, but at least we got together and got this item done. And this item could not only save money but may be able to make the system work efficiently.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the House Subcommittee with jurisdiction over the Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of Columbia, and as a strong supporter of this bill, I am pleased that the House will act today to advance H.R. 3243. The bill, introduced by Congressman JOHN SARBANES of Maryland, will allow federal fire fighters to trade shifts with each other, without triggering required overtime payments from their employing agencies. Notably, state and municipal fire fighters have long been able to swap shifts, or to exchange time, and still be paid according to the original work schedule. Such workplace flexibility aids in boosting employee morale and increases overall retention rates, without costing these local and state governments any additional money.

The Sarbanes bill simply amends title 5 by excluding trade time from the calculation of overtime pay for federal fire fighters. Clearly, it will still be up to the agency—such as the Department of Defense—to approve the request to switch schedules. The bill's enactment will actually save federal agencies money, because under current law, agencies must at times pay overtime for fill-in workers. However, under this legislation, these entities will now have employees voluntarily agreeing to work shifts without overtime being required.

Again, extending a small amount of scheduling flexibility to our federal fire fighters—that neither increases agency costs nor reduces manpower—is the right thing to do. Moreover, the bill's enactment will increase the attractiveness of federal fire fighters positions,