

FBI#386666EC7 on May 10, 2004 after his arrest on April 26, 2004, by the U.S. Border Patrol in San Diego, CA. YAMADA was issued a Notice to Appear for Removal Proceedings by the U.S. Border Patrol for having violated the terms of his entry into the United States. These proceedings were terminated without prejudice on June 15, 2004. Mr. YAMADA was granted deferred action on July 8, 2004, as a matter of prosecutorial discretion.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to support this legislation. Shigeru Yamada was born in Japan in 1992. When Shigeru was 10 years old, his mother brought him to the United States as a dependent on her student visa. In 1995 when Shigeru was 13 years old, his mother was killed in a car accident.

At the time of her death, Shigeru's mother was engaged to be married to an American citizen. If his mother had survived and in fact married the U.S. citizen, Shigeru would have obtained legal permanent resident status through her. Shigeru's natural father was an alcoholic and physically abusive to Shigeru's mother and the siblings. After the mother's death, Shigeru and the siblings were raised by an aunt in Chula Vista, California.

Although Shigeru's aunt attempted to formally adopt Shigeru, the adoption was not completed before the 18th birthday. Under current immigration law, Shigeru would have had to have been adopted before the age of 16 to obtain legal immigration status in the United States. Shigeru's younger sibling was adopted by another family while another sibling was married to an American citizen. Shigeru attended Eastlake High School and graduated with honors in 2000.

This bill easily fits within the modern-era private immigration bill precedent. Private immigration bills have been enacted where the foreigners, the aliens, have been abandoned by their parents or the parents had died. As this bill is consistent with private immigration bill precedent, and the Department of Homeland Security report revealed no adverse information about the beneficiary, I urge my colleagues to support it.

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, Shigeru Yamada was brought to the United States from Japan when he was 10 years old. He entered the country on a non-immigrant visa with his mother and his two sisters, and remained here on his mother's student visa for over 3 years. Although his mother became engaged to a U.S. citizen, which would have resulted in lawful permanent resident status for Shigeru and his sisters, tragedy prevented this from coming to pass. When Shigeru was 13 years old, his mother was killed in a car accident, and he and his siblings were taken to live with their maternal aunt and uncle in Chula Vista, California.

When Shigeru's aunt attempted to formally adopt him, she was unable to complete the process before he turned 16 years old. Under current immigration law, virtually all adoptions

of foreign children by U.S. citizens must be completed before the child's 16th birthday in order for the child to qualify for legal status in the United States. Although Shigeru's sisters obtained legal status through adoption and marriage, Shigeru continued to reside here without such status.

Despite these difficulties, Shigeru shined. He graduated with honors in 2000 from Eastlake High School, where he served on student government, participated in numerous community service activities, and excelled at football and wrestling. He was an All-American Scholar and was named "Outstanding English Student" his freshman year. He was also voted the "Most Inspirational Player of the Year" in various sports, both at the junior-varsity and varsity level. He served as vice president of the associated student body his senior year. Shigeru later obtained an associate's degree from Southwestern Community College.

Shigeru's story highlights so many things that are wrong with our current immigration system. First, Shigeru is just the type of young person who would benefit from the DREAM Act, which passed the House with bipartisan support 1 week ago today. More importantly, America is just the country that would benefit from providing Shigeru a path to lawful status, so that he could continue to excel and serve as a model to all those around him.

Second, Shigeru's story highlights the nonsensical inflexibility of our international adoption rules. Earlier this summer, the House passed H.R. 5532, the International Adoption Harmonization Act of 2010. H.R. 5532 would harmonize our international adoption rules by setting the uniform deadline by which all adoptions must be finalized at a child's 18th birthday. One purpose of H.R. 5532 is to ensure that when a child is legally adopted by U.S. citizen parents between the child's 16th and 18th birthdays, the child is permitted to remain with his or her parents in the United States. The need for this commonsense piece of legislation was demonstrated by the many private immigration laws enacted by previous Congresses to provide exactly this form of relief to just those individual children who came to our attention—bills just like the one before us today. H.R. 5532 remains stalled in the Senate, which represents a real failure to protect American families and adopted children.

I remain hopeful that our Senate colleagues on both sides of the aisle will recognize that passage of the DREAM Act and H.R. 5532 are both in America's best interest. But under current law, S. 4010 represents the only option for Shigeru Yamada to remain in the United States, the country that he rightly calls home.

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I'd like to thank Senator FEINSTEIN, the Senate and House Judiciary Committees, Chairman CONYERS, and Chairwoman LOFGREN for their leadership in the passage of S. 4010, a bill for the relief of Shigeru Yamada, an extraordinary young man who is in danger of being deported back to Japan, despite living here for most of his life. Shigeru came to the U.S. legally in 1992 at the age of 10 with his mother and two younger sisters. In 1995, when Yamada was 13 years old, his mother was tragically killed in a car accident. Yamada and his sisters were suddenly orphaned, and due to a change in immigration laws, were stripped of their legal status. Notwithstanding personal adversities, Yamada excelled in high school where he

was active in sports, student government, and the community, while maintaining almost a 4.00 GPA. Yamada has attended Southwestern College and is a model member of the Chula Vista, California community. His two younger sisters were able to become citizens. One married a U.S. citizen and the other one was adopted by family members. The family tried to adopt Shigeru, but they were not successful. Yamada does not have any family or home in Japan. His mother's side of the family is Korean which makes it extremely difficult for him to integrate into Japanese society. He would be virtually unemployable in Japan because he does not speak, read, or write Japanese. His situation shows that he would suffer extreme hardship if forced to return to Japan. The passage of this bill brings justice one step closer to Yamada. We want and need more people like Shigeru in our country and he deserves the opportunity to become a permanent U.S. citizen. Once again, I'd like to thank the leadership for passage of this critical bill.

Mr. POE of Texas. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CHU. Madam 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 pass the bill, S. 4010.

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.

FOR THE RELIEF OF HOTARU NAKAMA FERSCHKE

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1774) for the relief of Hotaru Nakama Ferschke.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1774

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

SECTION 1. PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS FOR HOTARU NAKAMA FERSCHKE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, Hotaru Nakama Ferschke shall be eligible for issuance of an immigrant visa or for adjustment of status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence upon filing an application for issuance of an immigrant visa under section 204 of such Act or for adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident.

(b) ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS.—If Hotaru Nakama Ferschke enters the United States before the filing deadline specified in subsection (c), she shall be considered to have entered and remained lawfully and shall, if otherwise eligible, be eligible for adjustment of status under section 245 of the Immigration and Nationality Act as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION AND PAYMENT OF FEES.—Subsections (a) and (b) shall apply only if the application for issuance of an immigrant visa or the application for adjustment of status is filed with appropriate fees within 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) REDUCTION OF IMMIGRANT VISA NUMBER.—Upon the granting of an immigrant visa or permanent residence to Hotaru Nakama Ferschke, the Secretary of State shall instruct the proper officer to reduce by 1, during the current or next following fiscal year, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to natives of the country of the alien's birth under section 203(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act or, if applicable, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to natives of the country of the alien's birth under section 202(e) of such Act.

(e) PAYGO.—The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go-Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled "Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation" for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

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

S. 1774 is an immigration relief bill for Hotaru Nakama Ferschke. By now the story of Mrs. Ferschke and her late husband, Marine Sergeant Michael H. Ferschke, Jr., should be well known to Members of the House.

The couple met in March 2007 when Sergeant Ferschke was stationed at Camp Schwab in Okinawa, Japan. They dated for more than 1 year before Sergeant Ferschke was deployed to Iraq. Shortly before his departure, they learned that they were going to have a baby. They spoke about getting married, moving back to the United States, and raising a family together.

Two months after arriving in Iraq, they were married through a ceremony conducted over the telephone. But just 1 month later, Sergeant Ferschke tragically lost his life in combat.

The United States military recognizes the couple's marriage for purposes of providing Mrs. Ferschke with a death gratuity. But our immigration laws recognize only proxy marriages that have been consummated, something this couple was never able to do following the marriage. As a result, Mrs. Ferschke has been unable to move to the United States on an immigrant visa, and her hopes of raising their son with the love and support of Sergeant Ferschke's family have been thwarted.

Last month, the House passed H.R. 6397, the Marine Sergeant Michael H.

Ferschke, Jr. Memorial Act. The purpose of that bill was to fix Mrs. Ferschke's situation and to ensure that no other family is left in a similar situation. Because that bill remains stuck in the Senate, a relief bill for Mrs. Ferschke is the only way to right this wrong.

I commend Senators WEBB, ALEXANDER, CORKER, and UDALL for introducing this bill in the Senate, and Representative JOHN DUNCAN for his work on a companion bill in the House. I would also recognize Judiciary Committee Chairman JOHN CONYERS, Immigration Subcommittee Chairwoman ZOE LOFGREN, and Judiciary Committee Ranking Member LAMAR SMITH for helping to move this bill to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY,

Washington, DC., March 5, 2010.

Hon. ZOE LOFGREN,

Chair, Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM CHAIR: In response to your request for a report relative to H.R. 3182, private legislation for the relief of Hotaru Nakama Ferschke, enclosed is a memorandum of information concerning the beneficiary. This report is an update of one previously provided your committee on February 26, 2010, revised to reflect additional information provided by your staff.

The bill provides that the beneficiary shall be eligible for issuance of an immigrant visa or for adjustment of status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence upon filing an application for issuance of an immigrant visa under section 204 of the Immigration and Nationality Act or for adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident.

We hope the information provided is useful. Please do not hesitate to call me if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

ELLIOT WILLIAMS,
Director.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
MEMORANDUM OF INFORMATION FOR H.R. 3182,
111TH CONGRESS

On July 10, 2009, Rep. John Duncan (R-TN) introduced H.R. 3182, private legislation to provide immigration relief for Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke. This is the first private bill filed on her behalf.

The beneficiary is the widow of Michael Harvey Ferschke, Jr., a United States Marine who was killed-in-action August 10, 2008, as a result of a gunshot wound received as a member of a dismounted patrol that was conducting combat operations in Tikrit, Iraq. Mr. Ferschke passed away before an I-130 immediate relative petition could be filed on Ms. Ferschke's behalf.

Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke was born on October 20, 1983, and is a native and citizen of Japan. Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke has entered the United States 3 times as a temporary visitor. She entered the United States on December 12, 2007, August 15, 2008, and February 27, 2009. Each time she came to the U.S. she complied with the terms of her visa and departed before her visa expired. Ms. Ferschke has never been placed in removal proceedings or ordered removed.

Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke met her husband while he was stationed at the U.S. Marine

base in Okinawa, Japan. They traveled to the United States from December 22, 2007, through December 30, 2007, for the Christmas holiday, where she met Michael's parents, Mr. Michael H. Ferschke, and Mrs. Robin Ferschke. When Michael Ferschke, Jr. received orders to deploy to Iraq, Hotaru, who was pregnant, remained in Okinawa. Michael Ferschke Jr. and Hotaru Nakama were married via teleconference on July 10, 2008, while he was in Iraq and she was in Japan. One month later, Michael was killed during Operation Iraqi Freedom in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

On August 15, 2008, Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke returned to the United States to attend the funeral for her late husband in Maryville, Tennessee. She returned to Okinawa on August 31, 2008.

On January 9, 2009, Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke gave birth to a son, Michael Harvey Ferschke III at the Chatan Hospital, Okinawa, Japan, and on February 27, 2009, she brought her newborn son to the United States. When in the United States, they reside with her late husband's parents in Tennessee. Neighbors have welcomed Hotaru and her new son into the community.

Mrs. Ferschke is the daughter of Mr. Masaaki and Mrs. Takako Nakama, both of whom are natives and citizens of Japan. Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke resides with her mother and grandmother, Mitsu Shinzato. Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke is one of four children, between sisters, Madoka Kudaka and Reika Nakama and her half-sister NaNami Nakama. Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke attended Okinawa Christian Junior College where she majored in English.

Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke is currently employed as an Administrative Specialist with the United States Army's 83rd Ordnance Battalion CASB, Kadena Air Base Okinawa, Japan where she has been employed since August 2007. Prior to her employment with the 83rd Ordnance Battalion she was employed at the Camp Courtney Commissary, Unit 5156, as a sales clerk. Her annual salary is estimated to be \$24,000.00 per year.

Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke has seen substantial support from the community here in the United States. Mrs. Hotaru Ferschke is not employed in the United States. She is a new member of the American Widows Project, a support group for the wives and husbands of fallen U.S. soldiers. Record checks concerning criminal activity with U.S. Federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies revealed no derogatory information. Commercial databases revealed no known debts or encumbrances, foreign or domestic. Inquiries with neighbors of Mr. Michael H. Ferschke and Mrs. Robin Ferschke regarding Hotaru Ferschke revealed no derogatory information.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to support this bill, and I would like to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for all of his efforts on companion legislation.

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for their work in bringing this bill to the floor at this time.

As has been described, this is a private relief bill attempting to allow the young widow of a marine who was killed in combat in Iraq to bring the couple's young son and come to live with the marine's family in the State of Tennessee in my district.

While everyone has supported this bill every step of the way, it has run into some technical or procedural difficulties that have delayed it until this point. As has previously been stated, I would like, as Ms. CHU did, to thank particularly Senator ALEXANDER and Senator WEBB who have taken such a personal interest in this bill on the Senate side, and I would like to once again thank the House for passing the general bill last month.

Mrs. Ferschke, the mother of this soldier, first came to see me about this in December of 2008. Early in this Congress, we introduced a private relief bill. It took a few months to get the necessary information and complete the required paperwork, but this private bill was taken up by the Subcommittee on Immigration in the Judiciary Committee on July 23, 2009. At that time it received the support of both Chairwoman LOFGREN and Ranking Member KING, both of whom I would also like to thank. However, at that point there were some objections to doing private bills in the other body, and so at the direction of the staff of the Judiciary Committee, both majority and minority, we attempted to do an amendment to the Defense bill. However, some of the people on the Rules Committee, while supporting the bill, did not feel it was germane to the Defense bill, which we also had to agree with, but we were doing that at the direction of others. But I also would like to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) because hearing about this at the Rules Committee, he took a special and personal interest in this bill also.

We then introduced a general bill, once again working with the staff of the Judiciary Committee, whom I would also like to thank. That bill was passed last month in the House, but we ran into some objections here, and that is why we are back here today on this private relief bill.

□ 1120

Hotaru Ferschke, as has been stated, is the widow of the late Sergeant Michael Ferschke of the U.S. Marine Corps. She was born on October 20, 1983, in Okinawa, Japan. In March 2007, as Ms. CHU said, when Sergeant Ferschke was stationed in Okinawa, he met her at a mutual friend's party. They dated for more than a year before Sergeant Ferschke was deployed to Iraq in April 2008. Shortly before Sergeant Ferschke deployed, the couple learned that Hotaru was pregnant. Sergeant Ferschke's parents and members of his military unit in Iraq have attested to the fact that the couple already had planned to marry before Hotaru became pregnant and had decided to live and raise their future family in the United States.

The couple was married by proxy, by telephone, by a military chaplain in July of 2008 while Sergeant Ferschke was in Iraq. But 1 month later, in August of 2008, Sergeant Ferschke was

killed in combat. Although the marriage is legally valid and recognized by the military, in order for Mrs. Ferschke to be recognized as Sergeant Ferschke's spouse for immigration purposes, the marriage itself would have had to have been consummated. Under the circumstances, this wasn't possible. The law makes no allowance to the fact that Mrs. Ferschke was already pregnant with her husband's child before the marriage ceremony took place.

I could go on and tell additional details, but I'll just leave those for the statement that I have and say that this is something that I think everyone has wanted to support all through this, and it is a great moment for this family to hopefully finally complete this at this time at the tail end of this Congress. And so I urge my colleagues to support this very worthwhile legislation.

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support this legislation. I once again want to thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for his efforts in this. It's a perfect example of how, if there's a problem, an issue with a constituent in a congressional district, the gentleman from Tennessee took the bull by the horns, so to speak, and solved this problem and brought it before the attention of Congress in an effort to resolve this problem.

I am pleased to support this bill for Hotaru Ferschke and would like to thank JOHN DUNCAN for all his efforts on her behalf. Hotaru is the widow of the late Sgt. Michael Ferschke (U.S. Marine Corps). She was born in Okinawa, Japan, and met Sgt. Ferschke there in 2007, where he was stationed at USMC Camp Schwab. They dated for more than a year before Michael was deployed to Iraq in 2008.

Shortly before Michael was deployed to Iraq, the couple learned that Hotaru was pregnant. They had planned to marry before she became pregnant. Michael and Hotaru were married "by proxy" via telephone on July 10, 2008, while Sgt. Ferschke was in Iraq. They were never able to see each other after their marriage because Michael was killed in combat on August 10, 2008. Hotaru gave birth to Michael Ferschke, III on January 7, 2009. Michael is a United States citizen.

Normally, the Immigration and Nationality Act would allow Hotaru to receive her green card, despite the death of her husband. The INA provides that "in the case of an alien who was the spouse of a citizen of the United States at the time of the citizen's death . . . if the citizen served honorably in an active duty status in the military, air, or naval forces of the United States and died as a result of injury or disease incurred in or aggravated by combat, the alien . . . shall be considered . . . to remain an immediate relative after the date of the citizen's death. . . ."

However, the INA also provides that the term spouse "does not include a spouse . . . by reason of any marriage ceremony where the contracting parties thereto are not physically present in the presence of each other,

unless the marriage shall have been consummated." Thus, the Ferschke's marriage is not recognized for immigration purposes because it was never consummated.

This provision, enacted in 1952, was designed to prevent marriage fraud. However, according to the U.S. Embassy in Seoul, Korea, it is clear that the Ferschke's relationship was bona fide.

While there is no precedent for such a private bill, the case seems to be relatively unique and meritorious. There is no indication that there was any fraud associated with the Ferschke's marriage.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill. Let us pay honor to the memory of Michael Ferschke and grant his widow a future in the U.S.

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, as Chairwoman of the House Immigration Subcommittee, I first learned about Hotaru Ferschke and her late-husband, Marine Sergeant Michael H. Ferschke, Jr., when the Subcommittee formally met to consider H.R. 3182, a private immigration bill introduced by Representative JOHN DUNCAN. The Ferschke case highlighted a little-known provision in our immigration laws, which states that when a marriage takes place between two persons who cannot both be physically present during the ceremony, the marriage is not valid unless and until it is consummated. The provision allows no exceptions, even where the bona fides of the marriage is recognized for other purposes and consummation of the relationship prior to marriage can be demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Last month, I joined Representatives DUNCAN, JIM MCGOVERN, and LAMAR SMITH in offering H.R. 6397, a bill that would amend this provision of our immigration laws to account for situations—like the one presented here—where the failure to consummate such a marriage was the result of service abroad in the United States Armed Forces. I was pleased that the House passed that bill by voice vote, but we now must await final passage in the Senate.

In the meantime, S. 1774 provides the only means by which Hotaru Ferschke will be able to obtain lawful permanent residence in the United States, so that she may raise her son—Mikey—in the country for which his father gave his life.

Moreover, as the House is poised to pass the first private immigration bills that will be sent to the President in 6 years, it is worth making some brief remarks about such bills more generally. Private legislation is perhaps the narrowest, most targeted form of relief that Congress can provide. Private immigration bills have long been recognized as necessary in compelling circumstances where the inflexible application of existing law would lead to extraordinary hardship. Such bills also can help Congress identify systemic problems with our laws.

This country has a long history of passing private immigration legislation. According to the Congressional Research Service, from 1936–2004, at least one private immigration law was enacted in each Congress. During the Cold War, Congress enacted well over 1,000 private immigration laws.

This long history came to a grinding halt in the 109th Congress, when Congress failed to enact a single private immigration law. The same was true of the 110th Congress and, until just recently, the 111th.

The Senate's passage of the two immigration relief bills before us today—S. 4010 and S. 1774—is therefore important not only for the two beneficiaries of the bills and their family members, but also for the private bill process itself. Our immigration laws are broken—there can be no doubt about that—and I am a firm believer that those laws must be reformed. But even a perfect set of laws will occasionally result in cases of extraordinary hardship, for which an individual exception to the law may be necessary. Private immigration relief bills have played a significant role in our history, and I am hopeful that they will continue to play such a role after today's important votes.

Mr. POE of Texas. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CHU. Madam 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 pass the bill, S. 1774.

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 PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT WEEK

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1600) supporting the critical role of the physician assistant profession and supporting the goals and ideals of National Physician Assistant Week, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1600

Whereas more than 75,000 physician assistants in the United States provide high-quality, cost-effective medical care in virtually all health care settings and in every medical and surgical specialty;

Whereas the physician assistant profession's patient-centered, team-based approach reflects the changing realities of health care delivery and fits well into the patient-centered medical home model of care, as well as other integrated models of care management;

Whereas approximately 47 percent of physician assistants currently practice in primary care and emergency medicine, regularly providing access to needed medical care to underserved populations such as frontier communities, rural towns, the urban poor, and at-risk groups (such as the elderly);

Whereas physician assistants practice in teams with physicians and extend the reach of medicine and the promise of improved health to the most remote and in-need communities of our Nation;

Whereas nearly 300,000,000 patient visits were made to physician assistants in 2009;

Whereas physician assistants may provide medical care, have their own patient panels, and are granted prescribing authority in all 50 States;

Whereas the physician assistant profession was created 40 years ago in response to health care workforce shortages and is a key part of the solution to today's health care workforce shortage;

Whereas the American Academy of Physician Assistants recognizes October 6–12, 2010 as National Physician Assistant Week; and

Whereas the physician assistant profession is positioned to be able to adapt and respond to the evolving needs of the health care system by virtue of—

(1) comprehensive educational programs that prepare physician assistants for a career in general medicine; and

(2) a team-based approach to providing patient-centered medical care: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives supports—

(1) the critical role of the physician assistant profession for the significant impact the profession has made and will continue to make in health care; and

(2) the goals and ideals of National Physician Assistant Week.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Madam 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 in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, House Resolution 1600 recognizes the critical role of physician assistants in our health care system by designating October 6–12 of 2010 as National Physician Assistant Week.

Physician assistants, or PAs, practice in a collaborative setting with physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals to extend the reach of medical care to more patients. Their role helps patients have better access to high-quality medical care, particularly for underserved populations. Throughout the Nation, approximately 75,000 PAs provide high-quality and cost-effective care in various health settings. With the passage of health reform, millions of Americans will enter our health care system, and PAs will play a vital role in helping our healthcare workforce meet this challenge.

I want to applaud the leadership of Representative MCCOLLUM on this issue, and I would urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

As an original sponsor of this resolution, I rise in support of House Resolution 1600, supporting the critical role of the physician assistant profession and supporting the goals and ideals of National Physician Assistant Week. I would also like to thank Congresswoman BETTY MCCOLLUM of Minnesota

for bringing to our attention the important services physician assistants provide and congratulate her for getting this resolution to the floor.

Physician assistants practice medicine under a physician's supervision. A PA's practice can include diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive care. On any given day, a PA could prescribe medication, order and interpret x-rays, attend surgery, give advice to patients, and may also have supervisory responsibilities. A PA is supervised by a physician, but at facilities where the physician is present for only a few days each week, the PA may be a patient's principal health care provider. This increases the flexibility of the medical profession and ensures patients have access to quality care.

PAs in every State are required to pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination. In order to take this exam, a candidate must be a graduate of an accredited PA program, which includes classroom, laboratory, and clinical training in several specialty areas. To maintain their certification, PAs must complete many hours of continuing medical education and a recertification examination. PAs are highly educated, highly trained, work extremely hard, and are a vital cog in our Nation's health care system. I hope all will join me in saluting our Nation's PAs for their commitment and dedication, and I urge your support for this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the Congresswoman from Minnesota who is the sponsor of the bill, Ms. BETTY MCCOLLUM.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. I would like to thank Chairman WAXMAN and I would like to thank Representative PALLONE for their help with this bill, as well as my colleague on the other side of the aisle, Congressman TERRY.

House Resolution 1600 acknowledges the critical role of physicians assistants by designating a week in 2010 as National Physician Assistant Week.

Forty years ago, the position of PA was created in response to a national health care workforce shortage. Over 20 years ago, I had the honor and the privilege in Minnesota of helping to write the rules for PAs to function and provide health care in Minnesota. I was the consumer member on the board, and I had a great learning curve working with doctors, PAs, hospitals, health care clinics, and patients from all over Minnesota in making sure that PAs were able to address this workforce shortage. And today, they continue to be an integral part of our health care system, practicing in all health care settings and specialties.

□ 1130

Physician assistant service will be vital as more Americans, our health care system and we prepare for an aging population—the baby boomers. PAs work, as has been mentioned, side