

rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1765.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### INTERNATIONAL PROTECTING GIRLS BY PREVENTING CHILD MARRIAGE ACT OF 2010

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 987) to protect girls in developing countries through the prevention of child marriage, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 987

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

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act of 2010”.

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Child marriage, also known as “forced marriage” or “early marriage”, is a harmful traditional practice that deprives girls of their dignity and human rights.

(2) Child marriage as a traditional practice, as well as through coercion or force, is a violation of article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states, “Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of intending spouses”.

(3) According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), an estimated 60,000,000 girls in developing countries now ages 20 through 24 were married under the age of 18, and if present trends continue more than 100,000,000 more girls in developing countries will be married as children over the next decade, according to the Population Council.

(4) Between ½ and ¾ of all girls are married before the age of 18 in Niger, Chad, Mali, Bangladesh, Guinea, the Central African Republic, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, and Nepal, according to Demographic Health Survey data.

(5) Factors perpetuating child marriage include poverty, a lack of educational or employment opportunities for girls, parental concerns to ensure sexual relations within marriage, the dowry system, and the perceived lack of value of girls.

(6) Child marriage has negative effects on the health of girls, including significantly increased risk of maternal death and morbidity, infant mortality and morbidity, obstetric fistula, and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

(7) According to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), increasing the age at first birth for a woman will increase her chances of survival. Currently, pregnancy and childbirth complications are the leading cause of death for women 15 to 19 years old in developing countries.

(8) Most countries with high rates of child marriage have a legally established minimum age of marriage, yet child marriage persists due to strong traditional norms and the failure to enforce existing laws.

(9) Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has stated that child marriage is “a clear and unacceptable violation of human rights”,

and that “the Department of State categorically denounces all cases of child marriage as child abuse”.

(10) According to an International Center for Research on Women analysis of Demographic and Health Survey data, areas or regions in developing countries in which 40 percent or more of girls under the age of 18 are married are considered high-prevalence areas for child marriage.

(11) Investments in girls’ schooling, creating safe community spaces for girls, and programs for skills building for out-of-school girls are all effective and demonstrated strategies for preventing child marriage and creating a pathway to empower girls by addressing conditions of poverty, low status, and norms that contribute to child marriage.

#### SEC. 3. CHILD MARRIAGE DEFINED.

In this Act, the term “child marriage” means the marriage of a girl or boy, not yet the minimum age for marriage stipulated in law in the country in which the girl or boy is a resident or, where there is no such law, under the age of 18.

#### SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) child marriage is a violation of human rights, and the prevention and elimination of child marriage should be a foreign policy goal of the United States;

(2) the practice of child marriage undermines United States investments in foreign assistance to promote education and skills building for girls, reduce maternal and child mortality, reduce maternal illness, halt the transmission of HIV/AIDS, prevent gender-based violence, and reduce poverty; and

(3) expanding educational opportunities for girls, economic opportunities for women, and reducing maternal and child mortality are critical to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the global health and development objectives of the United States, including efforts to prevent HIV/AIDS.

#### SEC. 5. STRATEGY TO PREVENT CHILD MARRIAGE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

(a) ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to provide assistance, including through multilateral, nongovernmental, and faith-based organizations, to prevent the incidence of child marriage in developing countries through the promotion of educational, health, economic, social, and legal empowerment of girls and women.

(2) PRIORITY.—In providing assistance authorized under paragraph (1), the President shall give priority to—

(A) areas or regions in developing countries in which 40 percent or more of girls under the age of 18 are married; and

(B) activities to—

(i) expand and replicate existing community-based programs that are successful in preventing the incidence of child marriage;

(ii) establish pilot projects to prevent child marriage; and

(iii) share evaluations of successful programs, program designs, experiences, and lessons.

(b) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish a multi-year strategy to prevent child marriage and promote the empowerment of girls at risk of child marriage in developing countries, which should address the unique needs, vulnerabilities, and potential of girls under age 18 in developing countries.

(2) CONSULTATION.—In establishing the strategy required by paragraph (1), the President shall consult with Congress, relevant Federal departments and agencies, multilateral organizations, and representatives of civil society.

(3) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required by paragraph (1) shall—

(A) focus on areas in developing countries with high prevalence of child marriage;

(B) encompass diplomatic initiatives between the United States and governments of developing countries, with attention to human rights, legal reforms, and the rule of law;

(C) encompass programmatic initiatives in the areas of education, health, income generation, changing social norms, human rights, and democracy building; and

(D) be submitted to Congress not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President should submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) a description of the implementation of the strategy required by subsection (b);

(2) examples of best practices or programs to prevent child marriage in developing countries that could be replicated; and

(3) an assessment, including data disaggregated by age and sex to the extent possible, of current United States funded efforts to specifically prevent child marriage in developing countries.

(d) COORDINATION.—Assistance authorized under subsection (a) shall be integrated with existing United States development programs.

(e) ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED.—Assistance authorized under subsection (a) may be made available for activities in the areas of education, health, income generation, agriculture development, legal rights, democracy building, and human rights, including—

(1) support for community-based activities that encourage community members to address beliefs or practices that promote child marriage and to educate parents, community leaders, religious leaders, and adolescents of the health risks associated with child marriage and the benefits for adolescents, especially girls, of access to education, health care, livelihood skills, microfinance, and savings programs;

(2) support for activities to educate girls in primary and secondary school at the appropriate age and keeping them in age-appropriate grade levels through adolescence;

(3) support for activities to reduce education fees and enhance safe and supportive conditions in primary and secondary schools to meet the needs of girls, including—

(A) access to water and suitable hygiene facilities, including separate lavatories and latrines for girls;

(B) assignment of female teachers;

(C) safe routes to and from school; and

(D) eliminating sexual harassment and other forms of violence and coercion;

(4) support for activities that allow adolescent girls to access health care services and proper nutrition, which is essential to both their school performance and their economic productivity;

(5) assistance to train adolescent girls and their parents in financial literacy and access economic opportunities, including livelihood skills, savings, microfinance, and small-enterprise development;

(6) support for education, including through community and faith-based organizations and youth programs, that helps remove gender stereotypes and the bias against girls used to justify child marriage, especially efforts targeted at men and boys, promotes zero tolerance for violence, and promotes gender equality, which in turn help to increase the perceived value of girls;

(7) assistance to create peer support and female mentoring networks and safe social spaces specifically for girls; and

(8) support for local advocacy work to provide legal literacy programs at the community level to ensure that governments and

law enforcement officials are meeting their obligations to prevent child and forced marriage.

#### SEC. 6. RESEARCH AND DATA.

It is the sense of Congress that the President and all relevant agencies should, as part of their ongoing research and data collection activities—

(1) collect and make available data on the incidence of child marriage in countries that receive foreign or development assistance from the United States where the practice of child marriage is prevalent; and

(2) collect and make available data on the impact of the incidence of child marriage and the age at marriage on progress in meeting key development goals.

#### SEC. 7. DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES.

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended—

(1) in section 116 (22 U.S.C. 2151n), by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(g) The report required by subsection (d) shall include, for each country in which child marriage is prevalent, a description of the status of the practice of child marriage in such country. In this subsection, the term ‘child marriage’ means the marriage of a girl or boy, not yet the minimum age for marriage stipulated in law or under the age of 18 if no such law exists, in the country in which such girl or boy is a resident.”; and

(2) in section 502B (22 U.S.C. 2304), by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(i) The report required by subsection (b) shall include, for each country in which child marriage is prevalent, a description of the status of the practice of child marriage in such country. In this subsection, the term ‘child marriage’ means the marriage of a girl or boy, not yet the minimum age for marriage stipulated in law or under the age of 18 if no such law exists, in the country in which such girl or boy is a resident.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members 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 gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 987, the International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act of 2010 and yield myself as much time as I may consume. Mr. Speaker, this legislation, S. 987, is the corresponding legislation to legislation introduced by our colleague from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM), H.R. 2103.

Child marriage is one of the most harmful practices affecting girls in the developing world today. Globally, more than 60 million girls under the age of 18, many only 12 or 13, are married, usually to men more than twice or three times their age. Between one-half and three-fourths of all girls are married before the age of 18 in countries

such as Chad, Mali, Bangladesh, and Nepal. Should these numbers remain consistent in the next 10 years, there will be 25,000 new child brides every day.

Marrying at such a young age comes at a terrible cost for these girls—girls who, in most developed countries, would otherwise still be happily playing sports and singing in their school choir. These young girls are at an increased risk for health problems like HIV/AIDS due to the sexual history of their older partners. In addition, young girls are at risk of complications during pregnancy and childbirth. In fact, childbirth complications are the leading cause of death for women 15 to 19 years old in developing countries.

Not only are child brides at a higher risk for disease and death during childbirth, they are frequently victims of domestic abuse. Premature marriage deprives girls of their dignity and dooms these girls to a life of poverty and dependence. It is for these reasons, and many more, that child marriage is categorized as both child abuse and a violation of human rights.

Poverty and a lack of education are both key contributing factors to why young women fall victim to child marriages. Girls who live in impoverished homes are twice as likely to marry under 18, and 60 percent of girls involved in child marriages have no education.

Families struck by poverty cannot afford to keep their daughters in school and often do not have the resources to provide for their daughters at all. Marrying off female children is often the only alternative for struggling families. With an often false promise of a better life for their daughters, parents marry their girls off at an all-too-early age.

However, there are undoubtedly better alternatives. This bill before us seeks to eliminate the harmful practice of child marriage overseas. It requires an integrated, strategic approach by our government to reduce the incidence of child marriage by authorizing the President to provide assistance through multilateral, non-governmental, and faith-based organizations to prevent the incidence of child marriage and to promote the educational, health, economic, social, and legal empowerment of girls and women. It also requires the President to establish a multiyear strategy in developing countries and promote the empowerment of girls at risk of child marriage.

Mr. Speaker, we need to invest in these young girls and provide safe spaces where they can evolve socially and become self-sufficient. Empowering young girls through education can help prevent child marriages and lead to a brighter and healthier future for millions worldwide.

I want to thank Representatives MCCOLLUM and CRENSHAW for their leadership on this bill, and I encourage my colleagues to support the bill,

which will be an invaluable investment in the future of millions of girls around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I am now pleased to yield 7 minutes to the gentlelady from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM), the author, along with Congressman CRENSHAW, of the corresponding House legislation.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, every year in the world's poorest countries, millions of girls are forced into marriage. Girls as young as age 8, but often 13, 14, and 15 years old, are sold by impoverished parents to settle debts or they are given away to become the wives of men who are years or even decades older. For a young girl, a child, to be forced into marriage to an adult man can only be described as a life of slavery, child molestation, and servitude. This is not marriage. It is a violation of the most basic human rights of a child.

On the floor today is S. 987, the International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act, a bill that was passed unanimously in the United States Senate. Let me repeat. This bill passed unanimously. Every Republican and every Democrat in the Senate supported it.

I want to commend Senators RICHARD DURBIN and OLYMPIA SNOWE, along with the other bipartisan cosponsors, for their tremendous efforts to protect vulnerable girls.

It is my honor to be the sponsor of the companion bill in the House, and I want to thank my Republican colleagues, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. LATHAM, for their bipartisan support for ending child marriage.

According to UNICEF, child marriage is “the most prevalent form of sexual abuse and exploitation of girls.” One in every seven girls in the developing world is forced into marriage sometime before the age of 15, millions of girls every year.

A 13-year-old that is forced into marriage will not go to school. She is most certainly guaranteed to be a victim of domestic violence. She is condemned to a lifetime of poverty, and she is more likely to die or be disabled in childbirth, and because she is a child, her infant is more likely to die.

HIV infection, maternal death, child death, gender-based violence, and extreme poverty are all deadly obstacles to development that destroys families, weakens communities, and destabilizes countries. Child marriage contributes to all of these destructive problems.

The photo I have with me was taken by a brilliant photojournalist, Stephanie Sinclair, who documented child marriage in Afghanistan. This 11-year-old girl in this photo, Ghulam, is not seated with her grandfather. The man next to this child is her husband-to-be. This little girl's father gave her away to be married because he was too poor to care for her. Ghulam's value to her husband comes from her ability to work in the field, care for animals, and

because she's a virgin. In this country, a man treating an 11-year-old as his wife would be imprisoned as a sexual predator, a pedophile. In Afghanistan, an 11-year-old's abuser is her husband.

□ 1950

It does not matter where in this world an 11-year-old girl is; she should never be anyone's wife. Today we have an opportunity to put the lives of vulnerable girls ahead of what is all too common at times partisan political games that take place in this House. Today we can show our constituents in the world that the life of every girl has value and limitless potential if they can grow up free from exploitation.

It is my firm belief that girls, girls everywhere—in America, in Ethiopia, in Afghanistan—deserve the right to enter adulthood with the freedom to decide for themselves who their husband will be. A girl is not a commodity to be traded. She is a precious member of a community who needs to be valued and allowed to grow into adulthood.

This Congress and the American people spend billions of tax dollars on foreign assistance. The U.S. has a direct interest and an opportunity to ensure that girls in the developing world can grow up to be healthy, productive, contributing members of their communities and their countries.

Not only do girls deserve the right to choose their future husband; they deserve the opportunity to get an education, to contribute their skills and their talents to develop their countries.

This legislation supports and expands the successful models already in place for promoting girls' education, protecting the human rights of girls, and eliminating the practice of child marriage. This bill authorizes existing State Department funds to be used to implement a strategy to protect girls from being forced into marriage. This bill does not spend one additional dollar that is not already appropriated by Congress for health, education, democracy, or other development activities.

Earlier this week, I was honored to receive a letter from Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, urging the House to pass S. 987. The letter says: "Child marriage is a harmful practice that treats young girls as property, stops their education, and robs them of their childhood and dignity." The archbishop goes on: "We thank you for your attention and dedication to passing this bill before Congress adjourns. By doing so, you may help make the difference between lives of opportunity or enslavement for millions of young girls in the developing world."

Mr. Speaker, child marriage is sanctioned sexual abuse that destroys girls' lives. The choice before this Congress is to do nothing as young girls and children continue to be enslaved, raped, and condemned to a life of abuse and poverty; or we can join the U.S. Senate and vote to pass this legislation

and have the United States stand with millions of girls today and tomorrow who seek nothing more than the freedom, the opportunity, and the time to be allowed to be children and grow into adulthood without being forced into marriage.

I thank Chairman BERMAN for his support, and I urge all my colleagues to vote to protect millions of girls in this world from sexual abuse.

THE ELDERS FOUNDATION,  
London, UK, December 13, 2010.

Hon. BETTY MCCOLLUM,  
Longworth House Office Building,  
Washington, DC.

Hon. ANDER CRENSHAW,  
Cannon House Office Building,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES MCCOLLUM AND CRENSHAW: As Chair of The Elders, I am writing to thank you for your leadership and support of the International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act (S. 987 and H.R. 2103). The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on 1 December 2010, and we now encourage the House of Representatives to pass this important measure.

As an independent group of global leaders, brought together by Nelson Mandela, we seek to address major causes of human suffering and promote the shared interests of humanity. Part of that effort involves speaking out about gender discrimination and the oppression of girls and women, issues we know many members of the House care about as well.

Child marriage is a harmful practice that treats young girls as property, stops their education and robs them of their childhood and dignity. Child brides are at far greater risk of dying in childbirth, while their children are also less likely to survive infancy than the children of older mothers. Often married to much older men, child brides are more vulnerable than their unmarried peers to sexually transmitted diseases including HIV and AIDS. There is compelling evidence that child marriage is a significant brake on the achievement of no less than six of the eight Millennium Development Goals. UNICEF estimates that in developing countries, 60 million girls now aged 20-24 were married under the age of 18. That number is likely to increase by 100 million over the next decade if these trends continue.

In our recent Washington Post op-ed, President Mary Robinson and I told the story of Dhaki, a 13-year-old girl from Ethiopia who was married to a man eleven years her senior. Her husband regularly forced himself upon her. Her cries were ignored by neighbours who shunned her for not respecting the wishes of her husband. Thanks to a local development program, Dhaki has since been freed from this torture and is continuing her education.

My fellow Elders and I strongly believe that the International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act can provide assistance to developing countries to help them reduce child marriage rates and promote the empowerment of girls and women worldwide. It will help innocent girls like Dhaki who were trapped in abusive, forced marriages that amount to a modern version of slavery. Please consider this letter a public endorsement of this legislation by The Elders.

We thank you for your attention and dedication to passing this bill before Congress adjourns. By doing so, you may help make the difference between lives of opportunity or enslavement for millions of young girls in the developing world.

God Bless You.

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU,  
Chair.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT).

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the International Protecting Girls By Preventing Child Marriage Act.

Recently, Nelson Mandela asked a group of the world's most thoughtful and experienced political and moral leaders to identify the largest issues fueling humanitarian problems, and forced child marriage is at the top of the list. Child marriage denies girls the chance to get a full education. Every country in the world that has advanced has educated their women as the first step. Child marriage prevents girls from contributing to their communities in the fullest way possible, and it contributes to the health crisis among women and babies in countries around the world.

In the next 10 years, it's estimated that over 100 million young girls will be forcibly married if we don't act, and the policy of the United States right now is to write more reports. With this bill, we can make a huge difference with no additional taxpayer moneys being spent. This bill gives clear guidelines on how already-appropriated moneys are to be spent in countries with the greatest problems, in ways that are culturally sensitive and community-based. It requires the State Department to track the issue annually as part of our human rights considerations.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will save lives and save dreams, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise, as do others on our side of the aisle today, as a supporter of efforts to combat child marriage in developing countries but in opposition to the Senate bill that we are considering today. I want you to know, before I make all my remarks, that I have actually seen forced child marriages in countries like Saudi Arabia firsthand. And it is a horrible thing, and I am very supportive of stopping that practice.

It's truly distressing to know that there still are countries where underage girls, like in Saudi Arabia, are compelled to marry much older men and lose their innocence and hope forever. The health of such young girls can suffer, as can their future opportunities to lead productive lives filled with normal social and economic opportunities, lives in which they can contribute with their full potential to their societies and their economies.

Concern over this problem is not a partisan issue. For example, in response to the plight of such young

women and to ensure that the prevention of child marriage is an integral part of U.S. efforts to promote respect for fundamental universally recognized human rights, in May of last year, Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN of the Foreign Affairs Committee expressly included pertinent language in the Republican alternative version for the State Department authorization bill, H.R. 2475.

However, much has changed in our domestic fiscal environment over the course of the last 2 years. Here at home, we have Americans who are losing their houses, their homes, State and local governments that are on the verge of bankruptcy, cities that are reducing their police and firefighting forces, an economy that is close to stalling due to lack of growth, and I could go on and on. But in light of all these facts, even the provision that had been included in the Republican proposal, or the authorization of State Department operations, last year would now need to be revised to cut spending and address the budgetary challenges that we face.

Regrettably, the bill adopted by the Senate that we are considering today does not reflect the current fiscal realities. The Congressional Budget Office has stated that the manner in which the provisions of this bill are drafted would result in \$108 million of authorized funding and \$67 million in actual outlays over the next few years, which is different than what we have heard here on the floor.

□ 2000

Further, despite inquiries to the Congressional Research Service and, through CRS, the State Department and Agency for International Development, there is apparently no available confirmed figure on exactly how much aid the United States already provides to fight child marriage overseas.

We do know that such U.S. assistance programs, programs that specifically include the prevention of child marriage as an objective, are already underway. But no one can tell us how much taxpayer funding is already being used to fight child marriage in developing countries.

To achieve the policy objectives we seek, while taking into account the economic challenges and limitations our Nation, our constituents are facing, this week Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN introduced a bill on the prevention of child marriage which enjoys the support of several of our colleagues in this House. That bill reflects modifications that Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN had sought to make to the Senate text before it came to the floor, but they were not accepted. Instead of the \$67 million in outlays over the next 5 years in the Senate text before us, the provisions of that bill would have resulted in less than \$1 million in potential costs.

The Republican alternative proposed the following:

First, we make it clear that child marriage is a violation of human rights and that its prevention should be a goal of U.S. foreign policy;

Second, since there's currently no legislative requirement for a U.S. strategy for assistance to prevent child marriage, we require the creation of such a multiyear strategy;

Third, we require a report within 1 year that would inform us on the progress of the required strategy and, perhaps more important, give us a comprehensive assessment of what we already are doing and funding in the effort to fight child marriage; and

Finally, that the practice of child marriage in other countries be reported each year as part of the annual Human Rights Report, and that the practice of child marriage also be reported for those countries that are potential recipients of U.S. security assistance.

I believe the alternative approach that was proposed would have achieved the goals we desire without adding to our economic burdens. Regrettably, we are faced with S. 987 and its price tag of \$67 million.

Mr. Speaker, having outlined my concerns with the bill before us today, I ask my colleagues to vote "no" on this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I assume the gentleman from Indiana has no further speakers.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I have no further speakers, but I will add one more comment if I may, and that is: Make no mistake about it—

Mr. BERMAN. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Well, I have not yielded my time, so I will use my time. I will be happy to use your time.

Mr. BERMAN. I would yield the gentleman such time as he may consume, up to a point, everything except 1 minute.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I won't take the full minute. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me just say that I don't want anyone to think we're not very sympathetic to the problem. We are, but the fiscal problems we face in this country right now are of paramount concern to all of us. And for that reason, we must bring this to a vote, and that's the reason why I ask for it.

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

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. And I do it simply in the context of urging my colleagues to vote for this legislation; to point out, number 1, that this is not an entitlement program. This is an authorization. It is not an appropriation.

To the extent, after we pass this legislation and it is signed into law, that the statement takes its appropriated resources and uses some of those resources to develop the strategic plan to work with these organizations for what the gentleman himself concedes is a

very important cause, those resources will come from some other form of resources. They will not be additional spending unless there is an appropriation. And this bill is not an appropriations bill; it is an authorization bill.

I urge my colleagues to support it. It's a critical issue.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act.

Child marriage is an international epidemic, with 100 million girls projected to marry in the next decade.

Not only do these young girls lose the opportunity to achieve their full potential, but they also are at risk for serious health consequences. Childbirth is five times more deadly for girls under 15 than for women in their twenties, and pregnancy is the most common cause of death for girls between the age of 15 and 19.

HIV/AIDS is another serious risk for child brides, as they frequently marry more sexually experienced men. In many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, girls under the age of 19 are more than twice as likely to contract HIV as boys of the same age.

Young girls frequently experience trauma and violence in these marriages.

A front page article in The New York Times on November 7, 2010 told the story of Farzana, a young girl living in Afghanistan.

Although she dreamed of being a teacher, Farzana was engaged at age 8 and married four years later. Her husband beat her for the first time on her wedding day, and the beatings continued for four years. She was forbidden to see her mother.

Farzana tells us, "I thought of running away from that house, but then I thought: what will happen to the name of my family? No one in our family has asked for divorce. So how can I be the first?"

Left with few choices, Farzana set herself on fire. After burning half her body, she lived—but only after 57 days in the hospital and multiple surgeries.

Farzana's dream of becoming a teacher was killed by a premature marriage.

She—and millions of others like her—deserve better.

The bill that we are considering today will help realize the dreams of many young girls like Farzana by expanding assistance to prevent child marriage and empower girls around the world.

Young girls everywhere deserve the opportunity to make their own decisions and determine their own destiny.

Mr. BERMAN. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 987.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. 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.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO HOUSE AMENDMENT TO SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 4853, TAX RELIEF, UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE REAUTHORIZATION, AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2010

Mr. POLIS (during consideration of S. 987), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111-682) on the resolution (H. Res. 1766) providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 4853) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CALLING ON STATE DEPARTMENT TO LIST VIETNAM AS A RELIGIOUS FREEDOM VIOLATOR

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 20) calling on the State Department to list the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as a "Country of Particular Concern" with respect to religious freedom, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 20

Whereas the Secretary of State, under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IRFA) and its amendment in 1999, and under authority delegated by the President, designates nations found guilty of "particularly severe violations of religious freedom as 'Countries of Particular Concern'" (CPC);

Whereas when the United States designates a nation as a CPC, the intent is to place protection and promotion of religious freedom as a diplomatic priority in bilateral relations, including taking actions specified in section 405(a)(b)(c) of the IRFA;

Whereas in November 2006, the State Department announced that the CPC designation was lifted from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam;

Whereas in explaining the lifting of the designation, State Department officials have stated that Vietnam "has turned a corner . . . and has what looks like religious freedom" and that Vietnam "does not meet the criteria for a severe violator of religious freedom" under terms set by the IRFA;

Whereas the criteria for designating countries as a CPC, as set forth in section 3(11) of the IRFA, are for "systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom including violations, such as—(A) torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; (B) prolonged detention without charges; (C) causing the disappearance of persons by the abduction or clandestine detention of those persons; and (D) other flagrant denial of the right of life, liberty, or the security of persons.";

Whereas in 2004, the Vietnamese National Assembly issued Directive 21/2004/PL-UBTVQH11 to regulate religious activities;

Whereas this directive contains several articles that seriously interfere with religious freedom and impose heavy government control on religious activities;

Whereas, on September 15, 2004, the State Department added Vietnam to the CPC list and Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, John Hanford, stated, "at least 45 religious believers remain imprisoned . . . Protestants have been pressured by authorities to renounce their faith, and some have been subjected to physical abuse.";

Whereas to avoid possible sanctions or other "commensurate actions" recommended by section 405(a)(b) of the IRFA, in May 2005 the United States and Vietnam reached a "binding agreement" consistent with section 405(c) of the IRFA;

Whereas although the terms of that "binding agreement" have never been fully publicized, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2006 Annual Report stated that the United States agreed to lift the CPC designation if the Government of Vietnam fully implemented legislation on religious freedom and rendered previous contradictory regulations obsolete, instructed local authorities strictly and completely to adhere to the new legislation to ensure compliance, facilitated the process by which religious congregations are able to open houses of worship, and gave special consideration to prisoners and cases of concern raised by the United States during the granting of prisoner amnesties;

Whereas the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV), the Hoa Hao Buddhists, and the Cao Dai groups continue to face unwarranted abuses because of their attempts to organize independently of the Vietnamese Government, including the detention and imprisonment of individual members of these religious communities;

Whereas villagers of Con Dau, Da Nang, have suffered severe violence, including beatings with batons and electric rods during a May 2010 incident, at the hands of Vietnamese Government officials for attempting to protect their historic Catholic cemetery and other parish properties from an attempted government forced sale of these properties;

Whereas over the last 3 years, 18 Hoa Hao Buddhists have been arrested for distributing sacred texts or publically protesting the religious restrictions placed on them by the Vietnamese Government, at least 12 remain in prison, including 4 sentenced in 2007 for staging a peaceful hunger strike;

Whereas five members of the Cao Dai religious community remain in prison for distributing materials in Cambodia critical of the Vietnamese Government's restrictions on Cao Dai religious practice, for this action they were sentenced to up to 13 years imprisonment;

Whereas five Khmer Buddhists were arrested in February 2007 for organizing peaceful demonstrations opposing the restriction of language training and ordination ceremonies for Khmer Buddhist monks;

Whereas Protestants continue to face beatings and other ill-treatment, harassment, fines, threats, and forced renunciations of faith;

Whereas according to Human Rights Watch, 355 Montagnard Protestants remain in prison, arrested after 2001 and 2004 demonstrations for land rights and religious freedom in the Central Highlands;

Whereas according to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, there are reports that some Montagnard Protestants were imprisoned because of their religious affiliation or activities or because religious leaders failed to inform on members of their religious commu-

nity who allegedly participated in demonstrations;

Whereas according to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2008 Annual Report, religious freedom advocates and human rights defenders Nguyen Van Dai, Le Thi Cong Nhan, and Fr. Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly are in prison under Article 88 of the Criminal Code and Fr. Nguyen Van Loi is being held without official detention orders under house arrest;

Whereas at least 15 individuals are being detained in long term house arrest for reasons related to their faith, including the most venerable Thich Quang Do and most of the leadership of the UBCV;

Whereas according to United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2008 Annual Report, there are still too many abuses of and restrictions on religious freedom;

Whereas UBCV monks and youth groups leaders are harassed and detained and charitable activities are denied, Vietnamese officials discriminate against ethnic minority Protestants denying medical, housing, and education benefits to children and families, an ethnic minority Protestant was beaten to death for refusing to recant his faith, over 600 Hmong Protestant churches are refused legal recognition or affiliation, leading to harassment, detentions, and home destructions, and a government handbook on religion instructs government officials to control existing religious practice, halt "enemy forces" from "abusing religion" to undermine the Vietnamese Government, and "overcome the extraordinary growth of Protestantism.";

Whereas since August 2008, the Vietnamese Government has arrested and sentenced at least eight individuals and beaten, tear-gassed, harassed, publicly slandered, and threatened Catholics engaged in peaceful activities seeking the return of Catholic Church properties confiscated by the Vietnamese Government after 1954 in Hanoi, including in the Thai Ha parish;

Whereas in September 2008, immediately preceding a visit by Deputy Secretary of State, John Negroponte, Vietnam arrested five journalists and human rights defenders, including two journalists and bloggers reportedly covering the prayer vigils held by Catholics in Hanoi; and

Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, prominent nongovernmental organizations, and representative associations of Vietnamese-American, Montagnard-American, and Khmer-American organizations have called for the redesignation of Vietnam as a CPC: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) strongly encourages the Department of State to place Vietnam on the list of "Countries of Particular Concern" for particularly severe violations of religious freedom;

(2) strongly condemns the ongoing and egregious violations of religious freedom in Vietnam, including the detention of religious leaders and the long-term imprisonment of individuals engaged in peaceful advocacy; and

(3) calls on Vietnam to lift restrictions on religious freedom and implement necessary legal and political reforms to protect religious freedom.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.