

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1112, which recognizes Pennsylvania State University's Dance Marathon fund-raiser for its enthusiastic continued support of the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital. This is an event which was first started in 1972. It raised \$2,000 in that year, and since then has continued on an annual basis and has raised a staggering amount of money for an incredibly good cause, the Children's Hospital at the Hershey Medical Center.

I know the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON), the sponsor of this resolution, is far more familiar with the history of this extraordinary effort than I am, and I would just as soon defer to him to talk about this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today, proudly, in support of House Resolution 1112, congratulating the Pennsylvania State University IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon—or THON as it's referred to at Penn State—on its continued success in support of the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital.

Pennsylvania State University, or Penn State, is a public research university founded in 1855 as the Farmers' High School of Pennsylvania. The school was renamed Pennsylvania State College in 1875, and in 1889 it became Pennsylvania State University. Today, Penn State offers 160 different majors, and over 43,000 students are enrolled at the university's main campus in State College, Pennsylvania, just miles from my home town.

Penn State has a strong reputation for its academic, athletic, and civic excellence. It is known as one of "the public ivies" and also is known for its community involvement. The Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital at the Penn State Medical Center in Hershey, Pennsylvania, is the only Children's Hospital located in south central Pennsylvania and the home of the region's only level 1 NICU. The hospital is a leader in several specialties and has ranked higher than 90 percent in patient satisfaction.

The Four Diamond Fund for the Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital was established to conquer childhood cancer by assisting children and their families through treatment. The fund has helped more than 2,000 families by offsetting the cost of treatment and additional expenses incurred during treatment.

The Penn State Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic organize a yearly dance marathon known as THON to raise funds for the Four Diamond Fund. The first THON took place in 1973 and has raised more than \$68.9 million since then. THON now has 15,000 student volunteers and is part of a year-long effort to raise funds and

awareness. This year's THON raised over \$7.8 million just last weekend for pediatric cancer patients. THON is the largest student-run philanthropy in the world and helps to make a difference in the lives of children with pediatric cancer.

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As a proud Penn State alumnus and Member representing them here in Washington, I want to congratulate Penn State—the dancers, the students, the individuals who make the donations, and the organizations involved in the THON event. I want to recognize them for their commitment to helping others. Their activities have truly touched the lives of so many.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, a little over a week ago, I spent a very memorable and moving afternoon watching Penn State students taking part in THON, the annual Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon. THON at Penn State is no small event. It remains the largest student-run philanthropy in the world which since 1977 has raised over \$68 million for the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Children's Hospital to fight childhood cancer.

THON involves over 15,000 student volunteers from Penn State's University Park campus and its 19 commonwealth campuses. Over 700 dancers take part in THON's marquee event: a 46 hour dance marathon at the Bryce Jordan Center. Thousands of other students join in as moralers, family and public relations, entertainment, donor relations, finance, communication, hospitality, logistics, technology, rules and regulations, and 'OPP'erations team members. These students' year-long efforts culminate in THON weekend—truly an amazing and uplifting sight to see.

All of the student dancers, volunteers and sponsors who participated in this year's THON deserve recognition from Congress and the thanks of Americans everywhere for their work to help end the scourge of childhood cancer. Their hard work resulted in raising \$7.83 million this year, breaking last year's record of \$7.5 million.

I am proud to say that my own daughter was among the hundreds of students who took part in THON 2010. Ali served on the Morale Committee "Jule Runnings" and helped lift the spirits of exhausted dancers, massage tired feet, and lead the hourly line-dance to keep everyone moving to stay motivated for their cause.

Penn State students are joined by hundreds of Four Diamonds Families from Penn State Children's Hospital who look forward to THON all year round. Four Diamond Families often develop lifetime friendships with the Fraternities, Sororities, and organizations that "adopt" them and spend time with them throughout the year. At THON weekend you will find the kids running throughout the event, participating in talent shows, playing games with the dancers, getting piggyback rides and even starting water-pistol fights with unsuspecting volunteers. The culmination of the weekend is Family Hour—when families share the struggle in the fight against childhood cancer with everyone in attendance. This

was a deeply emotionally moving hour that brought the struggle of childhood cancer into a personal light. Some of the stories had happy endings, some did not. But each story was an inspiration to keep fighting for the cure for childhood cancers. These children and families are why Penn State dances.

THON is a life changing event for anyone who attends or takes part in the event. And while Penn State students are hoping to change the lives of children affected by childhood cancer, more often than not it's the students whose lives are changed by participating in THON. Love truly does "Belong Here." We Are Penn State—For the Kids.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, again, I urge strong support of the resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1112.

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.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 362) expressing the support of the House of Representatives for the goals and ideals of the National School Lunch Program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 362

Whereas the National School Lunch Program is declared to be the policy of the United States Congress, as a measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food, by assisting the States, through grants-in-aid and other means, in providing an adequate supply of food and other facilities for the establishment, maintenance, operation, and expansion of nonprofit school lunch programs;

Whereas Federal regulations further state that participating schools shall ensure that children gain a full understanding of the relationship between proper eating and good health;

Whereas local educational agencies are responsible for collaborating with the school community to implement comprehensive nutrition and wellness policies in schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program;

Whereas all of the Nation's more than 49,000,000 pupils deserve access to high-quality, safe, nutritious meals available in the school setting, recognizing the link between adequate nourishment and educational performance;

Whereas children that experience hunger have been shown to be more likely to have

lower math scores, decreased attentiveness, increased likelihood of repeating a grade, increased absences and tardiness, and more referrals to special education services;

Whereas in 2009, the National School Lunch Program in the United States provided over 31,000,000 meals to school children daily, and must comply with rigorous State and Federal requirements, provide adequate food preparation and dining facilities, and cover costs to provide reimbursable meals including food, energy, transportation, labor, and other costs;

Whereas the National School Lunch Program must provide nutritious meals that are consistent with the goals of the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans;

Whereas the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies of Sciences recommends increased amounts of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in the National School Lunch Program, and that measures to improve the quality of meals may increase program costs and the need for administrative support;

Whereas school food service must operate on a nonprofit basis, and it is expected that the Federal subsidy for a free meal will, on average, cover the costs of producing a reimbursable meal;

Whereas the U.S. Department of Agriculture identified that the full cost to produce a reimbursable lunch generally exceeds the Federal reimbursement for a free lunch; and

Whereas revenue deficits in school meal programs must be offset by generating additional revenue from other sources that may otherwise support classroom instruction: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of the National School Lunch Program; and

(2) recognizes that America's pupils deserve access to high-quality, safe, nutritious meals available in the school setting.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on House Resolution 362 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COURTNEY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 362, which expresses the House of Representatives' support of the goals and ideals of the National School Lunch Program.

When it comes to education in our country, we traditionally focus on reading, writing, and extracurricular activities. We want to ensure that our students have access to well-trained teachers and to the tools they need to achieve academic success. However, we often forget that an essential tool to any child's academic success can also be found outside the classroom—in the school cafeteria.

Children who are hungry are at a disadvantage to their peers. Studies have shown that children who experience hunger throughout the day have higher likelihoods of receiving lower math scores, of having decreased attentiveness, increased absences and tardiness, and a higher chance of having to repeat a grade. Children who are not well nourished are also more likely to need referrals to special education services.

We know that nearly one-third of our Nation's children today are overweight and obese. Obesity rates have soared over the past four decades among children of all age groups, increasing nearly five-fold among those who are ages 6 through 11. Teaching children to have a healthy relationship with food and nutrition has never been more important.

First Lady Michelle Obama has initiated an exciting new program to help solve this challenge. The "Let's Move!" campaign directs attention to four areas: helping parents make healthy family choices; serving healthier food in schools; improving access to healthy, affordable food in communities; and increasing physical activity.

The National School Lunch Program can have a central role in the First Lady's efforts to help children develop healthy behaviors and to achieve their highest potential. For over 60 years, the National School Lunch Program has served as a safeguard for the health and nutritional well-being of our Nation's children. Every day, over 31 million meals are served to schoolchildren across the country.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to take note of the changes we have seen in school food menus over the years. In cafeterias in all of our communities, you might find menus which offer salad bars with fresh fruit, whole wheat pizza, or freshly made chicken wraps. The days of "mystery meat" are past. Today, students want to eat in the school cafeteria because the food tastes good and there are many food options.

However, we know from the most recent report from the Institute of Medicine that healthy foods cost more. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has reported that the full cost to produce a reimbursable lunch generally exceeds that of the Federal reimbursement for free lunches. To help address this concern, the President has requested an additional \$1 billion for child nutrition programs to help improve nutrition quality and to make these programs accessible to more children. These funds will go a long way in school cafeterias across the country.

I look forward to working with the President and with my colleagues, particularly with those on the House Education and Labor Committee, on this initiative.

Lastly, Madam Speaker, this week, each of us may be receiving visits from our local school food service directors. I want to acknowledge the fine work of the school food service workers who help to educate our children on nutri-

tion and who work hard every day to serve them safe and healthy meals. They are the front line in these efforts, and they deserve our thanks.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Representative WATSON of California for introducing this important resolution, which highlights the need for this program, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 362, expressing the support of the House of Representatives for the goals and ideals of the National School Lunch Program.

The National School Lunch Program was first established by the National School Lunch Act in 1946. The program enables students to purchase school lunches at a free or reduced price, focusing on students whose families cannot afford the full price of school meals. The program also promotes a basic understanding of nutrition and healthful eating.

In fiscal year 2009, over 31.2 million children participated in the School Lunch Program every day; 19.4 million of those children received their meals for free or at a reduced rate. Participation has steadily grown over the years since the program was first established over 60 years ago. The School Lunch Program is administered in approximately 101,000 schools and institutions by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. At the State level, it is administered by State education agencies through agreements with local school food authorities.

Public or nonprofit private schools, serving grades K through 12, and public or nonprofit private residential child care institutions may participate in the School Lunch Program. School districts and independent schools that participate in the Lunch Program receive cash subsidies from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for each meal or snack they serve and USDA foods or commodities. In return, they must serve lunches and snacks that meet Federal requirements, and they must offer free or reduced-price lunches to eligible children.

The National School Lunch Program helps to provide meals during the school day to students who may not otherwise be able to afford them. I stand in support of this resolution expressing support for the goals and the ideals of the National School Lunch Program and for the children that it serves. I ask for my colleagues' support.

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, in closing, again, I urge strong support for the resolution. It is a timely measure because, as the gentleman from Pennsylvania knows, today the Education and Labor Committee is holding

a hearing on reauthorizing the Child Nutrition Act. The School Lunch Program is really at the center of that effort. Again, I urge support of the resolution.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, the National School Lunch Program, as established by the National School Lunch Act, has been serving our nation's children for more than 60 years. This program safeguards the health and well-being of children by providing balanced meals for free or at low cost. Just last year, the Program provided more than 31 million nutritious meals to children across the nation. My bill, House Resolution 362 recognizes the outstanding service of the National School Lunch Program.

Hunger is on the rise in the United States. A 2007 USDA report found that 12.4 million children live in households that are considered to be food insecure. In my state, California, the unemployment rate exceeds 12% and is on the rise. More families will be struggling to put nutritious meals on the table. The National School Lunch Program performs an exemplary service in providing for the children of these families. With H. Res. 362, Congress can send a strong message to schools showing our continued support and give local programs the initiative to improve and advance.

By providing school lunches, Congress plays a vital role in ensuring that our nation's children are healthy, which is more important now than ever. Both obesity and malnutrition are on the rise, increasing the rates of Type 2 diabetes and heart problems among children. The current generation of children and their parents are accustomed to processed, fast food; a fast stop for a hamburger and fries or a quick fix meal from a box. Though these meals may be cheap and easy, they often lack the proper nutrition a developing child requires.

Over the past few years, schools have made a conscious effort to ensure that children receive balanced and nutritious meals. For many children, their school lunch may be the most nutritious meal they will eat each day. Simply by including fresh fruits and vegetables in their diets daily encourages children to make healthy choices. The Program is a tool that can help educate children about eating well even when they are at home.

Providing meals in school also increases a child's ability to learn effectively. Children who experience hunger in school have been shown to have lower math scores, decreased attentiveness, increased likelihood of repeating a grade, increased absences and tardiness, and more referrals to special education services. Simply by providing nutritious meals, Congress can improve student performance in school.

Supporting the National School Lunch Program brings to life its mission "to safeguard the health and well being of our nation's children." This is one crucial way in which we can protect the health of children nationwide. I hope you will all join me in supporting the National School Lunch Program, H. Res. 362.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 362, a resolution expressing the support of the House of Representatives for the goals and ideals of the National School Lunch Program. The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care insti-

tutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. I support this resolution because it recognizes the fundamental role the National School Lunch Program plays in making sure that every child, regardless of socioeconomic status, has the energy and nutrients he or she needs to learn and grow as scholars.

The National School Lunch Program has been providing for children in our public schools for over sixty years. It was established under the National School Lunch Act signed by President Harry Truman in 1946. In 2008, the National School Lunch Program provided meals for more than 30 million American children. Parents who work two and three jobs just to put a roof over their children's heads do not have to worry that their children will not have lunch when they get to school every day. In 1998, Congress expanded this program to include reimbursement for snacks that children receive at afterschool programs. Children receive nutritious snacks so they have the energy and ability to focus during valuable tutoring sessions and enriching extra-curricular lessons.

Mr. Speaker, during these difficult economic times, the National School Lunch Program is even more important than usual. In September 2009, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities released an analysis of how the recession had affected working families thus far. According to that report, the median household income declined 3.6 percent in 2008 after adjusting for inflation, the largest single-year decline on record. The poverty rate rose to 13.2 percent, its highest level since 1997. The number of people in poverty hit 39.8 million, the highest level since 1960. While Congress works to turn this recession around by passing landmark legislation like the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Jobs for Main Street Act, programs such as the National School Lunch Program give working parents the peace of mind that comes with knowing that their children are taken care of. If a parent loses his job and his family falls into poverty, he does not have to worry that his children will have nutritious lunches and snacks provided every day at school. That is one less thing for hard-working families to worry about in these tough times.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the National School Lunch Program for its dedication feeding our most valuable population in this country—our children. Without nutritious food, low-income children would have extreme difficulties focusing in school and therefore would be at a great disadvantage academically. The National School Lunch Program does its part to ensure that all children have the energy they need to learn and succeed every day in school. I ask my fellow colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 362.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the actions of the House of Representatives in addressing the need for America's students to receive high-quality, safe, nutritious meals in school. I strongly support H. Res. 362 and urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

Many of our children depend on the National School Lunch Program for nutritious meals. In Fiscal Year 2007, more than 30.5 million children each day got their lunch through the National School Lunch Program. In my home state of Georgia, about 74 percent of public school students eat school

lunch. In some counties, in the Fourth District of Georgia, up to 90 percent of students participate in the school lunch program. For many of the children in my District, school lunch fuels their day.

I applaud Representative WATSON for introducing this resolution. It recognizes the link between proper eating, good health, and educational performance. We should do all we can to ensure that our children continue to have nutritious meal options available through the National School Lunch Program.

I join the chairman in urging my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WU). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 362, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. COURTNEY. 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.

READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1111) designating March 2, 2010, as "Read Across America Day".

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1111

Whereas reading is a basic requirement for quality education and professional success, and is a source of pleasure throughout life;

Whereas the people of the United States must be able to read if the United States is to remain competitive in the global economy;

Whereas Congress has placed great emphasis on reading intervention that has been proven effective through scientifically valid research and providing additional resources for reading assistance; and

Whereas more than 50 national organizations concerned about reading and education have joined with the National Education Association to use March 2 to celebrate reading and the birth of Theodor Geisel, also known as Dr. Seuss: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors Theodor Geisel, also known as Dr. Seuss, for his success in encouraging children to discover the joy of reading;

(2) honors the 13th anniversary of Read Across America Day;

(3) encourages parents to read with their children for at least 30 minutes on Read Across America Day in honor of the commitment of the House of Representatives to building a Nation of readers; and