

southwest boundary of the Barona Indian Reservation.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to clarify the legal description of the land placed into trust for the Barona Band of Mission Indians in 2004; and

(2) to remove all doubt relating to the specific parcels of land that Congress has placed into trust for the Barona Band of Mission Indians.

SEC. 3. LAND TRANSFER.

Section 121 of the Native American Technical Corrections Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-204; 118 Stat. 544) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in subsection (a) is land comprising approximately 86.87 acres in San Diego County, California, and described more particularly as follows: T. 14 S., R. 1 E. San Bernardino Meridian; Section 21, SW¼ SW¼, excepting the north 475 ft.; W½ SE¼ SW¼, excepting the north 475 ft.; E½ SE¼ SW¼, excepting the north 350 ft.; Together with that portion W½ SE¼, lying southwesterly of the following line: Beginning at the intersection of the southerly line of said SE¼ Section 21 with the westerly boundary of Rancho Canada De San Vicente Y Mesa Del Padre Barona as shown on United States Government Resurvey approved January 21, 1939; thence northwesterly along said boundary to an intersection with the westerly line of said SE¼; containing 68.75 acres more or less; Section 28, NW¼ NW¼, excepting the east 750 ft.; containing 17.02 acres more or less.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(d) CLARIFICATIONS.—

“(1) EFFECT ON SECTION.—The provisions of subsection (c) shall apply to the land described in subsection (b), as in effect on the day after the date of enactment of the Barona Band of Mission Indians Land Transfer Clarification Act of 2012.

“(2) EFFECT ON PRIVATE LAND.—The parcel of private, non-Indian land referenced in subsection (a) and described in subsection (b), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Barona Band of Mission Indians Land Transfer Clarification Act of 2012, but excluded from the revised description of the land in subsection (b) was not intended to be—

“(A) held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Band; or

“(B) considered to be a part of the reservation of the Band.”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 462—RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE CHALLENGES FACED BY CHILDREN IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM, ACKNOWLEDGING THE DEDICATION OF FOSTER CARE PARENTS, ADVOCATES, AND WORKERS, AND ENCOURAGING CONGRESS TO IMPLEMENT POLICY TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF CHILDREN IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 462

Whereas National Foster Care Month was established more than 20 years ago to bring foster care issues to the forefront, highlight the importance of permanency for every child, and recognize the essential role that foster parents, social workers, and advocates have in the lives of children in foster care throughout the United States;

Whereas all children deserve a safe, loving, and permanent home;

Whereas the primary goal of the foster care system is to ensure the safety and well-being of children while working to provide a safe, loving, and permanent home for each child;

Whereas there are approximately 408,000 children living in foster care;

Whereas there were approximately 254,000 youth that entered the foster care system in 2010, while over 107,000 youth were eligible and awaiting adoption at the end of 2010;

Whereas children in foster care experience an average of 3 different placements, which often leads to disruption of routines and the need to change schools and move away from siblings, extended families, and familiar surroundings;

Whereas youth in foster care are much more likely to face educational instability with 65 percent of former foster children experiencing at least 7 school changes while in care;

Whereas children of color are more likely to stay in the foster care system for longer periods of time and are less likely to be reunited with their biological families;

Whereas foster parents are the front-line caregivers for children who cannot safely remain with their biological parents and provide physical care, emotional support, education advocacy, and are the largest single source of families providing permanent homes for children leaving foster care to adoption;

Whereas children in foster care who are placed with relatives, compared to children placed with nonrelatives, have more stability, including fewer changes in placements, have more positive perceptions of their placements, are more likely to be placed with their siblings, and demonstrate fewer behavioral problems;

Whereas an increased emphasis on prevention and reunification services is necessary to reduce the number of children that are forced to remain in the foster care system;

Whereas more than 27,900 youth “age out” of foster care without a legal permanent connection to an adult or family;

Whereas children who age out of foster care may lack the security or support of a biological or adoptive family and frequently struggle to secure affordable housing, obtain health insurance, pursue higher education, and acquire adequate employment;

Whereas foster care is intended to be a temporary placement, but children remain in the foster care system for an average of 2 years;

Whereas volunteers, guardians, mentors, and workers in the child-protective-services community play a vital role in improving the safety of the most valuable youth and work hard to increase permanency through reunification, adoption, and guardianship;

Whereas due to heavy caseloads and limited resources, the average tenure for a worker in child protection services is just 3 years;

Whereas on average, 8.5 percent of the positions in child protective services remain vacant;

Whereas States, localities, and communities should be encouraged to invest resources in preventative and reunification services and postpermanency programs to

ensure that more children in foster care are provided with safe, loving, and permanent placements;

Whereas Federal legislation over the past 3 decades, including the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-272), the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (Public Law 105-89), the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-351), and the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (Public Law 112-34) provided new investments and services to improve the outcomes of children in the foster care system;

Whereas May is an appropriate month to designate as National Foster Care Month to provide an opportunity to acknowledge the child-welfare workforce, foster parents, advocacy community, and mentors for their dedication, accomplishments, and positive impact they have on the lives of children; and

Whereas much remains to be done to ensure that all children have a safe, loving, nurturing, and permanent family, regardless of age or special needs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes National Foster Care Month as an opportunity to raise awareness about the challenges faced by children in the foster care system, acknowledging the dedication of foster care parents, advocates, and workers, and encouraging Congress to implement policy to improve the lives of children in the foster care system;

(2) encourages Congress to implement policy to improve the lives of children in the foster care system;

(3) supports the designation of May as National Foster Care Month;

(4) acknowledges the special needs of children in the foster care system;

(5) recognizes foster youth throughout the United States for their ongoing tenacity, courage, and resilience while facing life challenges;

(6) acknowledges the exceptional alumni of the foster care system who serve as advocates and role models for youth who remain in care;

(7) honors the commitment and dedication of the individuals who work tirelessly to provide assistance and services to children in the foster care system; and

(8) reaffirms the need to continue working to improve the outcomes of all children in the foster care system through parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) and other programs designed to—

(A) support vulnerable families;

(B) invest in prevention and reunification services;

(C) promote adoption and guardianship in cases where reunification is not in the best interests of the child;

(D) adequately serve those children brought into the foster care system; and

(E) facilitate the successful transition into adulthood for children that “age out” of the foster care system.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, as cofounders and coauthors of the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth, Senator LANDRIEU and I offer a resolution to recognize May as National Foster Care Month.

The resolution is an opportunity to raise awareness about the challenges faced by children in the foster care system. It is also a time to acknowledge the dedication of foster care parents, advocates, and workers who are changing the lives of children every day.

National Foster Care Month was established more than 20 years ago to bring foster care issues to the forefront. Today we continue to see almost a half million children who are unable to remain at home because of abuse or neglect or because of other family issues.

During this separation, foster youth face loneliness, instability, and grief. Unfortunately, children in foster care experience an average of three different placements which often lead to disruption of routines. Some are required to change schools and move away from siblings, extended families, and familiar surroundings. They face educational instability and, as a result, score lower on all academic measures than peers.

Foster youth have to overcome misperceptions and stigmas and deal with emotional pain and trauma that comes from such separation. It becomes a reality for many children every day. In 2010, about 254,000 children entered into care. While many are reunified with their families or adopted into new ones, more than 107,000 children were awaiting adoption at the end of 2010.

The Senate Caucus on Foster Youth is providing a voice for these foster young people. Senator LANDRIEU and I founded this caucus in 2009 to raise awareness of issues challenging foster youth, including educational stability, substance abuse, sexual exploitation, and the overprescription of psychotropic drugs.

We hear from youth about policies that affect their quality of life. Among other activities, the caucus sponsors a speakers series to bring the best ideas from the field to us policymakers in Washington, DC.

Today I invite my colleagues to join us on this caucus, to get involved and to make a difference. Senator LANDRIEU and I created the foster care caucus in the Senate to focus on all youth in the system, but we have particular focus on older children who may lack the security or support of a biological or adoptive family. These kids tend to age out of the foster care system, then struggle in creating a stable life that many of us often take for granted. More than 27,900 youth age out of foster care without a legal, permanent connection to an adult or family. We must focus on how to reduce this number from year to year. We have made great strides over the years, and we have done so in a bipartisan manner.

In 2006, the Senate Finance Committee held the first hearings on child welfare in more than a decade. The hearings led to passage of the Child and Family Services Improvement Act, which improved programs designed to help troubled families, provided grants for States and community organizations to combat methamphetamine addiction and other substance abuse, and increased case worker visits for children in foster care. It also supported grants to strengthen and improve col-

laboration between courts and child welfare agencies.

In 2008 I introduced the bill that became the Fostering Connection to Success and Increasing Adoption Act. This bipartisan bill made it easier for children to stay in their own communities and be adopted by their own relatives, including grandparents, aunts, and uncles. It provided incentives for States to move children from foster care to permanent adoptive homes, and it made all children with special needs eligible for Federal adoption assistance.

The law also broke new ground by establishing opportunities to help kids who age out of the foster care system at age 18 by giving States the option to extend their care in helping them pursue educational and vocational training.

Last year, to try to prevent children from having to enter the foster care system in the first place, I worked to reauthorize grants that support families who struggle with substance abuse and improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of children who are not in their homes or are likely to be removed from their homes because of substance abuse by parents.

Children in the foster care system yearn for permanency, and these grants help keep families together when possible so the children are not subject to the many difficulties they face in the foster care system.

But Congress, as you know, must be vigilant. We must always keep our eyes on the prize; that is, a safe, loving and permanent home for every child. We must always stress prevention as well as reunification and the reunification services because these two key components are necessary to reduce the number of children who are forced to remain in foster care.

Finally, let me take a moment to pay tribute to many volunteers, guardians, mentors, and workers in the child protective service community. Every person in this field plays a vital role in improving the safety of our most vulnerable youth, and our country is better off for that. They are dedicated and important to thousands of children and can be very positive influences for families across the country.

This month of May is the time to pay tribute to the community. It is time to remember these young people. More important, it is time to encourage others to get involved and, hence, make a difference. It is my hope that this awareness will extend beyond me, and people will recognize the need to step up and to fight for these vulnerable youth on a daily basis. I encourage Members to cosponsor our resolution, and I especially appreciate the cooperation and working relationship I have had with Senator LANDRIEU on this subject of adoption, foster care, and, in particular, for aging-out young people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I appreciate the eloquent statement our colleague from Iowa has put into the RECORD and his passionate advocacy on behalf of this special group of children in America. From his position as senior member on the Finance Committee, both serving as chair and as ranking member, his support has been essential to their well-being. In a committee that has a lot of important issues, from tax reform to international trade, the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, never fails to keep the needs of foster care children and their families and the support community on the front of that agenda. I could not have a better partner, and I am very grateful for his partnership on this issue and his friendship.

I also want to recognize some of our colleagues from the House: Representative KAREN BASS, Representative TOM MARINO, Representative MICHELE BACHMAN, and Representative JIM McDERMOTT, who worked very closely with Senator GRASSLEY and myself. As you can see, this is across party lines, across geographic lines, and across different political philosophies.

We want to say one thing very loud and clear to the country: Foster children are not criminals. They are not delinquents. They are children who are in desperate need of love and care and support. Our foster care system in many ways works beautifully and in some ways needs, of course, to be fixed, repaired, and strengthened. But overall the foster care system should, at all times, be temporary. It is a temporary place for children to go to be protected and healed and nurtured until they can be returned to their birth family or to their extended family with sibling groups intact or until they can be processed to a kinship adoption, which Senator GRASSLEY has been a tremendous advocate for, or to a domestic adoption.

I cannot add anything to the very excellent and comprehensive statement the Senator made. I would like to add just a few points. Because of the work many of us have done—and we do not hear good news around here that often, so I want to share that in the last 20 years, because of the work that our group has done, and others in the Congress, we have doubled the amount of children being adopted out of the foster care system. That is a tremendous victory because of the legislation that has been passed, the focus across party lines.

In 1990 we only adopted 14,000 children out of foster care. In the last year of record, 2010, we adopted 53,000. It is a tripling of adoptions out of foster care.

I do not have the numbers in front of me for reunifications, but Senator GRASSLEY and I know that number has increased as well. We are making progress in the bills we are proposing and passing, the appropriations that we are investing. It has not been a lot more money over the last few years. It

has just been a real strategic focus which I would like to believe our caucus and the adoption caucus as well, the foster care caucus, has helped to produce.

We have had more adoptions out of foster care. We have had more reunifications out of foster care. We have shortened the time that children are in foster care. But we have, and in this month of May still have, many challenges. That is why Senator GRASSLEY and I urge our colleagues to join us in this resolution, S. Res. 462. Be a cosponsor. Step up and say by your cosponsorship that you care about this issue, that you want to help us continue to make progress.

I want to remember our former colleague, John Chafee, who, when he was in the Senate, was an extraordinary advocate for foster care children. We named the John Chafee Foster Care Independence Program in his honor. As Senator GRASSLEY said, we are making progress with helping our children who age out when we failed to reunite them with their birth family, we failed to find them an adoptive home. They are aging out, but we are trying to give them more help and support. That is still a challenge.

Some of our Members are working on foster children and school choice. If children are brought into the foster care system and they are separated from their families, it is quite traumatic. Of course it is for their own good. Sometimes their families are being abusive. Sometimes their families are being grossly negligent. Unfortunately, in this day and age sometimes their families are deported and they are in the home alone. We want to make sure the children get to stay at least in the school of their choice. It is one thing to be pulled from your family; it is another thing to have to lose your family 1 day and your school the next day and all of your teachers, all of your friends.

There is legislation pending that would give foster children the opportunity to stay in the school they are in when they enter care, if that is their choice. That would be a great reform.

We also want to continue to promote kinship adoption, reaching out to the extended family, trying to keep children placed in their extended families who are willing and responsible to raise them—but not placing children with kin if the kin or the relatives are not responsible and not willing; that is not a solution.

Finally, we want to promote quality foster families. This is a problem that is easily solvable. It seems like it is a lot, this number, 450-some-odd thousand children. But it represents only one-half of 1 percent of all children in America. This is not a big number. It sounds like it when we say 450,000, but the percentage, one-half of 1 percent—we calculated it 1 day on just the back of a napkin. If one family for every four churches in America would say yes to taking in a foster child or to

adopt a child out of foster care, there would be no more orphans in our country.

Again, if one family out of every four churches stepped up for the children available for adoption, we would have no more orphans in America. Then we could focus on recruiting quality foster families who can help these children to find their way—to find their way back to their biological families with their sibling groups intact or find their way to a new family who will love them and nurture them and protect them and support them forever.

That is what families do. We do not support our children until they are 18 and let them go on their merry way. We are with them until the last breath. That is what parents do. We are with our children forever. Every child in this world deserves a forever family.

Senator GRASSLEY and I have come together. We work to strengthen our foster care system. We know it is broken in places. We know it can be fixed. We work on fixing it every day.

I thank our colleagues who have joined us in just recognizing Foster Care Month. As Senator GRASSLEY said in his conclusion, and I will say in mine, we want to thank everyone who helps on this every month of the year, not just May. We want to thank the teachers who reach out especially to the foster children they know are in their classrooms. We want to thank the judges who process their cases quickly.

I particularly want to thank the CASA workers. I am a big believer in CASA, Court Appointed Special Advocates. I think it is a great organization for all the volunteers who worked to help make our foster care system in America better.

Again, this is S. Res. 462.

I would like to thank our counterparts in the House.

It has been a real joy and pleasure to work with Senator GRASSLEY these many years on helping to promote the very best practices in the country on reforming our foster care system in America and trying to help who we can around the world.

SENATE RESOLUTION 463—DESIGNATING MAY 19, 2012, AS “NATIONAL KIDS TO PARKS DAY”

Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 463

Whereas the second annual National Kids to Parks Day will be celebrated on May 19, 2012;

Whereas the goal of National Kids to Parks Day is to empower young people and encourage families to get outdoors and visit the parks of the United States;

Whereas, on National Kids to Parks Day, individuals from rural and urban areas of the United States can be reintroduced to the splendid National Parks and State and neighborhood parks that are located in their communities;

Whereas communities across the United States offer a variety of natural resources and public land, often with free access, to individuals seeking outdoor recreation;

Whereas the people of the United States should encourage young people to lead a more active lifestyle, as too many young people in the United States are overweight or obese;

Whereas National Kids to Parks Day is an opportunity for families to take a break from their busy lives and come together for a day of wholesome fun; and

Whereas National Kids to Parks Day aims to broaden the appreciation of young people for nature and the outdoors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 19, 2012, as “National Kids to Parks Day”;

(2) recognizes the importance of outdoor recreation and the preservation of open spaces to the health of the young people of the United States; and

(3) calls on the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 464—COMMEMORATING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota (for himself and Mr. THUNE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 464

Whereas on January 2, 1942, the War Department established Rapid City Army Air Base in South Dakota as a training location for B-17 Flying Fortress crews;

Whereas thousands of pilots, navigators, radio operators, and gunners were trained at Rapid City Army Air Base and went on to support the allied efforts in World War II;

Whereas on June 13, 1953, President Dwight D. Eisenhower visited the base and dedicated it in memory of Brigadier General Richard E. Ellsworth;

Whereas during the Cold War, Ellsworth Air Force Base maintained 2 legs of the strategic triad, strategic bombardment, and intercontinental ballistic missiles, earning the title “The Showplace of Strategic Air Command”;

Whereas 2012 marks the 25th year of the B-1B Lancer mission at Ellsworth Air Force Base;

Whereas in 1999, B-1Bs from Ellsworth Air Force Base flew over 100 combat missions in support of NATO forces in Operation Allied Force in Kosovo;

Whereas Ellsworth Air Force Base has played a crucial role in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, and Operation Enduring Freedom, deploying over 10,000 personnel and flying over 6,000 combat sorties in those operations;

Whereas the first ever B-1B global strike mission launched from the United States came from Ellsworth Air Force Base on March 30, 2011, striking targets in Libya before refueling, rearming, and hitting additional targets in Libya on the return;

Whereas, for 70 years, Ellsworth Air Force Base has served as an integral part of the defense strategy of the United States and served as the proud home to thousands of bomber pilots, navigators, radio operators, gunners, missile launch control facility personnel, and aircraft and missile maintenance personnel;

Whereas, the personnel from Ellsworth Air Force Base have a history of compiling some