

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 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 children entering foster care often confront the widespread misperception that children in foster care are disruptive, unruly, and dangerous, even though placement in foster care is based on the actions of a parent or guardian, not the child;

Whereas children who age out of foster care lack the security and 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 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 during 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), the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (Public Law 112-34), and the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (Public Law 113-183) provided new investments and services to improve the outcomes of children in the foster care system;

Whereas May 2015 is an appropriate month to designate as “National Foster Care Month” to provide an opportunity to acknowledge the accomplishments of the child-welfare workforce, foster parents, the advocacy community, and mentors for their dedication, accomplishments, and positive impact 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) supports the designation of May 2015 as “National Foster Care Month”;

(2) recognizes National Foster Care Month as an opportunity to raise awareness about the challenges that children face in the foster care system;

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

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

(5) recognizes youth in foster care 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—

(A) to support vulnerable families;

(B) to invest in prevention and reunification services;

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

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

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

SENATE RESOLUTION 169—EX-PRESSING CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF DR. WARREN WEINSTEIN, AND COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND WORK OF DR. WARREN WEINSTEIN

Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 169

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein was abducted in Lahore, Pakistan on August 13, 2011, and was held captive by al-Qaeda for nearly 4 years;

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein is widely recognized as a scholar and humanitarian who devoted his life to improving the lives of men, women, and children around the world;

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein selflessly suffered financial hardships and separation from his family, as many foreign service, military, development, and journalism personnel do, in order to serve the greater good and those in need;

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein was a Fulbright scholar who earned a master's degree and a Ph.D. in international law and economics from Columbia University;

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein served as a tenured professor with the political science department at SUNY Oswego;

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein served for 9 years at the Africa Bureau of the United States Agency for International Development and for 7 years at the International Finance Corporation, a division of the World Bank Group;

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein served as a Peace Corps Director in Togo and Ivory Coast;

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein served for 7 years as a development advisor in Pakistan for J.E. & Austin Associates, a contractor to the United States Agency for International Development;

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein was proficient in at least 7 languages;

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein had a home in Rockville, Maryland, where he lived with his family; and

Whereas Dr. Warren Weinstein is survived by his wife, 2 daughters, a son-in-law, a granddaughter, and a grandson: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) mourns the death of Dr. Warren Weinstein and expresses condolences to his family;

(2) salutes Dr. Warren Weinstein for his lifelong commitment to humanitarian development work in challenging and dangerous circumstances;

(3) calls on the United States to make the return of all citizens of the United States held captive abroad, regardless of the different circumstances, a top priority and to provide a coordinated and consistent approach to supporting hostages and the families of the hostages; and

(4) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the family of Dr. Warren Weinstein.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1199. Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 97, supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

SA 1200. Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 97, *supra*.

SA 1201. Mr. CORKER (for Mr. LEE) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1200 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) to the resolution S. Res. 97, *supra*.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1199. Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 97, supporting the goals of International Women's Day; as follows:

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following: “That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women's Day;

(2) recognizes that the empowerment of women is inextricably linked to the potential of countries to generate economic growth, sustainable democracy, and inclusive security;

(3) recognizes and honors individuals in the United States and around the world, including women who are human rights defenders, who have worked throughout history to ensure that women are guaranteed equality and basic human rights;

(4) reaffirms the commitment to ending discrimination and violence against women and girls, to ensuring the safety and welfare of women and girls, to pursuing policies that guarantee the basic human rights of women and girls worldwide, and to promoting meaningful and significant participation of women in all aspects of their societies and communities;

(5) supports efforts to establish a sustainable, measurable and global development framework that seeks to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment; and

(6) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women's Day with appropriate programs and activities.

SA 1200. Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 97, supporting the goals of International Women's Day; as follows:

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas there are more than 3,500,000,000 women in the world as of March 2015;

Whereas women around the world have fundamental rights, participate in the political, social, and economic life of their communities, play a critical role in providing and caring for their families, contribute substantially to the growth of economies and the prevention of conflict, and, as farmers and caregivers, play an important role in advancing food security for their communities; Whereas the advancement of women around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United States;

Whereas on September 24, 2014, the President highlighted the United States' support for the advancement of women, noting: “Where women are full participants in a country's politics or economy, societies are more likely to succeed. And that's why we support the participation of women in parliaments and peace processes, schools, and the economy.”;

Whereas women remain underrepresented in conflict prevention and conflict resolution

efforts, despite proven success by women in conflict-affected regions in moderating violent extremism, countering terrorism, resolving disputes through nonviolent mediation and negotiation, and stabilizing societies by improving access to peace and security services, institutions, and decision-making venues;

Whereas on December 19, 2011, the Obama Administration launched the first United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (referred to in this preamble as the “National Action Plan”) that includes a comprehensive set of national commitments to advance the active participation of women in decisionmaking relating to matters of war and peace;

Whereas the National Action Plan states the following: “Deadly conflicts can be more effectively avoided, and peace can be best forged and sustained, when women become equal partners in all aspects of peace-building and conflict prevention, when their lives are protected, their experiences considered, and their voices heard.”;

Whereas the National Action Plan requires the National Security Council staff to coordinate a comprehensive review of, and update to, the National Action Plan in 2015 with consultation from international partners and civil society organizations;

Whereas according to the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the Department of State, the full and meaningful participation of women in security forces vastly enhances the forces’ effectiveness;

Whereas the ability of women and girls to realize their full potential is critical to the ability of a country to achieve strong and lasting economic growth and political and social stability;

Whereas according to the International Monetary Fund, “focusing on the needs and empowerment of women is one of the keys to human development”;

Whereas according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, ⅓ of the 781,000,000 illiterate people in the world are female;

Whereas according to the United States Agency for International Development, compared to uneducated women, “educated women are less likely to marry early and more likely to have smaller and healthier families. They are also more likely to get a job and earn a higher wage.”;

Whereas according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the majority of women living in rural areas of the developing world are heavily engaged in agricultural labor, yet they receive less credit, land, agricultural inputs, and training than their male counterparts;

Whereas according to the United Nations, women have access to fewer income-earning opportunities and are more likely to manage the household and engage in agricultural work, making women more vulnerable to economic insecurity caused by natural disasters and long-term changes in weather patterns;

Whereas according to the World Bank, women own or partly own more than ⅓ of small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries, and 40 percent of the global workforce is female, yet women entrepreneurs and employers have disproportionately less access to capital and other financial services compared to men;

Whereas despite strides in recent decades, women around the world continue to face significant obstacles in all aspects of their lives, including underrepresentation in all aspects of public life, denial of basic human rights, and discrimination;

Whereas despite achievements by individual female leaders, women around the

world are still vastly underrepresented in high-level positions and in national and local legislatures and governments and, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women account for only 21.9 percent of national parliamentarians;

Whereas it is estimated that 1 in 3 women around the world has experienced some form of physical or sexual violence;

Whereas according to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime’s 2012 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, women account for between 55 and 60 percent of all trafficking victims detected worldwide, and women and girls together make up approximately 75 percent of all known trafficking victims;

Whereas 603,000,000 women live in countries where domestic violence has not been criminalized;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, approximately 800 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth every day, with 99 percent of all maternal deaths occurring in developing countries;

Whereas on August 10, 2012, the President announced the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, the first interagency strategy to address gender-based violence around the world;

Whereas violence against women and girls impedes progress in meeting many international global development goals, including efforts to stem maternal mortality and the spread of HIV/AIDS;

Whereas on October 11, 2013, the President strongly condemned the practice of child marriage;

Whereas according to the International Center for Research on Women, ⅓ of girls in the developing world are married before the age of 18, and 1 in 9 girls is married before the age of 15;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, suicide is the leading cause of death for girls ages 15 to 19, followed by complications from pregnancy and childbirth;

Whereas it is imperative to alleviate violence and discrimination against women and afford women every opportunity to be full and productive members of their communities;

Whereas 2015 marks the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, where 189 countries committed to integrating gender equality into all dimensions of society;

Whereas 2015 marks the deadline for meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and progress towards meeting the targets for gender equality and women’s empowerment remains uneven; and

Whereas March 8 is recognized each year as International Women’s Day, a global day to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women past, present, and future, and to recognize the obstacles that women still face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

SA 1201. Mr. CORKER (for Mr. LEE) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1200 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) to the resolution S. Res. 97, supporting the goals of International Women’s Day; as follows:

Strike the 13th whereas clause of the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas according to the United States Agency for International Development, compared to uneducated women, educated women are less likely to marry as children and more likely to have healthier families;

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 5, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., in room 328A of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Review of the U.S. Grain Standards Act.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 5, 2015, at 10:30 a.m., in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a Subcommittee hearing entitled “Surface Transportation Reauthorization: The Importance of a Long Term Reauthorization.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 5, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on May 5, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “Continuing America’s Leadership: Realizing the Promise of Precision Medicine for Patients.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 5, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR-418 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 5, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR AND NUCLEAR SAFETY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear