

"SIMARRA" is not merely yet another second chance program, demanding leniency from the criminal justice system for repentant mothers.

Instead, H.R. 5130 asks our national criminal justice system what it can do for those mothers' children—young Americans born and relegated to a life of nearly impossible odds of survival.

"SIMARRA" provides that first chance—a first chance for American infants—that many of their mothers, born themselves to mothers behind bars, never received.

We have a unique opportunity to nurture infants by uniting them with their mothers through the "SIMARRA Act of 2016," better preparing them to endure the harsh realities of this world.

Further, H.R. 5130 simultaneously implements risk and needs assessments, risk reduction incentives, and risk and recidivism reduction programs to address the healthcare, safety and rehabilitative needs of new-mother-inmates while they serve their sentence.

The most likely long-term mechanism through which imprisonment affects infant mortality is through its effects on maternal health.

Mothers are fighting to keep their children alive and we, as guardians, have an opportunity to say that the buck stops here when it comes to the next generation—any sins that the mother may have committed need not be visited upon her child.

Mr. Speaker, as a nation we do not have a person to waste, so we must embrace practices that nurture the bonds between mother and child.

In observance of May 8, 2016, we will honor mothers, grandmothers, mothers-in-law, stepmothers, foster mothers and godmothers who take in children, mothers who adopt, those who act as mothers, and those women who have no relations by blood, but who give the gift of mothering to children.

In hindsight, we can never thank our mothers enough for all the sacrifices they have made for us.

Thus, in our reflection, let us include the children of all mothers regardless of the circumstances under which they came to walk the Earth.

I wish every mother a safe and happy Mother's Day this Sunday and hope to echo the message that we value your contributions and will safeguard your efforts because they benefit us all.

#### RECOGNIZING THE SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**HON. MARC A. VEASEY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 6, 2016*

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Southeast Community Development Corporation, a non-profit organization in Southeast Fort Worth, Texas, as they host their 2nd Annual Pathway's Banquet, highlighting the work of local leaders for their contributions to empowering our local youth and adults.

The Southeast Community Development Corporation was founded in April 2014, by

Pastor Robert J. McGinty, who saw a need to continue to serve others after retiring from 36 years of service in law enforcement. Since its founding, the program has found success in providing education support, mentoring, leadership development, health and wellness initiatives, and programs where participants can prepare themselves for financial literacy, life-skills, job readiness, and empowerment for home ownership.

One of their most successful programs is the Children's Defense Fund Freedom School, the only all-male program in Texas aimed at building strong, literate, and empowered children to serve a fundamental role within their families, communities, and nation. Young men between the ages of 13 and 17 participate in an interactive summer reading-based curriculum to improve their reading level and to curb summer learning loss. In addition, the scholars participate in college tours and community service projects and learn valuable tools to expand their educational opportunities.

Every year, the Southeast Community Development Corporation hosts their Annual Pathways Banquet to honor local government, city, business, and community leaders for their contributions to creating "Pathways for the City's Youth and Adults."

This year, the organization will host its 2nd Annual Pathways Banquet at the Tarrant County Community College Trinity River Campus, where they will honor Tarrant County Commissioner Roy C. Brooks, Former Dallas Cowboy Greg Ellis, and former TCC Chancellor, the late Erma Johnson Hadley, for their work and commitment to expanding opportunities for our adults and youth in the Tarrant County community.

In honor of the Southeast Community Development Corporations 2nd Annual Pathways Awards ceremony, and the invaluable service the organization provides to the Fort Worth community, this statement will be entered into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Friday, May 6, 2016.

#### RECOGNIZING POLISH CONSTITUTION DAY ON MAY 3, 2016

**HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 6, 2016*

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Polish Constitution Day on May 3, 2016 and the Polish Constitution Day Parade in my hometown of Chicago on May 7, 2016.

On May 3, 1791, Poland ratified the first democratic constitution of its kind in Europe. The document laid the groundwork for a constitutional monarchy and, eventually, the spread of democracy in the region.

The Polish Constitution Day Parade is a longstanding Chicago tradition. The Parade brings together nearly 100,000 people for festivities that include floats, folk dancing, and polka bands. This year marks the 125th anniversary of the Parade, which recognizes Chicago's vibrant Polish American community. Polish Americans make up over 7 percent of Chicago's population and have made notable contributions to the arts, academics and even politics. In fact, Chicagoland has the largest

Polish community outside of Poland and is home to many organizations that celebrate Polish culture and heritage, including the Polish Women's Alliance of America based in my district.

Ada Ezlakowska will serve as this year's Queen of the Parade, and Jan Krawiec will be Grand Marshal. Mr. Krawiec is a 96-year-old Holocaust survivor who fought in the Polish Resistance during World War II and helped run the underground press. He moved to Chicago after being tortured by the Gestapo and detained at Auschwitz-Birkenau and Buchenwald. He attended Loyola University in my district and travelled to the U.S.S.R. with President Nixon. I am proud that he will be honored on Saturday.

The United States and Poland share a deep bond. We need to strengthen that relationship by increasing opportunities for travel and cultural exchange. I am proud to support Poland's proposed inclusion in the Visa Waiver Program. This would promote short-term travel between our countries, encouraging cultural and political ties as well as easing travel for families with members in both countries.

Polish Constitution Day is a time to celebrate our Polish American community. I congratulate Chicago on 125 years of marking this special occasion.

#### RECOGNIZING CINCO DE MAYO

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 6, 2016*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, to recognize the holiday of Cinco de Mayo commemorating the victory of the Mexican Army 1862 over France at the Battle of Puebla during the Franco-Mexican War.

The fifth day of May, or Cinco de Mayo, is a special day because it represents the importance of freedom, liberty and determination for the people of Mexico and for Mexican-Americans.

It was on that day, May 5, 1862, that untrained, outnumbered, and outgunned Mexican forces—determined to protect their land—successfully defended the town of Puebla against the French.

The quest for an independent Mexico started on September 16, 1810, when the people of Mexico, following the will to become a free nation, refused to submit to Spanish rule.

The struggle went on for 10 years.

Finally, in 1821, the first independent Mexican government was established.

But being an independent nation was not easy.

Over the years, Mexico received economic support from several nations, France and England among them.

Later on, even Spain supported the new country.

Thus, Mexico became heavily indebted to foreign powers.

Due to ongoing political unrest caused by many groups struggling for power, Mexico was not able to pay back the loans.

On July 17, 1861, President Benito Juarez issued a moratorium in which all-foreign debt payments would be suspended for a period of two years, with the promise that after this period, payments would resume.

In 1862, France, Spain, and England dispatched their fleets to Mexican shores pursuing not only money but also land and rights as payment for their loans.

A government representative greeted them and explained that Mexico acknowledge its debts, but had no funds to pay them.

They were offered payment warrants in exchange.

The Spaniards and the British decided to accept the warrants and withdrew from the scene.

But the French government's representative did not accept the offer and ordered his troops to invade the country and head toward Mexico City, the nation's capital.

They had to cross through the state of Puebla to get to the capital.

Mexican President Benito Juarez, reacted immediately and prepared the defense.

He commanded Ignacio Zaragoza, a young and brave General, to fortify the City of Puebla and repel the French invaders.

The battle was by no means even.

France, under Louis Napoleon's rule, had the most world's powerful army, and sent more than six thousand men to invade Mexico.

But the courage and the love of freedom impelled the Mexican people to fight back.

General Ignacio Zaragoza led 5,000 ill-equipped Mestizo and Zapotec Indians called *Zacapoaxtlas*.

On the 5th of May 1862, the forts of Loreto and Guadalupe, in the city of Puebla, became the scene of the historical defeat of the great European army.

Against overwhelming odds, they managed to drive back the French army, achieving a total victory over soldiers deemed among the best trained and equipped in the world and embarking on the end of the European domination in America.

For Mexico, this day has come to represent a symbol of Mexican unity and patriotism in the history of Mexico.

In our country, Cinco de Mayo is also a celebration of the rich cultural heritage Mexican Americans have brought to the United States.

Hispanics are the fastest-growing minority group in the United States.

According to the most recent data available, the estimated Hispanic population in the U.S. is 42.7 million—constituting 14 percent of our nation's population.

Hispanics now own a record number of small businesses—1.6 million, with annual revenues of more than \$221 billion.

Small businesses create two-thirds of American jobs, and the fastest-growing small business sector is Latino-owned firms.

Today, there are 32 Hispanic Members in the United States Congress, including 3 Senators and 29 House Members, many of whom are Mexican-American, representing constituencies in all regions of the country, from California to New York, from Arizona to Illinois, from Colorado to Florida.

These gains and numbers tell us that Hispanics are a driving force in our country—economically, socially and politically.

Hispanics share the common goals with all other Americans of freedom, opportunity, and a chance to build a better life.

In pursuing these aspirations, Hispanics have made important contributions to life in the United States in the fields of culture, sports, entertainment, business enterprise, science, politics and others.

Today, millions of Americans will join our neighbors to the south in celebrating Cinco de Mayo.

On this day, we are reminded that all people—regardless of their race, color, or gender—have enriched cultures and are worthy of respect and self-determination.

I am happy to be here today to celebrate this momentous day and to recognize the values, traditions, and positive contributions of the Mexican culture.

## SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND RESULTS REAUTHORIZATION ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. MARK DeSAULNIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 29, 2016*

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act.

Plenty of members have raised legitimate concerns with this bill, not the least of which is that students, teachers, parents, administrators, and the community in D.C. did not ask for this system to be forced on them.

A specific concern: The lack of protections for students with disabilities, arguably those who need protections the most.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—colloquially known as IDEA—has ensured for decades that children with disabilities throughout the nation receive the services and accommodations they need. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

Voucher schools should not get a free pass because of accounting gimmicks allowed under the voucher program.

When IDEA was passed, it did not have a clause that said “protect all students with disabilities except those students who choose to go to voucher schools.” I urge my colleagues to reject this bill and stand up for the civil rights that we all agreed every student deserves.