

H. RES. 59

Resolved, That the following named Members be and are hereby elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE.—Ms. Shea-Porter and Mr. Espallat.

(2) COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS.—Mr. Lawson of Florida.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ADJOURNMENT FROM TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017, TO FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2017; AND ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2017, TO MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Friday, January 27, 2017; and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet on Monday, January 30, 2017, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the additional motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

REINFORCING EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY IN DEVELOPMENT ACT

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 601) to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 601

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development Act” or the “READ Act”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

Sec. 3. Assistance to promote sustainable, quality basic education.

Sec. 4. Comprehensive integrated United States strategy to promote basic education.

Sec. 5. Improving coordination and oversight.

Sec. 6. Monitoring and evaluation of programs.

Sec. 7. Transparency and reporting to Congress.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

(a) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this Act, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(3) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(4) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(b) OTHER DEFINITIONS.—In this Act, the terms “basic education”, “marginalized children and vulnerable groups”, “national education plan”, “partner country”, and “relevant Executive branch agencies and officials” have the meanings given such terms in section 105(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by section 3.

SEC. 3. ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE, QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION.

Section 105 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151c) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE, QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) BASIC EDUCATION.—The term ‘basic education’ includes—

“(i) measurable improvements in literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills development that prepare an individual to be an active, productive member of society and the workforce;

“(ii) workforce development, vocational training, and digital literacy informed by real market needs and opportunities and that results in measurable improvements in employment;

“(iii) programs and activities designed to demonstrably improve—

“(I) early childhood, preprimary education, primary education, and secondary education, which can be delivered in formal or non-formal education settings; and

“(II) learning for out-of-school youth and adults; and

“(iv) capacity building for teachers, administrators, counselors, and youth workers that results in measurable improvements in student literacy, numeracy, or employment.

“(B) COMMUNITIES OF LEARNING.—The term ‘communities of learning’ means a holistic approach to education and community engagement in which schools act as the primary resource center for delivery of a service to the community at large, leveraging and maximizing the impact of other development efforts and reducing duplication and waste.

“(C) GENDER PARITY IN BASIC EDUCATION.—The term ‘gender parity in basic education’ means that girls and boys have equal access to quality basic education.

“(D) MARGINALIZED CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE GROUPS.—The term ‘marginalized children and vulnerable groups’ includes girls, children affected by or emerging from armed conflict or humanitarian crises, children with disabilities, children in remote or rural areas (including those who lack access to safe water and sanitation), religious or ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, orphans

and children affected by HIV/AIDS, child laborers, married adolescents, and victims of trafficking.

“(E) NATIONAL EDUCATION PLAN.—The term ‘national education plan’ means a comprehensive national education plan developed by partner country governments in consultation with other stakeholders as a means for wide-scale improvement of the country’s education system, including explicit, credible strategies informed by effective practices and standards to achieve quality universal basic education.

“(F) NONFORMAL EDUCATION.—The term ‘nonformal education’ means organized educational activities outside the established formal system, whether operating separately or as an important feature of a broader activity, that are intended to provide students with measurable improvements in literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills development that prepare an individual to be an active, productive member of society and the workforce.

“(G) PARTNER COUNTRY.—The term ‘partner country’ means a developing country that participates in or benefits from basic education programs under this subsection pursuant to the prioritization criteria described in paragraph (4), including level of need, opportunity for impact, and the availability of resources.

“(H) RELEVANT EXECUTIVE BRANCH AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS.—The term ‘relevant Executive branch agencies and officials’ means the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Labor, the Department of Education, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Defense, the Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the National Security Advisor, and the Director of the Peace Corps.

“(I) SUSTAINABILITY.—The term ‘sustainability’ means, with respect to any basic education program that receives funding pursuant to this section, the ability of a service delivery system, community, partner, or beneficiary to maintain, over time, such basic education program without the use of foreign assistance.

“(2) POLICY.—In carrying out this section, it shall be the policy of the United States to work with partner countries, as appropriate, other donors, multilateral institutions, the private sector, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations, including faith-based organizations and organizations that represent teachers, students, and parents, to promote sustainable, quality basic education through programs and activities that—

“(A) take into consideration and help respond to the needs, capacities, and commitment of developing countries to achieve measurable improvements in literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills development that prepare an individual to be an active, productive member of society and the workforce;

“(B) strengthen educational systems, promote communities of learning, as appropriate, expand access to safe learning environments, including by breaking down specific barriers to basic education for women and girls, ensure continuity of education, including in conflict settings, measurably improve teacher skills and learning outcomes, and support the engagement of parents in the education of their children to help partner countries ensure that all children, including marginalized children and other vulnerable groups, have access to and benefit from quality basic education;

“(C) promote education as a foundation for sustained economic growth and development within a comprehensive assistance strategy that places partner countries on a trajectory

toward graduation from assistance provided under this section with clearly defined benchmarks of success that are used as requirements for related procurement vehicles, such as grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements; and

“(D) monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and quality of basic education programs in partner countries.

“(3) PRINCIPLES.—In carrying out the policy referred to in paragraph (2), the United States shall be guided by the following principles of aid effectiveness:

“(A) ALIGNMENT.—Assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection shall be aligned with and advance United States foreign policy and economic interests.

“(B) COUNTRY OWNERSHIP.—To the greatest extent practicable, assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection should be aligned with and support the national education plans and country development strategies of partner countries, including activities that are appropriate for and meet the needs of local and indigenous cultures.

“(C) COORDINATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection should be coordinated with and leverage the unique capabilities and resources of local and national governments in partner countries, other donors, multilateral institutions, the private sector, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations, including faith-based organizations and organizations that represent teachers, students, and parents.

“(ii) MULTILATERAL PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES.—Assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection should be coordinated with and support proven multilateral education programs and financing mechanisms, which may include the Global Partnership for Education, that demonstrate commitment to efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability.

“(D) EFFICIENCY.—The President shall seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection by coordinating the related efforts of relevant Executive branch agencies and officials.

“(E) EFFECTIVENESS.—Programs and activities supported under this subsection—

“(i) shall be consistent with the policies and principles set forth in this subsection;

“(ii) shall be designed to achieve specific, measurable goals and objectives that are directly related to the provision of basic education (as defined in this section); and

“(iii) shall include appropriate targets, metrics, and indicators that—

“(I) move a country along the path to graduation from assistance provided under this subsection; and

“(II) can be applied with reasonable consistency across such programs and activities to measure progress and outcomes.

“(F) TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.—Programs and activities supported under this subsection shall be subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation, which may include impact evaluations, the results of which shall be made publically available in a fully searchable, electronic format.

“(4) PRIORITY AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—The President shall ensure that assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection is aligned with the foreign policy and economic interests of the United States and, subject to such alignment, priority is given to developing countries in which—

“(A) there is the greatest need and opportunity to expand access to basic education and to improve learning outcomes, including for marginalized and vulnerable groups, particularly women and girls to ensure gender parity in basic education, or populations affected by conflict or crisis; and

“(B) such assistance can produce a substantial, measurable impact on children and educational systems.”

SEC. 4. COMPREHENSIVE INTEGRATED UNITED STATES STRATEGY TO PROMOTE BASIC EDUCATION.

(a) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—Not later than October 1, 2017, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a comprehensive United States strategy to be carried out during fiscal years 2018 through 2022 to promote quality basic education in partner countries by—

(1) seeking to equitably expand access to basic education for all children, particularly marginalized children and vulnerable groups; and

(2) measurably improving the quality of basic education and learning outcomes.

(b) REQUIREMENT TO CONSULT.—In developing the strategy required under subsection (a), the President shall consult with—

(1) the appropriate congressional committees;

(2) relevant Executive branch agencies and officials;

(3) partner country governments; and

(4) local and international nongovernmental organizations, including faith-based organizations and organizations representing students, teachers, and parents, and other development partners engaged in basic education assistance programs in developing countries.

(c) PUBLIC COMMENT.—The President shall provide an opportunity for public comment on the strategy required under subsection (a).

(d) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under subsection (a)—

(1) shall be developed and implemented consistent with the principles set forth in section 105(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by section 3; and

(2) shall seek—

(A) to prioritize assistance provided under this subsection to countries that are partners of the United States and whose populations are most in need of improved basic education, as determined by indicators such as literacy and numeracy rates;

(B) to build the capacity of relevant actors in partner countries, including in government and in civil society, to develop and implement national education plans that measurably improve basic education;

(C) to identify and replicate successful interventions that improve access to and quality of basic education in conflict settings and in partner countries;

(D) to project general levels of resources needed to achieve stated program objectives;

(E) to develop means to track implementation in partner countries and ensure that such countries are expending appropriate domestic resources and instituting any relevant legal, regulatory, or institutional reforms needed to achieve stated program objectives;

(F) to leverage United States capabilities, including through technical assistance, training, and research; and

(G) to improve coordination and reduce duplication among relevant Executive branch agencies and officials, other donors, multilateral institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and governments in partner countries.

SEC. 5. IMPROVING COORDINATION AND OVERSIGHT.

(a) SENIOR COORDINATOR OF UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL BASIC EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.—There is established within the United States Agency for International Development a Senior Coordinator of United States International Basic Education Assistance (referred to in this section as the “Senior Coordinator”). The Senior Coordinator shall be appointed by the President, shall be a current USAID employee serving in a career or noncareer position in the Senior Executive Service or at the level of a Deputy Assistant Administrator or higher, and shall serve concurrently as the Senior Coordinator.

(b) DUTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Senior Coordinator shall have primary responsibility for the oversight and coordination of all resources and activities of the United States Government relating to the promotion of international basic education programs and activities.

(2) SPECIFIC DUTIES.—The Senior Coordinator shall—

(A) facilitate program and policy coordination of international basic education programs and activities among relevant Executive branch agencies and officials, partner governments, multilateral institutions, the private sector, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations;

(B) develop and revise the strategy required under section 4;

(C) monitor, evaluate, and report on activities undertaken pursuant to the strategy required under section 4; and

(D) establish due diligence criteria for all recipients of funds provided by the United States to carry out activities under this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(c) OFFSET.—In order to eliminate duplication of effort and activities and to offset any costs incurred by the United States Agency for International Development in appointing the Senior Coordinator under subsection (a), the President shall, after consulting with appropriate congressional committees, eliminate a position within the United States Agency for International Development (unless otherwise authorized or required by law) that the President determines to be necessary to fully offset such costs and eliminate duplication.

SEC. 6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS.

The President shall seek to ensure that programs carried out under the strategy required under section 4 shall—

(1) apply rigorous monitoring and evaluation methodologies to determine if programs and activities provided under this subsection accomplish measurable improvements in literacy, numeracy, or other basic skills development that prepare an individual to be an active, productive member of society and the workforce;

(2) include methodological guidance in the implementation plan and support systemic data collection using internationally comparable indicators, norms, and methodologies, to the extent practicable and appropriate;

(3) disaggregate all data collected and reported by age, gender, marital status, disability, and location, to the extent practicable and appropriate;

(4) include funding for both short- and long-term monitoring and evaluation to enable assessment of the sustainability and scalability of assistance programs; and

(5) support the increased use and public availability of education data for improved decision making, program effectiveness, and monitoring of global progress.

SEC. 7. TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING TO CONGRESS.

(a) ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGY.—Not later than each

March 31 immediately following a fiscal year during which the strategy developed pursuant to section 4(a) was carried out, the President shall—

(1) submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes the implementation of such strategy; and

(2) make the report described in paragraph (1) available to the public.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a description of the efforts made by relevant Executive branch agencies and officials to implement the strategy developed pursuant to section 4, with a particular focus on the activities carried out under the strategy;

(2) a description of the extent to which each partner country selected to receive assistance for basic education meets the priority criteria specified in section 105(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act, as added by section 3; and

(3) a description of the progress achieved over the reporting period toward meeting the goals, objectives, benchmarks, and timeframes specified in the strategy developed pursuant to section 4 at the program level, as developed pursuant to monitoring and evaluation specified in section 6, with particular emphasis on whether there are demonstrable student improvements in literacy, numeracy, or other basic skills development that prepare an individual to be an active, productive member of society and the workforce.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 601, the Reinforcing Education Accountability and Development Act, or the READ Act. This bill passed the House at the end of the last Congress in essentially the same form as H.R. 4481. I am pleased the House has moved to take it up again today.

We all recognize the importance of education as a driver of economic growth, social mobility, and overall stability. Education is what increases the productivity of the workforce. This is what empowers men and women to better care for themselves and their families. It increases civic participation.

Even 1 extra year of schooling significantly increases a worker's earnings over her or his lifespan. For women in particular, a primary school education is directly correlated very strongly with improved maternal-child health and improved survival rates.

Yet, around the world, as we know here, there are 120 million children

that are not in school. More than one-third of these children, as NITA LOWEY can testify, come from countries that are embroiled in war, embroiled in conflict, and many of these recent conflicts have lasted for over a decade.

We are now seeing entire generations of these young children who are failing to receive even the most basic education.

You want to talk about a humanitarian crisis?

This is it. There are clear implications for global stability and for our security.

When children remain out of school, what do they face?

Well, certainly great increased risk of abuse at the hands of traffickers, forced marriage or marriage as a child bride, and recruitment by criminal or terrorist organizations.

Nowhere is this harsh reality more clear than in Syria, where 4 million Syrian children are currently out of school. We have had the opportunity to talk to many of these children on the border and see what their circumstances are like.

Inside Syria, these children are being shaped by violence and by a lack of alternatives that place them at high risk of exploitation and radicalization. As refugees—if you talk to our friends and allies in the region—they are placing tremendous strain on the education system in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey.

Despite these growing challenges, it has been decades since Congress reviewed and updated the authorities on which U.S. international basic education efforts are based.

This bill, the READ Act, introduces the new guidelines and the increased accountability for existing U.S. efforts to improve access to basic education in developing and conflict-torn countries. It requires strategic planning. It requires the prioritization of resources relative to needs on the ground in these countries and relative to the potential for impact. It requires alignment with U.S. diplomatic development and security interests.

Particular emphasis is given to those areas in crisis and those countries that are partners of the United States that face this critical challenge, whose populations are most in need, who have committed their own resources to ensure the success and sustainability of these efforts, but need our assistance.

It also requires increased attention to what is most important here, and that is to the specific barriers to education that are faced by women and girls.

The bill formalizes a senior coordinator position within USAID to oversee the development and implementation of a strategic plan across Federal agencies to ensure coordination and eliminate duplication and waste.

I thank Representative LOWEY for her continued bipartisan leadership on this issue, as well as my committee's ranking member, Mr. ENGEL, and the

chair of our Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, Mr. SMITH, for their work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation.

Again, I thank our chairman, ED ROYCE, for his leadership and working together.

I want to acknowledge my good friend from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), who authored this bill. For years and years, she has been a champion for access to education here in the United States and around the world.

Like the other bills before us today, we passed this legislation in the last Congress. I am glad we are taking it up so early this year so that, hopefully, the Senate can act.

Mr. Speaker, research tells us that more than a quarter billion young people around the world are not in school. For millions more, the educational opportunities are substandard. This lack of access puts so many young people at a tremendous disadvantage. Children should be in classrooms. They should be aspiring to their highest potential, thinking about what they want to be when they grow up.

□ 1700

The payoff of a few years of quality education is huge. Every year of primary school increases an individual's earning potential by 5 to 15 percent. It is not just those students who reap the benefits, it is really all of us.

Consider public health and economics. More educated populations are healthier and more productive. Consider threats to our security. In places like Afghanistan and South Sudan, where roughly half of children are not in school, we know that violent extremists and others are ready to fill the vacuum, leading these vulnerable young people down a dark, dark path. Research has also told us that in high-risk places like Somalia, where young people can learn about certain issues like nonviolent civic engagement, participation in violence drops by 14 percent and support for violence drops by 20 percent.

That is why education needs to be a foreign policy priority and why we need to be very careful as a new administration urges to make major changes in America's foreign assistance. This legislation calls for a 5-year strategy for expanding opportunities for kids to go to school all over the world, especially where children are most vulnerable. It would put a new point person in charge of making sure that our efforts across government are coordinated and effective, and it would place a special emphasis on monitoring and evaluation so that we know we are getting the best bang for the buck when it comes to our investments in basic education.

This bill would help to put children in classrooms around the world. It would give more young people a better shot at a full and successful life. I am proud to support it. I commend Mrs. LOWEY.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), the author of this bill.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of bipartisan legislation that would increase transparency and congressional oversight of U.S. basic education programs around the world.

H.R. 601, the Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development—READ—Act, which I introduced with my colleague, Representative David Reichert, would elevate the importance of education while improving USAID's efforts and ensuring that taxpayer dollars are well spent.

The challenge is clear. Nearly 60 million primary school-age children and 65 million adolescents are out of school around the world. Millions more are expected to never enroll. Women and girls are disproportionately out of school. The United States has a clear moral, economic, and security interest in promoting universal basic education as a fundamental human right.

The bill before us today enhances Congress' oversight of USAID's work with foreign governments, NGOs, and multilateral organizations to help nations develop and implement quality programs, address key barriers to school attendance, and increase completion rates for the poorest and most vulnerable children worldwide. It calls on USAID to develop a comprehensive strategy and appoint a senior coordinator tasked with ensuring that our programs expand access to millions of children who are not in school and improve the quality of education for millions who are.

These efforts will not only help students read and write, they will ultimately help protect vulnerable children from poverty, disease, hunger, and even extremism.

There is no greater force multiplier than education. An education is the fundamental tool with which girls and boys are empowered to increase their economic potential, improve their health outcomes, provide for their families, address cultural biases, participate in their communities, and contribute to democratic societies.

First introduced in 2004 and passed by the House last year, the bill before us today represents many years of hard work to elevate the importance of global education, bipartisan compromise, and the support of over 30 nonprofit and advocacy organizations, including RESULTS, the ONE Campaign, the Basic Education Coalition, the Global Campaign for Education,

Global Citizen, the Malala Fund, and many other vital partners.

In closing, I thank Chairman ROYCE, Ranking Member ENGEL, their hard-working staff—Joan, Jessica, Janice, and Mark, and, of course, Marin Stein, who has been working around the clock on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank them all. We have been working on this bill a very long time. I, again, thank Chairman ROYCE for his leadership and Ranking Member ENGEL. Their diligent efforts to bring the READ Act before the House today is so vital, and I urge immediate passage. In closing, thanks again to Marin Stein.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, I read a few weeks ago that the new administration was planning to retool the State Department to focus more on terrorism. The article suggested that the State Department might do away with some of our smart power efforts. That would be a mistake. I look at an effort like this one, expanding access to education, and I know that it isn't taking away from our ability to combat terrorism. In fact, it is critical to that fight.

When we help more young people get access to a good education, we are giving them the tools to think critically and resist those who mean us harm. We are helping give people an alternative, a path forward for their lives.

When kids don't have these skills, who do you think shows up? When children are told from a young age, with no competing message, that America is their enemy, how does that shape their lives?

So I hope that this bill gets to the new President's desk and that he sees the value not just in expanding access to education, but in the wide range of foreign policy priorities that help to project stability and make communities stronger, that show the world that the United States is a friend and a partner, and not an enemy.

Again, I thank Congresswoman LOWEY for her hard work. I thank Chairman ROYCE for his hard work and collegiality, as always. I support this bill. I urge all Members to do the same.

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I concur with those arguments that Mr. ENGEL just made. Congresswoman NITA LOWEY and I have talked about this, and if my colleagues will think on this for a minute, the reality today is that we face a situation where there are 65 million men, women, and children around the globe who have been displaced by conflict. I would just like the Members to think about the fact that this is more people than were dis-

placed during World War II. This is the highest level, highest on record of human beings who have been displaced by conflict. Think about what that means to the children who are those most victimized.

The United States is doing important work around the world, trying to help our allies, trying to help organizations—and there are many good NGOs working on this—to address this massive education deficit that so many of these children face. But Congress, I think, has to demand a greater degree, yes, of transparency and accountability for these activities to ensure our investments are as effective as possible in line with our strategic interests.

There is one more thing that we have to ask of our partners in this, and that is equal access to every young girl for education. That has got to be up there at the top of that priority list.

This Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development Act outlines clear priorities for this work with that emphasis that I talked about and asking those partners to carry out their end of this bargain. This bill also requires aggressive monitoring and evaluation and an annual report that justifies the investment on a country-by-country basis, but holds with it the accountability for the education of girls and for the rest of this work.

I urge Members to support this measure. Again, I thank Representative LOWEY. I thank the rest of the Members who worked on this for working on such a bipartisan basis on its provisions.

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

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 601. As a parent who was very involved in my children's education and served as President of the Southfield Public Schools Board of Education, I firmly believe the importance of promoting education to all regions of the world. Education is a universal human right that should be obtained by every young mind of the world.

Access to basic education is a human right that must be guaranteed to all children. In my role as the Vice Chair of the Bipartisan Congressional Women's Caucus during the 115th Congress, I will work with my colleagues in a bipartisan manner to highlight barriers to basic education, specifically focusing on girls' education in the developing world. Providing girls with an education helps break the cycle of poverty. Educated women are less likely to get married, more likely to have healthy babies, and are more likely to understand the value of education.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation would ensure that aid is prioritized for the most vulnerable populations, particularly those living in conflict zones. We must take the necessary steps to see that these children are provided with the rights to develop their full potential in order to be contributing members of their societies.

The enforcement of this bill will help bridge the gap with some global issues that we still see today with marginalized groups seeking education. Young children, regardless of gender have the right to gain a quality education.

Children with disabilities or illnesses should not be shunned away from trying to learn because they are considered different.

I am grateful that our Chamber has taken this important step to ensure that the United States dedicates our time and resources to helping the future of the world gain an education. I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their continued support of universal education for all.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 601.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BENEFITS OF RENEWABLE FUELS

(Mr. YOUNG of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about an issue of great importance to my district and the State of Iowa, renewable fuels.

On January 31, a renewable fuels summit will allow Iowans to gather together and highlight the essential role Iowa plays when it comes to our energy needs.

The renewable fuels industry boasts good-paying jobs for our economy, not only in my State of Iowa, but across the country. Renewable fuels increase choice for consumers and lower prices at the pump. A U.S. Department of Agriculture report also showed how the renewable fuels contribute to reducing emissions and our Nation's reliance on foreign fuels.

This new Congress provides a lot of opportunity to both renewable fuels advocates and opponents. I look forward to engaging in meaningful discussions with my colleagues to inform them of the benefits of renewable fuels: energy independence, good-paying jobs, enhancing national security, environmental benefits, consumer choice with lower prices, and ensuring the strength and history of the family farm.

I will also work with the Trump administration and anyone else to help protect the Renewable Fuels Standard and consumer access to conventional and advanced biofuels. The renewable fuels industry plays such a key role in so many of our Nation's needs.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge our new President to drain the swamp, to address his own myriad conflicts of interest. President Trump's financial disclosure stated he had a holding of at least \$15,000 in En-

ergy Transfer Partners, the lead developer on the Dakota Access Pipeline. We also know he has at least \$100,000 invested in Phillips 66, which has a 25 percent stake in the same project. His spokesperson claims he has sold his stake, but how do we know? We still don't have his tax returns.

Additionally, news stories indicate he has a holding in TransCanada, the developer of the Keystone XL pipeline. With the White House's action to push these pipelines forward, I fear that today we have the first of many indications of impropriety and conflict of interest. Without disclosure of his tax returns, Mr. Trump's personal financial interests are a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma. They appear to compromise honorable governance with insider deals.

The President should know the American people are watching, and they do care. The peaceful protests he saw on Saturday are only the beginning if he cannot live up to the ethical requirements of his new office and the legitimate expectations of the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

□ 1715

CONGRATULATING CLEMSON UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL TEAM

(Mr. RICE of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Clemson University football team on their 2017 national championship.

In a nail-biting rematch of the 2016 national championship game between the Clemson Tigers and the Alabama Crimson Tide, the Tigers came back with something to prove—and boy did they, with their 35-31 win.

While every member of the team played their hearts out, I would like to recognize a very special player who hails from the Seventh District of South Carolina, wide receiver Hunter Renfrow. A native of Horry County and graduate of Socastee High School, Mr. Renfrow has had an outstanding season, catching 44 passes, including 6 touchdowns, for a total of 495 yards this season. He joined the Tigers as a walk-on, earned a scholarship, and last week, with 1 second left, caught the game-winning touchdown in the championship game.

I would also like to extend special congratulations to two of Clemson's finest alumni: my wife, Wrenzie, and my friend, Congressman JEFF DUNCAN. I know few people who take more pride in their alma mater and enjoyed this win as much as they did.

This national title is a win for all of the great State of South Carolina. In fact, two national titles currently re-

side in South Carolina: the NCAA football championship in Clemson and the NCAA College World Series at Coastal Carolina University.

Congratulations Clemson, and go Tigers.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT, NOT END IT

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today, in the House Budget Committee, we heard testimony that, if the repeal mission that our Republican colleagues have been on now for the past 7 years is successful, 29.8 million Americans would lose their health insurance.

Now, Mr. Speaker, keep in mind that, for all of the rhetoric, here are the facts:

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, we have more people with health insurance today in our country than at any time in our Nation's history. What was once a 16 percent uninsured rate has been cut in half. It is now 8 percent.

Why in the world would we want to throw away that progress?

Now, we hear from the other side repeal and replace, repeal and replace. Well, we have now had 65 votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act, and how many votes have we had on their replace plan? Zero. Not one.

It would be criminal to throw away the progress that has been made through the Affordable Care Act. It is not perfect. No law is. No piece of legislation is. Let's work together to improve it, not end it.

AMERICANS' TAX DOLLARS SHOULD NEVER BE USED TO END THE LIFE OF A CHILD

(Mr. MOOLENAAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, today, the House voted to end taxpayer support for abortion.

A majority of Americans believe abortion is wrong, and they do not wish to see their tax dollars pay for this gruesome procedure that ends the life of another human being. This legislation permanently puts into law a long-standing policy that has been renewed by Congress every year. It will reassure Americans that the hard-earned money they pay to the government will never be used to fund abortions.

This is necessary because the Affordable Care Act, a law that has been unaffordable for so many Americans, actually paid subsidies for healthcare plans that include abortion. This is unacceptable. A child in a mother's womb is a blessing. Americans expect their tax dollars will never be used to pay to end the life of an innocent child.

Today's legislation will protect taxpayers and, most importantly, our society's most vulnerable—the unborn.