

Sewell (AL)	Swalwell (CA)	Veasey
Sinema	Tenney	Vela
Sires	Thompson (CA)	Visclosky
Slaughter	Thompson (MS)	Walberg
Smith (MO)	Thompson (PA)	Waters, Maxine
Smucker	Tipton	Watson Coleman
Soto	Turner	Weber (TX)
Speier	Upton	Woodall
Stivers	Valadao	Yoder
Suozi	Vargas	Young (AK)

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Tonko

NOT VOTING—19

Black	Johnson, E. B.	Ros-Lehtinen
Bridenstine	Johnson, Sam	Scalise
Butterfield	Long	Tiberi
Dunn	McCaull	Torres
Gohmert	Meadows	Yarmuth
Granger	Payne	
Hanabusa	Quigley	

□ 1344

Mr. RUTHERFORD changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

#### PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 296

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered to be the first sponsor of H.R. 296, a bill originally introduced by Representative Chaffetz of Utah, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

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

There was no objection.

#### INCREASING OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2824.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 533 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2824.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1347

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, with Mrs. ROBY in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents Through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act. This bill would reauthorize the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, known as MIECHV, for 5 years and make sure the program continues to focus on results.

I would like to note, this bill represents the first full reauthorization proposal Congress has considered for this program.

The Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee, which I chair, held a hearing on the program earlier this year. We solicited feedback from stakeholders, marked up a bill in committee, and today we are debating this bill on the floor. This is how Congress is supposed to work, and this bill is an example of Congress getting its work done.

The MIECHV Program helps support State and local efforts to provide voluntary, evidence-based home visiting services to parents and children living in communities that put them at risk of poor social and health outcomes, including in rural areas like those I represent.

Unlike many other programs that focus on money spent or people served, this program focuses on achieving real results for families. Specifically, this program promotes school readiness of young children, increases economic self-sufficiency of families, improves prenatal health and birth outcomes, and prevents childhood abuse and neglect.

Madam Chair, I have had the opportunity to see firsthand what home visiting looks like. In March, I spent time in Nebraska with the Panhandle Public Health District's Healthy Families America program in western Nebraska. The program focuses on improving the economic success and school readiness of vulnerable children and families in three Nebraska counties: Scotts Bluff, Morrill, and Box Butte.

During my visit, I met with Dawn, one of the program participants, who told me what it was like for her to work with a home visitor. Her home visitor helped her find a stable home and a steady income to provide for her growing family. These are the types of outcomes we should be expecting when we have programs to help those who are struggling to get ahead.

MIECHV works because funding is tied to evidence. Unfortunately, MIECHV is the exception, as few Fed-

eral social programs have been evaluated at all, and almost none condition funding on evidence of whether the program actually works.

In the Better Way agenda put forward by House Republicans last year, we proposed doing more of what MIECHV does: measuring how well programs are working to focus funding on those which produce real results. When we spend limited taxpayer dollars to help those in need, we must make sure we are spending money on effective programs. To do otherwise is a disservice to both taxpayers as well as those we are seeking to help.

On March 15 of this year, the Human Resources Subcommittee held a hearing on MIECHV. In the hearing, we heard from those with firsthand experience with home visiting programs, and their input was invaluable as we developed this proposal.

Both before and after the hearing, we sought input from States and others about how the program was working and how it could be improved and strengthened. These conversations also informed the bill before us today.

I should also note, there is broad bipartisan support for MIECHV, including from dozens of national organizations and hundreds of State and local organizations, including business leaders, law enforcement officers, faith-based groups, healthcare providers, child welfare advocacy organizations, and early education providers.

While I understand some of my colleagues would like to continue this program or even increase its funding without an offset, under the rules that govern this Chamber and our current deficits, it would be irresponsible and against the rules of this Chamber to fund this program without finding ways to reduce spending elsewhere. That is why we are considering this as part of a package of two bills today: this bill and the Control Unlawful Fugitive Felons Act of 2017, which will be considered later this week during its own debate.

Instead of increasing our Nation's debt, we should be doing more of what we are doing here today: prioritizing Federal spending and focusing on what works by improving the integrity of one program to provide funding for another.

Madam Chair, I am grateful for the time we are spending here today to consider the reauthorization of this important program, and I appreciate the opportunity to stand in support of this bill today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,  
Washington, DC, September 18, 2017.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,  
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY: I write concerning H.R. 2824, Increasing Opportunity through

Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act, which was additionally referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

I wanted to notify you that the Committee will forgo action on H.R. 2824 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration. This is done with the understanding that the Committee's jurisdictional interests over this and similar legislation are in no way diminished or altered. In addition, the Committee reserves the right to seek conferees on H.R. 2824 and requests your support when such a request is made.

I would appreciate your response confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 2824 and ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

GREG WALDEN,  
*Chairman.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,  
Washington, DC, September 18, 2017.

Hon. GREG WALDEN,  
*Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce,*  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WALDEN: Thank you for your letter concerning H.R. 2824, the "Increasing Opportunity through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act," on which the Energy and Commerce Committee was granted an additional referral.

I am most appreciative of your decision to waive formal consideration of H.R. 2824 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor. I acknowledge that although you waived formal consideration of the bill, the Energy and Commerce Committee is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in those provisions of the bill that fall within your Rule X jurisdiction. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees on any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will include a copy of our letters in our committee report and in the Congressional Record during consideration of this legislation on the House floor.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,  
*Chairman.*

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.  
Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, following the wisdom of Frederick Douglass, who said it is easier to build strong families, strong children, than to repair broken men, I introduced my first bipartisan home visiting bill over a decade ago, in 2005. Since 2005, home visiting has been uniquely bipartisan—until today.

Research is clear. Home visiting makes kids and families stronger, healthier, and safer. In my home State of Illinois, MIECHV improved program coordination, reinforced the emphasis on proven models, and expanded availability of services. Unfortunately, the majority's approach has rejected bipartisanship and made timely reauthorization of home visiting less likely.

H.R. 2824 presents substantial cuts to home visiting and threatens the effectiveness of services for vulnerable children and families. Equally bad, the rule under which we are considering this bill conditions home visiting help to vulnerable families on harming seniors and persons with disabilities. Although

we are not voting on that provision today, the rule we are considering this bill under makes it an inescapable part of it.

I join with over 110 civil rights, disability, and aging agencies to strongly oppose the Republican effort to pay for home visiting services that strengthen vulnerable children by stripping certain low-income seniors and those with severe disabilities of basic income they need to survive.

H.R. 2824 also is inconsistent with bipartisan Senate legislation introduced last week, which rejected the most controversial and problematic changes in H.R. 2824 in order to keep what works.

So what should the House have done instead of H.R. 2824?

826 organizations urged the House and Senate leaders to "reauthorize this important program for 5 years, with a doubling of funding from \$400 million, annually, to \$800 million, annually, to allow States, territories, and Tribes to expand these services to more children and families." Yet H.R. 2824 fails to increase funding by even one penny.

Currently, MIECHV dollars serve only about 6 percent of eligible families and less than 50 percent of eligible Tribes. I tried to offer a fully paid-for alternative to double funding for home visiting over 5 years without harmful policy changes but was not allowed a vote in committee or on the floor.

One of the most harmful policy changes is a new "State match" requirement, which would be in addition to the "maintenance of effort" requirement already in law. Just as with their failed healthcare bill, this Republican bill pushes their fight to make States pay more for services, while harming vulnerable children and families as collateral damage. There is no doubt that the State match in this bill will reduce home visiting in many States and Tribes, cut services, and harm families.

The Republican bill further undermines successful home visiting by changing it from a program to improve child development and parent-child relationships to a failed jobs program. Defining a core outcome of MIECHV as increased employment and earnings will gut Federal home visiting. Not one—not one—of the evidence-based models is a job training program. Not one.

This bill says, if any program wants to improve economic self-sufficiency, it shall include employment and earnings. Further, the bill applies stringent, unrealistic outcome standards.

H.R. 2824 is failure by design for home visiting. Later today, I urge my colleagues to support Congressman PASCRELL's amendment to strike this change.

After a decade of bipartisan efforts to increase Federal funds for home visiting, I am deeply saddened that H.R. 2824 now is the House Republican priority list for cutting funding, reducing services, and undermining the infrastructure that so many have worked to build. I unequivocally oppose this

harmful bill and its discriminatory pay-for, joining the good company of the NAACP, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Justice in Aging, National Women's Law Center, and the Arc of the United States, to name just a few.

I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 2824 so that we can move quickly on to a bipartisan approach which builds on home visiting's considerable strength.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1400

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN).

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I want to express my deep appreciation for the opportunity to join in this advocacy for this very important bill.

One of the great frustrations I know I share is when we have to make choices, and I see people come to me and they want us to increase the funding for those who are on the front lines fighting for our country, to increase the funding for those who are suffering from diseases, to increase the funding to protect senior citizens in various capacities, and every one of them tears at your heartstrings.

That is why, to me, it is such an incredible accomplishment when you are able, at this particular period of time, with huge deficits, to be able to fight to make sure that we can retain the funding to drive a fundamental program. The chairman has done that in this case, and I find the arguments to double that to be just a Trojan horse, an impediment to helping us take a meaningful program and make sure that it is authorized and supported.

In April, I visited the Crozer-Keystone Community Foundation in my own district. The foundation operates MIECHV and uses the Nurse-Family Partnership model to serve women and families in Delaware County. The model enables nurses to conduct regular home visits for first-time mothers and their children who are less than 2-years-old. It is designed to improve prenatal health and outcomes, improve child health and development, and improve families' economic self-sufficiency.

The success is evident to the experience of the women and families in the programs. In fact, the Nurse-Family Partnership model has been shown to reduce child abuse by 48 percent, reduce emergency room visits for accidents and poisonings by 58 percent, and reduce behavioral and intellectual problems by age 6 by 67 percent.

A study found that \$6 is returned to the community for every dollar it invests in the program. Did you hear that? For every dollar the community invests, they will get \$6; so it is not wrong to ask our partners in the States to match this commitment. In fact, my own State of Pennsylvania, I am proud to say it has actually exceeded the

matching because they know it works and it makes a true partnership with the States.

So I want to, once again, conclude by applauding the efforts of the chairman to position this in such a way for us to be able to move forward, to create the opportunity for this genuine partnership, to move on, on behalf of the—not programs just like the Nurse-Family Partnership, but the broad spectrum that are supported.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Chair, I am disappointed that this bill, H.R. 2824, injects needless controversy into reauthorizing the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program.

Home visiting is an evidence-based approach that connects pregnant women and families with young children to nurses, social workers, and other professionals. Through these programs, parents learn skills that help reduce abuse and neglect and improve child development during the crucial early years of life.

Most importantly, home visiting is backed by strong evidence that shows these programs are an effective way to improve outcomes for at-risk families. Unfortunately, H.R. 2824 ignores the proven successes of home visiting in favor of harmful, partisan changes to the law. In particular, I am troubled by language in this bill that would cut off funding to States and Tribal organizations that are unable to match Federal spending on home visiting. The bipartisan bill in the Senate does not do that; you do.

Advocates are concerned that this could cause States to scale back or even end their programs altogether. In addition, this bill makes a number of ill-advised changes that have little or no apparent justification. Research shows that home visiting programs are working well, yet only 6 percent of eligible individuals currently participate. We should be looking at expanding, not undermining, access to home visiting.

We need, at the very least, a clean bill that reauthorizes the home visiting program in a bipartisan way. Unfortunately, H.R. 2824 is not that bill, and, for that reason, I urge that we vote “no.”

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Madam Chair, I thank Chairman SMITH for yielding and for his hard work and leadership on this matter.

Madam Chair, I rise today to support H.R. 2824, which would reauthorize the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. At its core, MIECHV improve the lives of families in at-risk communities, focusing on the first years of a child's life.

Like the chairman, I, too, have seen firsthand its successes. I recently traveled to a Nurse-Family Partnership facility, which is a nonprofit that arranges home visits from registered nurses to low-income, first-time mothers.

I had the opportunity to meet the nurses and the women who currently are enrolled in the program. NFP facilities transform the lives of vulnerable first-time moms and their babies, empowering them to build brighter futures and stronger families, none of which would be possible without MIECHV funding.

I am proud to note that, like my previous speaker, my home State of Michigan has already taken the initiative to invest significant funding for the NFP facilities and other organizations, in addition to MIECHV funds, to the extent that Michigan would now already meet the requirement proposed in the bill.

I am particularly thankful for the chairman's transparent engagement process within the committee, specifically, early on. I raised the concern that the addition of new evidence standards, along with substantial evidence standards already in place, might be problematic, and I wanted to ensure that home visitors were not overly burdened by data collecting so that they can care for the mothers and the babies.

Both of these concerns were addressed with the amendments contained in the chairman's amendment, and I want to thank Chairman SMITH and Chairman BRADY for their leadership in addressing these concerns and other concerns.

I want to thank the chairman for all of his hard work, and I want to join him and my colleagues in supporting H.R. 2824.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), who has long been a champion on these issues.

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Chair, across our country, there are thousands of children, thousands of families, that have a really big stake in what happens with this bill.

I support evidence-based home visiting programs, and I support them not just by talking about them, but by providing them the resources they need to reach more children and make a difference in their lives.

This whole program, “home visiting,” is a little bit of a misnomer. This is not about going out to pay a social visit, to join a club or something. This is about skilled professionals working with young parents to help them be the parents they want to be. It is about family values. It is about strengthening and protecting families, particularly disadvantaged families.

Our home visiting programs give these families the tools that they need. I have seen how successful they have been in San Antonio, in San Marcos, in Austin, and across Texas.

A story was shared with me recently when I met with Alaska and Jimmy Martinez from San Antonio. During their first year in college, Alaska became pregnant. She felt she was going to have to drop out of school, and then they met with Susan, with the Nurse-Family Partnership there in San Antonio, and she gave them some referrals and some assistance. They were able to learn more about the development of their child and how they could prepare their family for that child's arrival.

Now, Alaska is about to finish her associate's degree. Jimmy is pursuing his business degree, and they are happy to have a beautiful 2-year-old son.

That is the way this program is supposed to work so people don't sink into poverty. They are lifted up and so are their children. This is just one of thousands of success stories from across the country—the family that unexpectedly finds they have a child with severe disabilities, or maybe just the more common experience of the family that has a baby who cries all night long, and they don't know what to do about it.

Too often, that is the kind of thing that ends up in a slap here, a slap there, and child abuse. Too often, it ends up with that child just being put in front of the television set instead of working with the child to deal with these real-life problems.

Some reforms were mentioned, alleged reforms, in this bill. I have served on this subcommittee through a number of terms of Congress. We have had some excellent witnesses, Republican and Democratic, and I have yet to hear a single witness call for a single one of the changes that they are proposing to impose on this program as obstacles to its success.

We haven't had an academic expert. We haven't had a stakeholder. We haven't had a single witness come forward and say: Please change this program so it cannot achieve the success that it is having today.

This is an evidence-based program. What does that mean? It means it is based on fact, not just on hope or good intention, as a number of our programs are. It means there is peer-reviewed data showing that this program works to reduce child abuse and to solve other problems.

The chairman, the advocate for this bill, tells me that they recognize this in the great Republican blueprint, and they want to do more of this. Well, if they want to do more of this, why are they creating one obstacle after another and causing one group after another to oppose those changes?

What about the resources to get the job done? As so many of the Republican witnesses before our subcommittee have acknowledged, we are helping a fraction of the children who are eligible for these kind of services.

I think you could call this bill the Republican 6 percent solution, because about 94 percent of eligible families in America don't get a penny of assistance out of this program. This program

that they say is so good, they want to praise it as an evidence-based program—and well they should, and well they have in the course of the several years I have served on the committee—this program is frozen at the same amount of funds that it had 5 years ago.

Though the need has grown, though the fraction of children who are served is minuscule compared with the need, they refuse to provide the resources to help other families like Alaska and Jimmy's.

It is clear, we can't just throw money at this problem or any other, but sometimes the only substitute that I hear from my Republican colleagues is to throw words at the problem like we have heard today: caring, soothing, empathetic words, but words that are no substitute for meaningful action.

Indeed, it is great to hear about support for an evidence-based program. Where is the evidence for these changes?

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Chair, where is the evidence today? It couldn't be produced in committee. Where is the evidence for one of these changes? Where is the evidence for freezing this funding?

We proposed to fully fund it, and I proposed to do it with a simple tax compliance measure that wouldn't have raised taxes on anyone, but it would have provided the resources for this home visiting program to do its intended purpose.

This measure, as proposed, should be rejected, and we ought to support genuine home visiting that reaches more American families and protects them, just as it has for so many families in Texas.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES).

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Madam Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act.

We need more support for early childhood, and to support families in that effort. They need to be evidence-based programs to ensure that we get more of the right beneficial programs implemented.

This bill seeks to strengthen the home visiting services to families in at-risk communities, and that is important because it will help reduce infant abuse and neglect across America.

The law's six benchmark areas will improve maternal and newborn health and will increase families' economic self-sufficiency. It also looks to better the coordination between community resources.

I would like to thank Chairman BRADY and Chairman SMITH for putting forth this piece of legislation.

□ 1415

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank Mr. DAVIS for his great leadership on this issue.

Madam Chair, I rise today in opposition to this bill.

Since its inception, MIECHV has been universally hailed as a tremendous success. It works, and it is cost effective. Participants like it; State and local governments like it; Democrats like it; and Republicans like it. It helps young families get off to a running start and makes sure that kids get the hand they need to stay on track.

I have seen this program work. The Nurse-Family Partnership program in Solano County, in my district, helps moms get the care and the support they need to have a healthy pregnancy and to learn to care for their babies. Home visits teach these new young moms the basics of raising healthy kids, helping them become more self-sufficient.

But instead of building on these successes and giving community programs the support they have been asking for, today the Republicans are focusing on undermining a great record of progress. Take, for instance, the new matching requirements in this bill.

When Congress created MIECHV, we authorized money for Tribes that don't have the resources to build home visiting programs on their own. This bill would force those Tribes to attribute matching money—which they don't have—to keep their program going. That is a death sentence to Tribal programs like the one in my district in Lake County, California.

With the passage of this bill, we are shortchanging hundreds of vulnerable families that rely on these programs. In addition, poor communities—not just Tribal communities, but poor communities across the country—have the same funding challenges, and these are most often the areas that benefit the most from MIECHV. This bill hurts people in those communities.

With this bill, we are not empowering communities to raise healthy children; we are undermining a great bipartisan program, and for that I stand in opposition to this piece of legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI).

Mrs. WALORSKI. Madam Chair, I appreciate Chairman SMITH's support and the work he has done on this bill.

Madam Chair, I rise in strong support of the Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents Through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act. In my home State of Indiana, three of the nine counties eligible for MIECHV funds are in my district.

In April, I had the pleasure of visiting with Healthy Families St. Joseph County to hear firsthand the good

work they are doing in Indiana's Second District. I heard from a single mom who had no job, no place to live, and very little money when she gave birth to her son; but with the help of Healthy Families, she turned long odds into success. The mother gained confidence to raise her son, and her son gained a shot at a thriving life that he may not have had without this program.

Home visitors helped over 2,600 Hoosier families in situations like this in Indiana last year.

MIECHV is a program that gets results. It works. We know this because of the statistics, but we hear it in the stories that they share with us. Parents get the tools and the confidence they need to raise their children. This improves outcomes for their children in the really early critical years and sets them on a better path as they grow up. The program helps to root out deeper issues like drug abuse and domestic violence that destroy families and hinder a child's development.

If there is one thing I have learned as I have heard from people in my district who successfully broke the cycle of poverty, it is this: It is one thing to provide money, but if that money comes on a one-size-fits-all basis, people cannot break the cycle. Checking a box doesn't break the cycle. Human interaction, looking at each person as an individual and not just a number, resolving underlying issues unique to each person's situation, and having a person coming alongside, saying, "I am with you; let's do this together" breaks the cycle. MIECHV is a great example of a program that does this.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Chair, I thank Mr. DAVIS for his outstanding advocacy on behalf of families all across America.

Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2824 because this Republican bill throws up unnecessary bureaucratic hoops and roadblocks to the progress we have made under the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting initiative.

It is smart policy to target resources and community experts to families who are most at risk back home. I have seen it in action back home in Tampa, Florida, where experts simply go to the home and explain to parents the importance of reading to your young child to get them ready for school, the importance of sleep, healthy habits, turning off the TV, and focusing on being a family unit. That is why it is so unfortunate that the Republicans are targeting the progress we have made.

We are smarter now. We understand what is successful, and, unfortunately, H.R. 2824 would undermine successful home visiting initiatives by making policy changes that no expert has

asked for. Indeed, I checked with my folks back home at the University of South Florida and on the ground there across the Tampa Bay area, and they say that, no, this bill will jeopardize the progress that we are making right now. In fact, they think that the match requirement will bring to an end the progress that we have been able to make because of the pressure on our State budget.

The way forward is through the bill that my colleagues—Mr. DAVIS, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. DEGETTE—and I have charted under H.R. 3525, which is a fairly clean reauthorization that doubles down on what works and doesn't invest in the bureaucratic red tape that simply is not going to help a family succeed.

So, Madam Chair, I urge the House to defeat this bill and, instead, to work in a bipartisan fashion.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chairwoman, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 15 seconds.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Chair, instead, I urge the House to defeat this bill that is not recommended by anyone in the field. Instead, let's work in a bipartisan way on what works, what saves taxpayers' money in the long run, and, most importantly, what truly boosts families.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I just want to add for the RECORD that the State of Florida matches their funds more than 2 to 1 already, so I am anxious to present the data here as it becomes necessary and is helpful to the exchange here.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Madam Chair, we know that home visiting works. There is no doubt about it. It is evidence based. Nobody has spoken anything that one would say it was not needed. It works for families and children in communities across our country. We agree about that on a bipartisan basis.

So we should not be here today debating a partisan bill, a bill that home visiting experts say poses a risk to the program's survival. We should be moving forward on a bipartisan bill without policy changes that might shut down home visiting in some communities or set it up for failure.

I hope that my colleagues will vote for the amendments being offered today that will improve the bill, but I also have some concerns about the State match.

No matter what we say, think of States and territories that have just been devastated by the floods and hurricanes. It is going to be very difficult for them to come up with the match money to keep some programs alive.

So I hope that my colleagues will vote for the amendments being offered today that will improve the bill. I re-

gret that there will not be enough of them to make this the bill that we had hoped it would be.

Madam Chairwoman, I urge a "no" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, I would like to take this time to thank my colleagues for taking the time to consider the reauthorization of this important program.

The MIECHV Program has bipartisan support due to its focus on achieving real results for families. This program works because its funding is tied to real evidence. It is imperative that we continue this program in a responsible way, partnering with States to increase the program's success.

I might repeat that for emphasis. It is imperative that we continue this program in a responsible way—a reasonable way, I will add—as we partner with States to increase the program's success. This bill shows how we can prioritize our Federal spending, focusing on programs with evidence that shows they actually work.

I look forward to moving this bill forward to reauthorize the MIECHV Program so more Americans can get the help they need to get ahead.

Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means, printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-33. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 2824

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

#### **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

*This Act may be cited as the "Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act".*

#### **SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

*The table of contents of this Act is as follows:*

- Sec. 1. Short title.*
- Sec. 2. Table of contents.*
- Sec. 3. Continuing evidence-based home visiting program.*
- Sec. 4. Continuing to demonstrate results to help families.*
- Sec. 5. Reviewing statewide needs to target resources.*
- Sec. 6. Improving the likelihood of success in high-risk communities.*
- Sec. 7. Measuring improvements in family economic self-sufficiency.*
- Sec. 8. Option to fund evidence-based home visiting on a pay for outcome basis.*
- Sec. 9. Strengthening evidence-based home visiting through state, local, and private partnerships.*

*Sec. 10. Data exchange standards for improved interoperability.*

#### **SEC. 3. CONTINUING EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING PROGRAM.**

*Section 511(j)(1)(H) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(j)(1)(H)) is amended by striking "fiscal year 2017" and inserting "each of fiscal years 2017 through 2022".*

#### **SEC. 4. CONTINUING TO DEMONSTRATE RESULTS TO HELP FAMILIES.**

*(a) REQUIRE SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS TO DEMONSTRATE IMPROVEMENT IN APPLICABLE BENCHMARK AREAS.—Section 511 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711) is amended in each of subsections (d)(1)(A) and (h)(4)(A) by striking "each of".*

*(b) DEMONSTRATION OF IMPROVEMENTS IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—Section 511(d)(1) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 711(d)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:*

*"(D) DEMONSTRATION OF IMPROVEMENTS IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—*

*"(i) CONTINUED MEASUREMENT OF IMPROVEMENT IN APPLICABLE BENCHMARK AREAS.—The eligible entity, after demonstrating improvements for eligible families as specified in subparagraphs (A) and (B), shall continue to track and report not later than 30 days after the end of fiscal year 2020 and every three years thereafter, information demonstrating that the program results in improvements for the eligible families participating in the program in at least 4 of the areas specified in subparagraph (A) that the service delivery model or models, selected by the entity, intend to improve.*

*"(ii) CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN.—If the eligible entity fails to demonstrate improvement in at least 4 of the areas specified in subparagraph (A), the entity shall develop and implement a plan to improve outcomes in each of the areas specified in subparagraph (A) that the service delivery model or models, selected by the entity, intend to improve, subject to approval by the Secretary. The plan shall include provisions for the Secretary to monitor implementation of the plan and conduct continued oversight of the program, including through submission by the entity of regular reports to the Secretary.*

*"(iii) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall provide an eligible entity required to develop and implement an improvement plan under clause (ii) with technical assistance to develop and implement the plan. The Secretary may provide the technical assistance directly or through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements.*

*"(iv) NO IMPROVEMENT OR FAILURE TO SUBMIT REPORT.—If the Secretary determines after a period of time specified by the Secretary that an eligible entity implementing an improvement plan under clause (ii) has failed to demonstrate any improvement in at least 4 of the areas specified in subparagraph (A) that the service delivery model or models intend to improve, or if the Secretary determines that an eligible entity has failed to submit the report required by clause (i), the Secretary shall terminate the grant made to the entity under this section and may include any unexpended grant funds in grants made to nonprofit organizations under subsection (h)(2)(B)."*

*(c) INCLUDING INFORMATION ON APPLICABLE BENCHMARKS IN APPLICATION.—Section 511(e)(5) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 711(e)(5)) is amended by inserting "that the service delivery model or models, selected by the entity, intend to improve" before the period at the end.*

#### **SEC. 5. REVIEWING STATEWIDE NEEDS TO TARGET RESOURCES.**

*Section 511(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(b)(1)) is amended by striking "Not later than" and all that follows through "statewide" the 2nd place it appears and inserting "Each State shall, as a condition of receiving payments from an allotment for the State under section 502, review and update the statewide needs assessment not later than October 1, 2020*

(which may be separate from but in coordination with the statewide”.

**SEC. 6. IMPROVING THE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS IN HIGH-RISK COMMUNITIES.**

Section 511(d)(4)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(d)(4)(A)) is amended by inserting “, taking into account the staffing, community resource, and other requirements of the service delivery model or models that the eligible entity may need to develop for the model to operate and demonstrate improvements for eligible families” before the period.

**SEC. 7. MEASURING IMPROVEMENTS IN FAMILY ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY.**

Section 511(d)(1)(A)(v) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(d)(1)(A)(v)) is amended by inserting “(which shall include measures of employment and earnings)” before the period.

**SEC. 8. OPTION TO FUND EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING ON A PAY FOR OUTCOME BASIS.**

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 511(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(c)) is amended by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) *AUTHORITY TO USE GRANT FOR A PAY FOR OUTCOMES INITIATIVE.*—An eligible entity to which a grant is made under paragraph (1) may use the grant to pay for the results of a pay for outcomes initiative that satisfies the requirements of subsection (d) and that will not result in a reduction of funding for services delivered under this section while an eligible entity develops or operates such an initiative.”.

(b) *DEFINITION OF PAY FOR OUTCOMES INITIATIVE.*—Section 511(k) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 711(k)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) *PAY FOR OUTCOMES INITIATIVE.*—The term ‘pay for outcomes initiative’ means a performance-based grant, contract, cooperative agreement, or other agreement awarded by a public entity in which a commitment is made to pay for improved outcomes that result in social benefit and direct cost savings or cost avoidance to the public sector. Such an initiative shall include—

“(A) a feasibility study that describes how the proposed intervention is based on evidence of effectiveness;

“(B) a rigorous, third-party evaluation that uses experimental or quasi-experimental design or other research methodologies that allow for the strongest possible causal inferences to determine whether the initiative has met its proposed outcomes;

“(C) an annual, publicly available report on the progress of the initiative; and

“(D) a requirement that payments are made to the recipient of a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement only when agreed upon outcomes are achieved, except that this requirement shall not apply with respect to payments to a third party conducting the evaluation described in subparagraph (B).”.

(c) *EXTENDED AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.*—Section 511(j)(3) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 711(j)(3)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(3) *AVAILABILITY.*—Funds” and inserting the following:

“(3) *AVAILABILITY.*—

“(A) *IN GENERAL.*—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), funds”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) *FUNDS FOR PAY FOR OUTCOMES INITIATIVES.*—Funds made available to an eligible entity under this section for a fiscal year (or portion of a fiscal year) for a pay for outcomes initiative shall remain available for expenditure by the eligible entity for not more than 10 years after the funds are so made available.”.

**SEC. 9. STRENGTHENING EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING THROUGH STATE, LOCAL, AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.**

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 511 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(l) *MATCHING REQUIREMENT.*—

“(1) *PROGRAM HOME VISITING SHARE.*—

“(A) *IN GENERAL.*—An eligible entity to which a grant is made under this section for fiscal year 2020 or any succeeding fiscal year shall not use the grant to cover more than the applicable percentage of the costs of providing services or conducting activities under this section during the fiscal year.

“(B) *APPLICABLE PERCENTAGE.*—In subparagraph (A), the term ‘applicable percentage’ means, with respect to a fiscal year—

“(i) in the case of an eligible entity that is a State or nonprofit organization—

“(I) 70 percent, in the case of fiscal year 2020;

“(II) 60 percent, in the case of fiscal year 2021;

or

“(III) 50 percent, in the case of fiscal year 2022 or any succeeding fiscal year; or

“(ii) in the case of an eligible entity that is an Indian Tribe (or a consortium of Indian Tribes), a Tribal Organization, or an Urban Indian Organization—

“(I) 100 percent, in the case of fiscal year 2020 or 2021; or

“(II) 70 percent, in the case of fiscal year 2022 or any succeeding fiscal year.

“(2) *NON-PROGRAM HOME VISITING SHARE.*—The share of the costs of providing services or conducting activities under this section not covered by grant funds may include—

“(A) State expenditures of Federal funds made available other than under this section expended for activities under this section;

“(B) State expenditures of State funds expended for activities under this section as a condition of receiving Federal funds other than under this section; and

“(C) contributions made for activities under this section from any other source, paid in cash or in kind, valued at the fair market value of such contribution.”.

(b) *CONFORMING AMENDMENT.*—Section 511(h)(2)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 711(h)(2)(A)) is amended in the 2nd sentence by striking “Such” and inserting “Except as provided in subsection (l)(1), such”.

**SEC. 10. DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS FOR IMPROVED INTEROPERABILITY.**

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 511(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(h)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) *DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS FOR IMPROVED INTEROPERABILITY.*—

“(A) *DESIGNATION AND USE OF DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS.*—

“(i) *DESIGNATION.*—The head of the department or agency responsible for administering a program funded under this section shall, in consultation with an interagency work group established by the Office of Management and Budget and considering State government perspectives, designate data exchange standards for necessary categories of information that a State agency operating the program is required to electronically exchange with another State agency under applicable Federal law.

“(ii) *DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS MUST BE NONPROPRIETARY AND INTEROPERABLE.*—The data exchange standards designated under clause (i) shall, to the extent practicable, be nonproprietary and interoperable.

“(iii) *OTHER REQUIREMENTS.*—In designating data exchange standards under this paragraph, the Secretary shall, to the extent practicable, incorporate—

“(I) interoperable standards developed and maintained by an international voluntary consensus standards body, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget;

“(II) interoperable standards developed and maintained by intergovernmental partnerships, such as the National Information Exchange Model; and

“(III) interoperable standards developed and maintained by Federal entities with authority over contracting and financial assistance.

“(B) *DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS FOR FEDERAL REPORTING.*—

“(i) *DESIGNATION.*—The head of the department or agency responsible for administering a program referred to in this section shall, in consultation with an interagency work group established by the Office of Management and Budget, and considering State government perspectives, designate data exchange standards to govern Federal reporting and exchange requirements under applicable Federal law.

“(ii) *REQUIREMENTS.*—The data exchange reporting standards required by clause (i) shall, to the extent practicable—

“(I) incorporate a widely accepted, nonproprietary, searchable, computer-readable format;

“(II) be consistent with and implement applicable accounting principles;

“(III) be implemented in a manner that is cost-effective and improves program efficiency and effectiveness; and

“(IV) be capable of being continually upgraded as necessary.

“(iii) *INCORPORATION OF NONPROPRIETARY STANDARDS.*—In designating data exchange standards under this paragraph, the Secretary shall, to the extent practicable, incorporate existing nonproprietary standards, such as the eXtensible Markup Language.

“(iv) *RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.*—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to require a change to existing data exchange standards for Federal reporting about a program referred to in this section, if the head of the department or agency responsible for administering the program finds the standards to be effective and efficient.”.

(b) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—The amendments made by this section shall take effect 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 115–331. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF NEBRASKA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 115–331.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, beginning on line 17, strike “of the service delivery model or models that the eligible entity may need to develop for the model to operate” and inserting “to operate at least 1 approved model of home visiting”.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 533, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, this amendment seeks to establish a careful balance between two competing views in regards to where and how home visiting programs



should be operated. The law requires States to operate home visiting programs in areas of highest need. However, some States expressed concern that they have been required to operate home visiting programs in areas where they were likely to fail, as they were not permitted to take into account staff and community resources and other requirements of a home visiting model when choosing where to operate.

In the bill I introduced with my colleagues, we allowed States to take these considerations into account, and States were generally pleased with this change. However, since the introduction of the bill, we have received additional feedback that some changes might be needed to make sure States could take into account these factors but not simply avoid serving actual areas with the highest need, including rural areas and remote areas that I represent, as well as others.

During the Ways and Means markup of this bill, Representative SEWELL offered an amendment to address this problem. Although we did not include her actual amendment in the reported bill, as we did not have enough time to review it and consider any unintended consequences, Representative SEWELL and I have been able to review her proposal since the markup and discuss its implications. I am pleased today to offer this bipartisan amendment to address the concerns she and others have raised.

Specifically, this amendment, combined with the language in the underlying bill, allows States to take into account staffing, community resources, and other requirements when determining how to operate their home visiting programs, while requiring that they operate at least one home visiting model in those communities with a high need for services. This ensures States do not shy away from some of the most difficult areas, which are often those that need home visiting services the most.

I am glad we have been able to work together on this bipartisan amendment, and I urge my colleagues to support the amendment as well as the underlying bill.

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

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, although I am not opposed to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. SIMPSON). Without objection, the gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. First, I would like to thank Chairman BRADY as well as Chairman SMITH for honoring their commitment to work with me to ensure that the most needy rural communities are not neglected in this bill.

I am glad to see that the language I proposed during the committee markup last week has been included in the Smith amendment.

□ 1430

Both my friend from Nebraska and I represent rural America, and we understand the obstacles that our rural constituents confront on a daily basis. Moreover, we both believe in the mission of the MIECHV Program, and we see how effective it has been in both rural and urban communities.

One of the reasons why the MIECHV Program is good policy is because of the program's flexibility. While models like the Nurse-Family Partnership can be successful in urban and suburban areas, other evidence-based models like HIPPO—*or* Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters—can be incredibly effective in rural areas that tend to have fewer resources.

This amendment language, which I offered during the committee markup, ensures that rural communities with little resources are not skipped over. This is a simple and commonsense fix that has bipartisan support as well as the support from the Home Visiting Coalition.

While I appreciate my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for working with me to fix this language, I have to say that I am disappointed that none of the other commonsense amendments offered by my Democratic colleagues were accepted during the markup.

For years, the MIECHV Program has enjoyed bipartisan support, but I am afraid that Republican changes in the underlying legislation we are considering today, I believe, will hurt the MIECHV recipients in the long-term viability of the program.

While I oppose the final passage of the underlying bill, I, again, want to thank my friend from Nebraska, as well as Chairman BRADY, for accepting my markup amendment language, and I urge my colleagues to support the Smith amendment.

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, again, I am grateful that Ms. SEWELL and I could work together to come up with this amendment. I certainly urge its adoption as we do move forward with the bill.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. PASCRELL

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 115-331.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, strike lines 21 through 26.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 533, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, this amendment would strike the provision in the bill that would add increasing employment and earnings to the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, *or* MIECHV, as it is generally referred to.

I, obviously, share the goal of increasing employment and earnings across the country. However, home visiting is not an employment program. It is a program to strengthen families to make kids healthier, safer, and more ready to learn when they start school. Those are the outcomes home visiting models strive for, and those are the outcomes they achieve.

I mentioned the other day in the Ways and Means Committee that I know the good that these programs do firsthand. In Passaic County—because most of these programs are run through counties throughout America—our home visiting program worked with a pregnant mom expecting a child with a heart defect.

The baby required open heart surgery shortly after being born last July. After the surgery, the newborn continued to have health complications. At times, his mom felt depressed and hopeless and feared that her child was not going to survive.

The home visiting program's family support worker was able to assist the mom by connecting her to services, providing her with emotional support, and acting as a liaison with the hospital where her son was.

We know the negative impact that postpartum depression can have on new moms and their babies. The home visiting program was able to connect this mom to supportive services and resources and alleviate her depression so that she could be a healthy and pleasant mom. I am happy to report that, after nearly 3 months in the hospital, this little boy was finally able to go home, and his mother continues to work with the home visiting program in northern New Jersey.

I don't think anyone can hear that story and not see value in the services that were provided. The home visiting program helped a mom, like so many other mothers across America, navigate her newborn son's healthcare crisis and manage the mental health issues associated with it.

But under the provision that my amendment is seeking to strike from the bill, this outcome would not be measured as a success. There is something wrong with that.

Most home visiting models focus on families with newborns or very small children and focus on building a parent-child bond. That is a fact. Many home visiting programs focus on teen parents and young mothers, and the priority is to keep them in school and make sure they continue their education.

There are currently 18 evidence-based home visiting models. None of them

provide employment services, none of them measure employment and earnings.

Home visitors have raised concerns that having to ask families about employment and earnings would be intrusive when you know what the focus of the program is, and would undermine the relationship they are trying to build with families.

Even if the data is collected without specifically asking families for it, knowing their performance is being measured based on their client's labor force participation—here is the kernel of the issue—will likely make home visitors feel they have to press their clients to work even if, like in the case of the mom in Passaic County, that should not be the main object.

Additionally, this bill provides no new funding. We are not asking for any new money here. Any resources devoted to supporting work would have to be diverted from MIECHV's core purposes.

I urge my colleagues, Mr. Chairman, to support this amendment to make sure children and families served by this program get the support and service that they truly need.

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, since the creation of the MIECHV Program, States have been required to demonstrate their home visiting programs result in measurable improvements in six benchmark areas specified in the law.

One of the benchmark areas States can choose to focus on is "improvements in family economic self-sufficiency." Yet, as the result of changes made last year under the prior Presidential administration, "economic self-sufficiency" no longer means what you think it means—increasing work and earnings. Instead, it was defined as whether you have health insurance or are in school.

Clearly, this is not what Congress meant when the program was created and included the concept of economic self-sufficiency. So this bill would make sure that States, if they choose to focus on family economic self-sufficiency as one of the four benchmarks of the six, would measure employment and earnings as a part of that metric.

Again, States can choose among six different benchmarks when they decide which home visiting programs to operate and what goals they would like to achieve within those previously established by Congress. They don't have to choose this metric, as I mentioned earlier. However, when they do explicitly set out to increase economic self-sufficiency—emphasis on the economic—information on work and earnings must be part of what is measured to determine whether they have achieved their

goal. I believe it is absolutely critical that this intent be restored in the law.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment and support the underlying bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, as I said, there are currently 18 evidence-based home visiting models. Also, there is nothing added to the budget; no extra currency I am asking for.

I would ask the sponsor of the bill what he would tell this woman from Passaic County, New Jersey, one of many examples that I have. I ask him what his answer would be to that woman.

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, again, I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment as well as support the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey will be postponed.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. DELBENE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 115-331.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 9, line 16, strike "Organization" and all that follows through line 21 and insert "Organization, 100 percent."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 533, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would eliminate the dangerous cuts to Tribes who don't meet the bill's match requirement. I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

I am proud to represent a number of Tribal communities in the Puget Sound region that each have a rich history, identity, and culture. But they face unique challenges.

The need for home visiting services is particularly high among American Indians and Alaska Natives. Young people who live on reservations are twice as likely to become teen parents. Nearly three-fourths of the parents served by Tribal home visiting services live below the Federal poverty level. And the majority of Tribal beneficiaries have less than a high school diploma.

The good news is that Tribes are already using home visiting resources to implement evidence-based models that have decreased depression, substance abuse, and stress among parents, while improving health among children.

Seventy-seven percent of Tribal home visiting programs have improved family outcomes in at least four different areas, such as improving maternal and newborn health, increasing school readiness, reducing domestic violence, and strengthening parents' economic self-sufficiency.

The bad news is the need for help in Indian Country has far exceeded the limited funding available through the home visiting program. In fact, less than half of qualified applications for Tribal home visiting can be granted under the current funding levels.

Some States have tried to address these shortages with State resources, like my home State of Washington, which has voluntarily used State funding to meet the needs of Tribal families. But it is not enough.

The underlying bill provides no new resources to address the nationwide shortfall in Tribal funding. Instead, it adds a match requirement that could be the end of home visiting on reservations altogether.

Most Indian Tribes struggle economically and already face challenges providing help to families. I understand that Tribal administrators have said almost none of them could meet the match requirement in this legislation.

Indian Tribes have also generally considered Federal match requirements to be a violation of Tribal sovereignty. As such, they may have to refuse the funds and shut down home visiting programs if the bill is enacted with the match requirement.

I appreciate that the chairman has delayed the implementation of the Tribal match and reduced it to 30 percent. But, realistically, the effect will be simply to give Tribes more time to shut down their home visiting programs. The match requirement will still be completely unworkable for them in 2022.

The Federal Government has a responsibility to our Tribal communities to do everything we can to support their people, strengthen their families, and expand economic opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, the underlying bill takes a dangerous step in the wrong direction for our Tribes, but we still have the opportunity to stop it.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on my amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

The amendment was agreed to.

□ 1445

#### AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MRS. MURPHY OF FLORIDA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 115-331.



Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk. The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 14, after line 9, insert the following:  
**SEC. 11. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.**

Section 511(j) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(j)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—To the extent that the grant amount awarded under this section to an eligible entity is determined on the basis of relative population or poverty considerations, the Secretary shall make the determination using the most accurate Federal data available for the eligible entity.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 533, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my bipartisan amendment, which is cosponsored by Congresswoman JENNIFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN from Puerto Rico and Congresswoman NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ from New York.

The American citizens in Puerto Rico and the neighboring U.S. Virgin Islands are enduring an incredibly difficult situation in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria.

As a Member whose central Florida district is home to over 100,000 individuals of Puerto Rican heritage, I join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have made crystal clear to our brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands that they will receive all the Federal support they need to stabilize the situation in the short term, to rebuild in the medium term, and to emerge stronger in the long term.

We are part of one American family. And like any close-knit family, we always have each other's backs, especially when times are tough.

My amendment will ensure that Puerto Rico and the other U.S. territories are treated equally under the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, which the underlying bill reauthorizes. The amendment will implement a recommendation made by the bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Task Force on Economic Growth in Puerto Rico.

This Federal program provides annual grants to States and territories to fund home visiting services for families with young children. Visits are conducted by social workers and other professionals. They provide parenting education and other support services with a goal of helping at-risk families succeed. It is a great program that invests in children and families, helps lift them out of poverty, and increases the chance that they will become productive and successful members of society.

In theory, the program treats States and territories equally when it comes to the distribution of grant funding. In

practice, however, Puerto Rico is treated unfairly. The Department of Health and Human Services makes allocations based, in part, on a U.S. Census Bureau data product on childhood poverty, but that data does not include information on Puerto Rico or the other territories. Therefore, Puerto Rico always receives the minimum grant allowed by the law, even though the island of 3.4 million has a high rate of childhood poverty.

My amendment would simply require HHS, when making grants, to use the best Federal data available for every State and territory and to use an appropriate alternative data source, if necessary, in the case of Puerto Rico. This will ensure that Puerto Rico receives its fair share of funding and not one penny more and not one penny less.

I hope my colleagues will support this amendment and that we will continue to do everything possible to help our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico.

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, even though I am not opposed to it.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, I support this amendment, the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, that is designed to serve families with young children living in communities at risk of a range of negative outcomes.

Today, HHS allocates money for MIECHV based on the share of children under age 5 in families at or below 100 percent of the Federal poverty line living in each State and territory.

It is imperative that the distribution of funds is done using the most accurate and up-to-date information so we can use our limited resources to target those most in need.

I thank the sponsors of this amendment, Representatives MURPHY, GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, and VELÁZQUEZ, for bringing this issue to our attention and for offering this amendment.

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

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, in closing, I would simply reiterate my hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this amendment.

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, I urge support of this amendment and the underlying bill so that we can help children.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RICE of South Carolina) having assumed the chair, Mr. SIMPSON, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, had come to no resolution thereon.

## RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1514

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. UPTON) at 3 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.

## INCREASING OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 533 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2824.

Will the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) kindly take the chair.

□ 1515

## IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, with Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, amendment No. 4, printed in House Report 115-331, offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY), had been disposed of.

## AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. PASCRELL

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 115-331 offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.