

LIHWAP has helped 1.4 million households across the country maintain or restore access to water service. However, LIHWAP was created as an emergency program and expired at the end of fiscal year 2023.

Recognizing the importance of Federal water assistance, Congress passed the Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act, which directed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, to create a Rural and Low-Income Water Assistance Pilot Program and report to Congress on the results of the pilot.

The LIHWAP Establishment Act would provide the necessary congressional authorization for a permanent LIHWAP beyond the COVID-19 emergency.

The LIHWAP Establishment Act would direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Administrator of the EPA, to establish a permanent low-income water assistance program. Just as the program did during the pandemic, LIHWAP would award grants to States, territories, and Tribes to assist low-income households in paying for drinking water or wastewater services.

The bill would also empower non-profit organizations to assist small, rural, underserved, and Tribal water systems apply for and access LIHWAP funding, as well as direct HHS to provide technical assistance to help agencies and water systems set up data sharing agreements to streamline eligibility requirements for low-income households.

In addition, the bill would transfer authority for the program from HHS to the EPA upon completion of the EPA's Rural and Low-Income Water Assistance Pilot Program.

Safeguarding water affordability for all Americans remains critical as household water and sewer bills rise faster than electric bills and inflation. Families continue to struggle to pay their water bills on time, and low-income communities suffer from disproportionate vulnerabilities affecting their access to clean, affordable water services.

Like heat and nutrition, which already have established Federal assistance programs, water is a vital and fundamental resource for public health and economic prosperity in all communities across the country. A permanent LIHWAP ensures we can continue to provide the necessary water assistance to low-income households at risk of losing access.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the LIHWAP Establishment Act as quickly as possible.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 567—RECOGNIZING THE SERIOUSNESS OF WIDESPREAD HEALTH CARE WORKER BURNOUT IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN HEALTH WORKFORCE WELL-BEING, AND EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF MARCH 18, 2024, AS THE INAUGURAL ‘HEALTH WORKFORCE WELL-BEING DAY OF AWARENESS’

Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. REED, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. SMITH, Mr. KING, Mr. WARNER, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. KELLY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 567

Whereas the capacity and well-being of the United States health workforce has been burdened for decades by an epidemic of burnout, and this trend has been exacerbated in recent years;

Whereas burnout can have wide-ranging consequences for individual health care workers, including occupational injury, risk of depression and suicide, lower morale and productivity, absenteeism, and possible deleterious impact on patient care;

Whereas 50 percent of health care workers reported burnout in 2020;

Whereas, in 2020, 44 percent of nurses experienced physical violence and 68 percent experienced verbal abuse;

Whereas, in 2020, 69 percent of physicians experienced colloquial depression, 20 percent experienced clinical depression, and 13 percent had thoughts of suicide;

Whereas physicians, particularly female physicians, are more likely than the general population to die by suicide, and United States physicians are more likely to die by suicide than physicians in other nations;

Whereas rates of burnout have serious consequences for the capacity of the United States health system, particularly in regard to employee retention and recruitment;

Whereas, in 2023, job quitting among health care and social assistance workers was 9.2 percent higher than in February 2020;

Whereas approximately 40 percent of United States health care workers plan to leave their current role within the next 5 years;

Whereas the average operating margin for hospitals in the United States was reduced by 130 percent between 2019 and 2020, driven in part by persistent labor shortages;

Whereas staffing shortages and impacts of burnout on the mental health and productivity of health care workers raise serious concerns about quality of care and patient safety;

Whereas the decreased capacity of the United States health system constitutes both a serious public health concern and a challenge to economic security;

Whereas, in 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health launched the Health Worker Mental Health Initiative, which aims to raise awareness of health workers' mental health issues and improve trainings and resources to address the mental health of health workers;

Whereas, in 2022, Congress enacted the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act (42 U.S.C. 294s et seq.), which estab-

lished grants and required other activities to improve mental and behavioral health among health care providers;

Whereas, in 2022, the Office of the Surgeon General published an Advisory on Addressing Health Worker Burnout to call attention to the health worker burnout crisis and to the urgent need to support the well-being of the health workforce of the United States;

Whereas, in 2022, the National Academy of Medicine released the National Plan for Health Workforce Well-Being, delineating necessary actions to safeguard the United States health workforce; and

Whereas a more robust national focus on protecting the well-being and mental health of health care workers will improve outcomes for workers and patients, strengthen the United States health system, and support population health: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses support for the designation of March 18, 2024, as the inaugural ‘Health Workforce Well-Being Day of Awareness’;

(2) recognizes the seriousness of widespread health care worker burnout in the United States and the need to strengthen health workforce well-being; and

(3) supports the goals and ideals of the Health Workforce Well-Being Day of Awareness, which include—

(A) raising public awareness about the importance of protecting the well-being of physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals to sustain the capacity of the United States health system and ensure the quality of patient care;

(B) mobilizing action to support the well-being of physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals across multiple sectors, including Federal, State, and local governments, health systems, insurers and payers, health information technology companies, educational, training, and accreditation organizations, private and nonprofit organizations, media and communications companies, and organizations that employ health care workers;

(C) creating and sustaining positive work and learning environments and culture;

(D) investing in measurement, assessment, strategies, and research;

(E) supporting mental and behavioral health, including removing barriers to accessing care and treatment, and reducing stigma;

(F) engaging effective tools and technology that reduce administrative burdens on physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals;

(G) establishing well-being as a long-term value in health organizations; and

(H) recruiting and retaining a diverse and inclusive health workforce.

SENATE RESOLUTION 568—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 26 THROUGH MARCH 1, 2024, AS ‘PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK’

Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. TESTER, Mr. REED, Mr. CASEY, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WELCH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. KING, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. BRAUN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 568

Whereas public education is a significant institution in a 21st-century democracy;

Whereas public schools in the United States educate students about the values and beliefs that hold the individuals of the United States together as a nation;

Whereas public schools prepare young individuals of the United States to contribute to the society, economy, and citizenry of the country;

Whereas 90 percent of children in the United States attend public schools;

Whereas Federal, State, and local lawmakers should—

(1) prioritize support for strengthening the public schools of the United States;

(2) empower superintendents, principals, and other school leaders to implement, manage, and lead school districts and schools in partnership with educators, parents, and other local education stakeholders; and

(3) support services and programs that are critical to helping students engage in learning, including counseling, extracurricular activities, and mental health support;

Whereas public schools should foster inclusive, safe, and high-quality environments in which children can learn to think critically, problem solve, and build relationships;

Whereas public schools should provide environments in which all students have the opportunity to succeed beginning in their earliest years, regardless of who a student is or where a student lives;

Whereas Congress should support—

(1) efforts to advance equal opportunity and excellence in public education;

(2) efforts to implement evidence-based practices in public education; and

(3) continuous improvements to public education;

Whereas every child should—

(1) receive an education that helps the child reach the full potential of the child; and

(2) attend a school that offers a high-quality educational experience;

Whereas Federal funding, in addition to State and local funds, supports the access of students to inviting classrooms, well-prepared educators, and services to support healthy students, including nutrition and afterschool programs;

Whereas teachers, paraprofessionals, and principals should provide students with a well-rounded education and strive to create joy in learning;

Whereas superintendents, principals, other school leaders, teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents make public schools vital components of communities and are working hard to improve educational outcomes for children across the country; and

Whereas the week of February 26 through March 1, 2024, is an appropriate period to designate as “Public Schools Week”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates the week of February 26 through March 1, 2024, as “Public Schools Week”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I have 12 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized to

meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans’ Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 3:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

The Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 3:00 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Jacob Walker, an intern in my office, be granted floor privileges until March 1, 2024.

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

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to the following interns on Senator KELLY’s staff for today: Maya Rezende-Tsao, Gabe Levine, Gannon Tulumello, and Leila Pearson.

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

PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 568, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 568) designating the week of February 26 through March 1, 2024, as “Public Schools Week”.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 568) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, February 29; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Rollinson nomination postcloture; that all time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m.; and that if the nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action; further, that following disposition of the Rollinson nomination, the Senate resume legislative session and execute the order of January 31, 2024, with respect to the veto message on S.J.