

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.