

them. Congress must lend its support to these schools and their goals, especially since on average, the funding gap between charter schools and traditional schools is 22 percent, or \$1,800 per pupil. The average charter school ends up with a total funding shortfall of nearly half a million dollars. Yet, twelve studies find that overall gains in charter schools are larger than other public schools; four find charter schools' gains higher in certain significant categories of schools and six find comparable gains to traditional schools. I ask my colleagues for their continued support of Charter schools and urge them to support this resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 382.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### SUPPORTING NATIONAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 338) supporting the goals and ideals of National Community College Month.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 338

Whereas there are more than 1,100 community colleges in the United States;

Whereas there are more than 11,000,000 students enrolled in for-credit and not-for-credit programs at community colleges nationwide;

Whereas in 2009, community colleges in the United States will award more than 500,000 associate's degrees and 270,000 associate's certificates;

Whereas community colleges have educated more than 100,000,000 people in the United States since the first community college was founded in 1901;

Whereas community college students are a more diverse group in terms of age, income, race, and ethnicity than students attending traditional colleges and universities, making community colleges essential to providing access to postsecondary education;

Whereas community colleges enrich and enhance communities across the country, socially, culturally, and politically;

Whereas community colleges are affordable and close to home for most people in the United States;

Whereas community colleges allow many older students to take courses part-time while working full-time, creating opportunities that otherwise would not be available;

Whereas community colleges provide job training for workers who have lost their jobs or are hoping to find better jobs, helping millions of people in the United States support themselves and their families;

Whereas community colleges contribute more than \$31,000,000,000 annually to the Nation's economic growth and, by helping to provide a skilled workforce, are critical to

our Nation's continued success and prosperity in the global economy of the 21st century; and

Whereas the American Association of Community Colleges, the Association of Community College Trustees, and more than 1,100 community colleges nationwide recognize April as National Community College Month: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Community College Month; and

(2) congratulates the Nation's community colleges, and their students, governing boards, faculty, and staff, for their contributions to education and workforce development, and for their vital role in ensuring a brighter, stronger future for the Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) and the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend and insert extraneous material on House Resolution 338 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of House Resolution 338, which supports the goals and ideals of National Community College Month. This resolution recognizes community colleges all across the country for their enormous contribution to educational outcomes and to workforce development.

Since the first community college, Joliet Junior College in Joliet, Illinois, was founded in 1901, community colleges have educated more than 100 million students in the United States. Community colleges provide a variety of roles for students. It is a place to receive an associate's degree, to begin a bachelor's degree, or for workplace training.

With more than 1,100 community colleges in the United States and over 11 million students currently enrolled in these schools, community colleges provide a high-quality education and resources to students coming from widely diverse backgrounds.

Community colleges enroll a diverse student body. In 2000, the United States Department of Education reported that 31 percent of community college students were minorities, and 61 percent of community college students received Pell Grants and met the income thresholds to qualify.

Community colleges offer a number of advantages for students. The schools maintain affordable tuition at a time of increasing tuition costs. And for a majority of Americans, community colleges are located conveniently close to their homes. The close proximity allows working students to take courses part-time while keeping their employ-

ment. One community college in my district, Colorado Mountain College, has five campuses spread across the mountain areas to help ensure that they have presence close to the places of work and where people live.

More students are enrolled part-time in community colleges than full-time. Additionally, community colleges provide excellent job training to millions of Americans who have lost their jobs or who desire more lucrative opportunities. This is particularly critical in these tough economic times. It costs almost \$2,500 per year to attend a community college, while it costs over \$6,500 a year to attend a 4-year in-state college, on average.

It is vital that community colleges remain affordable to the millions of students who attend every year. Furthermore, community colleges are at the forefront of innovation. With more than \$100 billion included in the economic stimulus package for green job opportunities, community colleges are prepared to provide the type of training necessary to implement our new green investment and help make sure that the renewable energy sector is a strong growing sector with a workforce that is ready to take on the positions.

This year, community colleges in our country will award more than 500,000 associate degrees and 270 associate certificates. Countless other students in community colleges will continue their education and transfer to 4-year colleges and universities.

Community colleges help spur the economy and provide a skilled workforce to contribute more than \$31 billion to the Nation's economy each year. In Colorado's Second Congressional District that I have the honor to represent, Front Range Community College and the Colorado Mountain College are effectively addressing the needs of both students and families and employers, and represent an essential component for ongoing economic development as well as our community pride.

The American Association of Community Colleges, the American Association of Community College Trustees, and community colleges across the country support this bill and this month. I urge my colleagues to support the bill as well and would like to thank Representative LATHAM for bringing this resolution forward, for community colleges are instrumental to our Nation's economy.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 338, supporting the goals and ideals of National Community College Month, and congratulating the community colleges for their role in educating the Nation.

As a co-chairman of the Congressional Community College Caucus and a member of the House Education and Labor Committee, I have witnessed the

benefits community colleges have to offer.

Community colleges serve a diverse body of students by providing them with a unique flexibility. Most community colleges offer evening courses that allow students to work towards earning their degree while working full-time to support themselves and their families. This flexibility allows many older working adults to further their education and advance their careers. In fact, the average age of a student attending community college is 29, and 50 percent of full-time students are employed part-time and 50 percent of part-time students are employed full-time.

Community colleges' flexibility also enables students whose cultural traditions may encourage them to fulfill more traditional familial roles and may not encourage them to take 4 years to attend a traditional college or university to pursue higher education or job training while fulfilling familial duties. The flexibility of most community colleges helps to draw in a diverse student body, and the relatively low cost of most community colleges provides an educational opportunity to many students who otherwise could not afford to further their education or careers.

The average cost of attendance at a community colleges is \$2,402 per year. This is significantly less than the average annual cost of attending a 4-year public or private university or college at \$6,585 for in-state, and \$17,452 for out-of-state tuition and fees at a public institution, and \$25,143, for tuition and fees at a private institution.

Community colleges provide a diverse body of students from various income levels with an opportunity for education. Students may be working toward a 2- or 4-year degree, a professional certification, or furthering their careers through job training, learning a second language, or attending employer-recommended classes in order to receive a promotion. Community colleges award approximately 555,000 associates degrees and approximately 295,000 professional certificates annually. In addition, many community colleges work closely with their community's one-stop employment center to provide skills, training, and other services to unemployed or dislocated workers, which is especially important in these difficult economic times.

Community colleges provide innumerable education opportunities to people of all ages, professions, cultures, and stages of life. These institutions enroll an estimated 11.5 million people annually, and open the door to education for people who would otherwise be unable to pursue it.

This is why I stand in support of this resolution, and I ask for my colleagues' support.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MILLER).

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, like Mr. CASTLE, I am one of the co-Chairs of the House Community College Caucus. And I am also pleased to join today in honoring our Nation's community colleges.

Community colleges provide an affordable close-to-home education to between 11 and 12 million Americans every year. Community colleges create opportunities for Americans that they just otherwise would not have available to them.

GEDs: for those students who do not complete high school in the regular time, in my State at least, the great, great majority of students who go back to get a GED go back to community colleges to get it. Sometimes the training is done on campus; sometimes it is done at work sites. But the great majority of students who do get their GED—which is an absolute requirement to having any prospect of getting highly skilled, well-paid jobs, they get that training through GEDs.

A great many students spend their first 2 years in college at community colleges before going on to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.

Community colleges train for jobs in a way that really makes jobs available to students. They are important for employers, and they are important for workers. No employer is going to move into a city, is going to expand operations or begin new operations in a community that does not offer the kind of job training that a community college offers.

All manner of job skills are taught at community colleges and really do the bulk of the Nation's work in providing training for those skills: health care professionals, nurses, phlebotomists, x-ray technicians, on and on. The bulk of those students—in North Carolina, at least, and I suspect in much of the Nation—are at community colleges.

Building trades: all of the skills in building trades are taught at community colleges. Law enforcement, fire fighting, other first responders go to community colleges for the skills they need. And in North Carolina, at least, where we are blessed with one of the first and best community college systems, there are programs, curricula in communities that are precisely tailored to specific needs of that community.

Let me give just a couple of examples. In the county I live in, Wake County, North Carolina, which includes Raleigh, the eastern end of the county, the towns of Zebulon, Knightdale and Wendell, is an area that includes—along with counties just east of there—a cluster of 30 or 40 employers that use extrusion technology for various reasons. Extrusion is pulling on plastics like taffy to shape it. And Wake Technical Community College established a campus in that part of the county specifically to train skills used in the extrusion industries.

In Alamance County, which for 100 years has been dominated by the tex-

tile industry, but the textile industry has taken one hit after another, a small company has grown up now, LabCorp, to become the Nation's second largest medical testing firm. Samples are sent from all over the country to be tested at LabCorp in Burlington, Alamance County. One of the leading programs or curricula at the Alamance Community College is a biotech program. And they have a standing understanding, agreement with LabCorp, that LabCorp will hire everybody who comes out of that program who wants to work for LabCorp.

□ 1345

The list goes on and on. Community colleges really are where our workers are going to need to go to improve their job skills to make sure that our Nation remains the most productive nation on Earth. And if we are going to have the most prosperous economy in the world, we need to have the most productive workers in the world, and community colleges are making that happen.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, again I would like to express my appreciation for the work done by community colleges across our country and urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 338.

America's community colleges continue to provide a silver lining to accompany the dark clouds of economic uncertainty.

Community colleges are uniquely positioned to retrain displaced workers so they can get back into the workforce and start earning a paycheck, even as unemployment figures across the country continue to climb. They help breathe life into local economies by giving workers the expertise they need to excel in the job market.

At this very moment, our future nurses, technicians and manufacturers are gaining the experience and expertise they need to compete in the marketplace through programs offered by community colleges.

These jobs are the backbone of our economy and a central support for millions of American families. They pay well and they come with reliable benefits. And they become even more important during a time of economic uncertainty.

In Iowa—my home state—community colleges have partnered with government agencies to organize job fairs that put workers in contact with potential employers and boost the profile of local businesses. Iowa's community colleges are strengthening the state's business climate. They're laying a foundation that will meet the needs of an increasingly competitive and high-tech workforce well into the future.

Community colleges have also taken great strides in renewable energy through groundbreaking programs that provide students with hands-on experience with the latest equipment. Graduates of these programs go to work on high-tech windmills and other innovative technology.

These are truly the jobs of the future, and I'm proud that several community colleges in

Iowa are leading the way. These programs are laying the foundation for a new era of energy efficiency and environmental responsibility that will benefit everyone in America.

Community colleges provide a wealth of benefits to the people they serve. They improve the quality of life in their communities. They prepare workers for the job market, and they are often laboratories of innovation. Our communities rely on the economic spark they provide—especially in the midst of hard times.

It's imperative that we provide these institutions the resources they need to continue their mission. Community colleges have proven that they get results. They improve lives. They strengthen communities.

I have the utmost confidence in the hard work and resiliency of the American people. Without doubt, we will recover from this economic downturn. And I'm just as certain that our community colleges will help us get there.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 338, "Supporting the goals and ideals of National Community College Month". I would like to thank my colleague Representative TOM LATHAM for introducing this resolution, as well as the co-sponsors.

The American Association of Community Colleges, the Association of Community College Trustees, and hundreds of community colleges nationwide recognize April as National Community College Month. They have many achievements to celebrate.

There are over 1100 community colleges in our nation, enrolling over 11 million students nationwide. Since the first community college was founded in the United States, over a century ago, community colleges have educated more than 100 million American minds, making incalculable contributions to our country and population. To this day, they contribute more than \$31 billion annually to the Nation's economic growth and, by helping to provide a skilled workforce, are critical to our Nation's continued success and prosperity in the global economy of the 21st century.

I know about this from the achievements of my district, and the work done by among the finest of academic institutions—Houston Community College. Founded in 1971, under the wing of the Houston Independent School District—for example, initially using the district's campuses to teach night classes. In 1997 they began to transfer operations to community college district-operated campuses throughout the college's service area.

Today, they offer students a wide array of academic and work programs, from accounting to fine arts, as well as stimulating programs such as the Spring Branch Business Plan Competition—learning and career opportunities found across the city of Houston and the surrounding area, in six different colleges.

Perhaps, most notably, the Houston Community College System operates a television channel called HCCTV, which stands for Houston Community College Television, which began in 1994. It is aired on a number of local cable channels and streamed on the Internet, operating with a studio complex, which has one large studio unit, five edit suites, and a digital master control system, all of which are located at the HCC headquarters. Just this past Saturday, I attended HCC's graduation in Houston. It was a tribute to how community colleges can change lives.

This is only one community college. In 2009, community colleges in the United States

will award, to these young minds, more than 500,000 associate's degrees and 270,000 associate's certificates. The students are a more diverse group in terms of age, income, race, and ethnicity than students attending traditional colleges and universities, making community colleges essential to providing access to postsecondary education.

They allow many older students to take courses part-time while working full-time, creating opportunities that otherwise would not be available and are affordable and close to home for most people in the United States. Community colleges provide job training for workers who have lost their jobs or are hoping to find better jobs, helping millions of people in the United States support themselves and their families.

I am here before you today supporting the goals and ideals of National Community College Month, and urging my fellow members to do the same. Let us, as a Congress, and as a country, congratulate the Nation's community colleges, and their students, governing boards, faculty, and staff, for their contributions to education and workforce development, and for their vital role in ensuring a brighter, stronger future for the Nation.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank Congressman LATHAM and my colleagues, for introducing H. Res. 338 honoring community colleges. I have long supported these institutions for the professional education they provide their students and I am happy to honor them today.

Community colleges in New Jersey serve over 150,000 students at 19 campuses.

They offer their students a broad array of certificate and associate degree programs—from business management to nursing, and engineering to philosophy.

That is why, as Assembly Speaker in New Jersey, I created the STARS program that allowed star high school students to attend any community college in New Jersey for free. Now that program has been expanded to allow these students to attend a four-year college after two high-performing years at their community college. I recognized the great education these institutions provide to students and I wanted to ensure that they remained a viable option for future students.

Community colleges play a vital role in our communities and for the students who attend them. I am proud to show my support for these fine institutions and H. Res. 338.

Ms. GIFFORDS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to celebrate April as National Community College Month with my support of H. Res. 338, "Supporting the Goals and Ideals of National Community College."

As the largest rural college district in the state, Cochise College has served the area of Southeastern Arizona since 1964. With multiple campuses and learning centers in Douglas, Sierra Vista, Benson, Willcox, Fort Huachuca, and Nogales, Cochise educates about 14,000 students a year.

Community colleges are essential to expanding access to postsecondary education to those who might not normally benefit from traditional colleges and universities. As a member of the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges consortium, Cochise College offers tailored learning to active-duty or retired servicemembers and their families.

Furthermore, community colleges contribute over \$31 billion annually to the Nation's eco-

nomie growth. In Cochise County, the College is the 10th largest employer in the county.

Cochise College strives to educate students with transferable degrees and direct-employment training, which are important tools in a competitive job market such as this. As Southeastern Arizona continues to grow, the College's role becomes ever so important to our community's development.

I am proud to celebrate National Community College Month by recognizing the integral role community colleges play in our evolving society.

Ms. GIFFORDS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to celebrate April as National Community College Month with my support of H. Res. 338, "Supporting the Goals and Ideals of National Community College Month."

More than 11 million students are enrolled in for-credit and not-for-credit programs at community colleges nationwide, and in my district alone, over 73,000 students attend Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona.

Community colleges are essential to expanding access to postsecondary education to a more diverse population than traditional colleges and universities. Pima Community College exemplifies that mission with a student profile compiled of 56% women and 42% ethnic minorities.

Since 1969, Pima Community College has provided an affordable and convenient education by offering child care, job placement assistance, financial aid, and other support services. As University fees continue to rise and more people return to school in an increasingly competitive job market, the College's role becomes ever so important to our community's development.

I am proud to celebrate National Community College Month by recognizing the integral role community colleges play in our evolving society.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 338.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### CONGRATULATING THE NATIONAL CHAMPION UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 348) congratulating the University of North Carolina men's basketball team for winning the 2009 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball National Championship.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.