

year. Understanding the Constitution and fundamentals of the government of the United States is essential to being a contributing member of our society. By recommending that the U.S. Constitution be taught to high school seniors, this measure will help prepare people of voting age to participate in the democratic process.

The state of public awareness and understanding of the U.S. system of government requires action to improve civic education. Americans from all walks of life—rich and poor, young and old, and Republican and Democrat—fail civic literacy tests. Moreover, many institutions of learning of all calibers and at all levels do not adequately prepare students to be knowledgeable citizens. Nearly half of the States do not require that U.S. civics and American history be taught in school. Education is vital to improving the vitality of our democracy.

In Texas, teaching of the constitution is part of our social studies curriculum and 91 percent of our students passed our exit exams in the 2007–2008 school year. This shows an effort on our part to educate our students on the governing doctrine of our great nation and the retention by our students of this information. Instituting such requirements helps develop responsible adults who understand their responsibilities as a citizen of this great nation.

I believe that all citizens need to have a strong understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the institutions of U.S. government. Individuals must understand the basic tenets of our Constitution in order to protect their rights and fully participate in the democratic process. Furthermore, civic Recommending to the States that they teach the United States Constitution as a part of the senior year curriculum will send a clear message that civics is an important part of a high school education. Increasing knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and our government will also lead to increased civic engagement among our students. Teaching the basic tenets of government to those students who will then become voters will increase voter participation rates and create a more active citizenry.

Mr. SABLAN. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 686, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTIONS WEEK

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 737) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a National Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week should be established.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 737

Whereas Hispanic-Serving Institutions play an important role in educating many

underprivileged students and helping them attain their full potential through higher education;

Whereas there are currently about 268 Hispanic-Serving Institutions in the United States;

Whereas Hispanic-Serving Institutions are actively involved in stabilizing and improving their communities;

Whereas celebrating the vast contributions of Hispanic-Serving Institutions contributes to the strength and culture of our Nation;

Whereas the achievements and goals of Hispanic-Serving Institutions are deserving of national recognition; and

Whereas the week of September 20th would be an appropriate week for such recognition: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the achievements and goals of Hispanic-Serving Institutions across the country;

(2) supports the designation of an appropriate week as “National Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week”;

(3) requests the President to issue a proclamation designating such week; and

(4) calling on the people of the United States and interested groups to observe such week with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs to demonstrate support for Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend and insert extraneous material on House Resolution 737 into the record.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of House Resolution 737, which encourages the establishment of the week of September 20 as National Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week. Hispanic-Serving Institutions are degree-granting institutions with full-time equivalent enrollment that are at least 25 percent Hispanic. In 1990, there were only 137 recognized Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Today, there are 268 such institutions, educating more than half of all Hispanic college and university students in the Nation.

Hispanic Americans face multiple obstacles in access and completion of higher education. While Hispanic high-school graduates are more likely than their white peers to go on to college, they are less likely to complete their bachelor's degrees because of issues linked to poverty, immigration, and enrollment status.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions play a crucial role in addressing these issues and obstacles while remaining committed to educating underserved students across the country.

Working to increase enrollment and retention, Hispanic-Serving Institu-

tions have created many innovative programs. At El Camino College in California, their “First Year Experience” class has rates 10 to 30 percent higher than the rest of the student body. The program provides a learning community through linked classes and a team of instructors and counselors who work together to increase student success.

At the University of Texas, El Paso, deep relationships with the surrounding K–12 community schools have helped bridge a path for students to obtain a higher education and be prepared for college-level work.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions continue to produce extremely accomplished members of our society. Their alumni include Members of Congress and some of the President's closest advisors in his Cabinet.

Lastly, it is important to note that September is Hispanic Heritage Month. This month celebrates the accomplishments and contributions of Hispanics in the United States while honoring the Hispanic culture in our country. It is appropriate that we include Hispanic-Serving Institutions in this honor.

I thank Representative GRIJALVA for his leadership in bringing this important resolution forward. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this important resolution and join me in my commendation of our country's Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 737, a resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a National Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week should be established.

I want to thank the gentleman from Arizona, Mr. GRIJALVA, for introducing this resolution. Mr. GRIJALVA recognizes the important role that HSIs play for all postsecondary students, especially minority students.

HSIs and their student body are very diverse. The community of HSIs includes 2-year and 4-year institutions and public and private institutions. In 2007, 46 percent of students enrolled in HSIs were Hispanics, and the remaining 44 percent were a diverse mix of students from various ethnicities and backgrounds. Even with this diversity of the student body, geographical location and population served, the principal missions of all of these institutions is to provide a quality education.

HSIs deserve recognition for the contribution they make to the education community and the Nation. While comprising less than 10 percent of the Nation's institutions of higher education, HSIs educate over two-thirds of Hispanic students enrolled in colleges and universities. Most HSIs do not have access to the resources or endowment income that other institutions can draw

on. However, they are still successful in their effort to provide a high-quality education, often to some of our most disadvantaged students.

We have consistently worked to improve the Nation's support for Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Just last Congress, the Higher Education Opportunity Act, the reauthorization bill for the Higher Education Act, included a provision that created a new program designed to allow these institutions to improve their graduate and professional programs. We also provided more flexibility to HSIs through broadening their uses of Title V funds to include activities like the development of articulation agreements, the development of distance learning technologies, and providing additional financial literacy counseling to students and families.

It is important that we recognize the contributions of HSIs and their graduates by celebrating HSI Week. The number of HSIs increases every year. From 2006 to 2007, 13 new institutions qualified as an HSI. These institutions provide an ever-increasing number of students with a high-quality education and leadership skills for the future, and they deserve recognition for such.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, again, I encourage my colleagues to support House Resolution 737.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 737.

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.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL COACHES APPRECIATION WEEK

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 6) recognizing the significant contribution coaches make in the life of children who participate in organized sports and supporting the goals and ideals of National Coaches Appreciation Week.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 6

Whereas coaches are a vital part of organized youth sports;

Whereas approximately 42 million American children participate in organized sports each year, but more than 20 million children in the United States lack the opportunity to participate in organized sports, in part because of an insufficient number of coaches;

Whereas a national effort to promote coaching is needed to increase the number of adults serving as coaches in youth sports;

Whereas the purpose of the Congressional Caucus on Youth Sports is to educate Members of Congress, the media, and the public on the need to restore a child-centered focus in youth sports that will produce immeasurable positive benefits for the well-being and character development of children;

Whereas sports and coaches help children fight obesity, increase their self-esteem, learn leadership skills, and discover how to incorporate the values of sports into other aspects of their daily lives;

Whereas youth sports activity can reduce gang participation and youth violence;

Whereas children need adults who will believe in them and who give children the support they need to be a success;

Whereas coaches can positively impact the physical, emotional, and educational life of children;

Whereas coaches who volunteer their time help educate children, serve as role models, and, in some situations, are parental surrogates; and

Whereas the designation of the week of September 13 through 19, 2009, as National Coach Appreciation Week would raise awareness and leverage resources to engage millions of children in organized sports that promote health, nutrition, and fitness, as well as other youth development outcomes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the significant contribution coaches make in the life of children who participate in organized sports;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of National Coach Appreciation Week; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Coach Appreciation Week with appropriate recognition, activities, and programs to demonstrate the importance of sports and coaches in the life of children.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend and insert extraneous material on House Resolution 6 into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 6, which recognizes the immeasurable contributions coaches make in the lives of children who participate in organized sports. This week, our Nation will honor adults who volunteer their time to coach our Nation's young with National Coaches Appreciation Week.

Approximately 42 million American children participate in organized sports each year. Youth sports, along with coaches, help fight childhood obesity, increase player self-esteem, develop leadership skills, and create opportunities for children to explore their passion. Participation in sports also devel-

ops discipline and fosters positive peer bonding, which helps keep students engaged in school. Because of their involvement with sports, many young athletes develop a lifelong commitment to exercise and well-being.

The benefits of sports participation cannot be overstated. High school students who participate in athletics are more likely to have a healthy mind and body.

□ 1430

Specifically, girls who play sports have better grades and are more likely to graduate compared to girls who do not participate in athletic activities. The risk of breast cancer, osteoporosis and obesity are also reduced with as few as 4 hours of exercise a week.

In addition to the many physical benefits of youth sports, coaches help athletes overcome personal challenges. The presence of a coach helps keep students engaged and provides alternative support systems that can help children stay away from mischief.

To acknowledge some of the dedication and hard work our youth sports coaches offer to children, the National Alliance for Youth Sports created a Coach of the Year award. This is a very prestigious national award that is given to an individual who is committed to the development of children. Last year's winner, Clarence McQueen, demonstrated his commitment to children by coaching basketball, baseball and flag football while teaching the benefits of teamwork, trust and hard work.

Today, more than 20 million children in the United States lack the opportunity to participate in organized sports due, in part, to the lack of available coaches. We must continue to encourage adults to volunteer and commit time to youth sports, as this resolution suggests.

Mr. Speaker, once again I want to express my support for this resolution, and I thank Representative MCINTYRE for bringing this bill forward. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of House Resolution 6, recognizing the significant contributions that coaches make in the lives of children who participate in organized sports and supporting the goals and the ideals of National Coaches Appreciation Week.

Coaches make a lasting impression on America's young people. I bet that almost every Member in this Chamber could name at least one coach that has had a profound impact on their lives and encouraged them to become the person that they are today. This resolution brings national attention to the contributions of coaches and recognizes the time and energy that they dedicate to the athletic and moral development of children. In addition, National