

MURKOWSKI, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 383

Whereas mentoring is a longstanding tradition in which a dependable, caring adult provides guidance, support, and encouragement to facilitate a young person's social, emotional, and cognitive development;

Whereas continued research on mentoring shows that formal, high-quality mentoring focused on developing the competence and character of the mentee promotes positive outcomes, such as improved academic achievement, self-esteem, social skills, and career development;

Whereas further research on mentoring provides strong evidence that mentoring successfully reduces substance use and abuse, academic failure, and delinquency;

Whereas mentoring, in addition to preparing young people for school, work, and life, is extremely rewarding for those serving as mentors;

Whereas more than 4,700 mentoring programs in communities of all sizes across the United States focus on building strong, effective relationships between mentors and mentees;

Whereas approximately 3,000,000 young people in the United States are in solid mentoring relationships due to the remarkable vigor, creativity, and resourcefulness of the thousands of mentoring programs in communities throughout the Nation;

Whereas in spite of the progress made to increase mentoring, the United States has a serious "mentoring gap", with nearly 15,000,000 young people in need of mentors;

Whereas mentoring partnerships between the public and private sectors bring State and local leaders together to support mentoring programs by preventing duplication of efforts, offering training in industry best practices, and making the most of limited resources to benefit young people in the United States;

Whereas the designation of January 2010 as "National Mentoring Month" will help call attention to the critical role mentors play in helping young people realize their potential;

Whereas a month-long celebration of mentoring will encourage more individuals and organizations, including schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith institutions, and foundations, to become engaged in mentoring across the United States; and

Whereas National Mentoring Month will, most significantly, build awareness of mentoring and encourage more people to become mentors and help close the mentoring gap in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of January 2010 as "National Mentoring Month";

(2) recognizes with gratitude the contributions of the millions of caring adults and students who are already volunteering as mentors and encourages more adults and students to volunteer as mentors; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Mentoring Month with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of, and volunteer involvement with, youth mentoring.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Daniel Barlava, an intern in Senator DODD's office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the remainder of today's session.

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

SUPPORTING NATIONAL SLAVERY AND TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 382 submitted earlier today.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 382) supporting the goals and ideals of observing National Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Month from January 1 through February 1, 2010, to raise awareness of, and opposition to, modern slavery.

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today the Senate will take an important step to raise awareness of human trafficking, a form of modern-day slavery. The resolution, introduced by myself and Senators CORNYN, CARDIN, and BROWNBACK, observes National Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Month from January 1 through February 1 to raise awareness of, and opposition to, modern slavery and human trafficking. This bipartisan resolution was passed unanimously today by the Senate.

Human trafficking is a crime in which persons are forced to work against their will in sweatshops, prostitution rings, farm labor, private homes, and other enterprises. The traffickers use force, threats of force, and coercion to ensure that their victims believe they have no other choice but to work for their captors.

The resolution resolves that Congress supports (1) the goals and ideals of observing the National Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Month from January 1 through February 1 to recognize the vital role that the people of the United States have in ending modern slavery; (2) marking this observance with appropriate programs and activities culminating in the observance on February 1 of National Freedom Day; and (3) all other efforts to raise awareness of and opposition to human trafficking.

This resolution recognizes the month of January as significant for modern slavery and human trafficking. January 1 is the anniversary of the effective date of the Emancipation Proclamation and February 1 is the anniversary of the date that President Abraham Lincoln signed the joint resolution sending the 13th amendment to the States for ratification.

In addition, it recognizes that January 11 is a day that many have chosen to commemorate human trafficking. In the 110th Congress, I sponsored a concurrent resolution that passed the Senate supporting January 11 as a National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness.

In 2007, California passed a resolution, signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger, designating January 11 as National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness. The Los Angeles

City Council and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors did the same for the county of Los Angeles.

The issue of human trafficking has become particularly problematic in California. San Diego is an international trafficking gateway city used to traffic foreign children into the U.S. The United Nations has listed Mexico as the No. 1 exporter of exploited children into North America.

From 1998 to 2003, more than 500 people from 18 countries were ensnared in 57 forced labor operations throughout California. These statistics only represent the cases that were discovered. Frequently, human trafficking goes undetected because the victims are not only afraid of their traffickers, but they have been taught by their traffickers to fear U.S. law enforcement.

Congress has acted to broaden the tools available to prosecute perpetrators of modern slavery and to assist and protect victims of human trafficking. It has enacted the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008.

California has taken a leadership role in identifying and prosecuting human trafficking cases. For example, San Diego received one of the first grants to train local law enforcement on identifying and prosecuting human trafficking. The U.S. attorneys offices in Oakland, Los Angeles, and San Diego have all created antitrafficking task forces.

Using these tools, this August five people in California were sentenced to Federal prison, all receiving multi-decade sentences for their roles in an international sex trafficking ring that lured young Guatemalan women and girls into the Los Angeles area and forced them into prostitution.

In this distressing case, the defendants intimidated and controlled their victims by threatening to beat them and kill their loved ones in Guatemala if they tried to escape. At least three of the defendants restrained the victims by locking them in at night and blocking windows and doors to prevent their escape.

In another recent case in Walnut Creek, CA, a woman was found guilty of trafficking a nanny from Peru. For nearly 2 years, the victim was forced to cook, clean, and take care of the family's children through false promises of pay. The victim was eventually able to escape, with the assistance of local residents and officials and parents at a local elementary school.

Human trafficking is a pervasive global crime, with nearly 1 million people trafficked across international borders every year. According to the State Department, roughly 80 percent of the victims are women and children.

I believe that it is vital that we work together as a nation to eliminate human trafficking and prevent the victimization of the most vulnerable members of society.