

others strengthened their laws and significantly expanded their programs. In California, for example, the state legislature broadly supported a move to raise the state cap on charters from 100 to 250 of this year and allow the creation of 100 additional schools each succeeding year. And just last month in Texas, the state board of education approved the creation of 85 new schools, more than doubling the existing number.

This is truly a grass-roots revolution, led by parents and teachers and community activists, which is seeking to reinvent the public school and take it back to the future, reconnecting public education to some of our oldest, most basic values—ingenuity, responsibility, accountability—and refocusing its mission on doing what's best for the child instead of what's best for the system.

The results so far have been quite encouraging. Parents of charter school students overwhelmingly give their programs high marks, particularly for their responsiveness and the sense of community they foster. Also, broad-based studies done by the Hudson Institute and the Education Department show that charters are effectively serving diverse populations, especially many of the disadvantaged and at-risk children that traditional public schools have struggled to educate. And while it's too soon to determine what impact charter schools are having on overall academic performance, the early returns suggest that charters are succeeding where it matters most, in the classroom.

A survey done last fall by the National School Boards Association found that the charter movement is already having a positive ripple effect that is being felt in many local public school districts. The NSBA report cites evidence that traditional public schools are working harder to please local families so they won't abandon them to competing charter schools, and that central administrators often see charters as a "a powerful tool" to develop new ideas and programs without fearing regulatory roadblocks.

The most remarkable aspect of the charter movement may be that it has managed to bring together citizens, educators, business leaders and politicians from across the political spectrum in support of a mutual goal to better educate our children through more choice, more flexibility and more accountability in our public schools. In these grass-roots, as I suggested above, may lie the roots of a consensus for renewing the promise of public education and ending the left-right stalemate that has too often impeded the reform debate.

We want to build on that broad agreement at the local and state level and do what we can at the Federal level to support and encourage the growth of this movement, which is just what the legislation we approved today will do. It starts by revamping the charter grant program to focus it more

on helping states and local groups create new schools and meet the President's goal of creating 3,000 charters by the year 2000.

Specifically, it calls for gradually increasing the grant funding over the next several years, and then better targeting those additional dollars to the states that are serious about expanding their charter program. It would do so by establishing several "priority" criteria that would give preference in awarding start-up grants to those states that show real progress in creating high-quality, highly-accountable charters. Our hope is that these changes will give states that have been slow to embrace the charter movement an incentive to get on board. The intent is not to punish those states that are moving cautiously, but instead to reward the ones that are prepared to harness this progressive force for change and encourage others to do the same.

The CSEA would also tighten some unintended loopholes in the original statute that have hampered the effectiveness of the program, ensure that charter schools receive their fair share of funding from the major Federal categorical grant programs, and take some initial steps to widen the pool of funding sources for those charters that are struggling to stay alive. And to enhance the potential for all children to benefit from charter successes, this legislation directs the Secretary of Education to work with the states to in effect establish an "innovation pipeline" that would share information about what is working in charter schools to public school districts around the country.

That, in the end, is really what this bill and the charter school movement in general are all about, which is improving the whole of our public education system. As Norman Atkin, a founder and director of the North Star Academy Charter School in Newark, has said, charter schools have the potential to serve as the "R&D arm" of public education, incubating new ideas that could benefit millions of students. And in time hopefully every public school will put into practice the principles undergirding the charter model, and every public school will be liberated from some of the top-heavy bureaucracy that too often suffocates them and in turn pledge to meet high standards of achievement for which they will be held strictly accountable, and every public school will benefit from the positive forces of choice and competition.

For now, we have taken an important step toward that goal today, and passed a piece of legislation that I am confident will make a real and immediate difference in the lives of many children in this country. I again want to thank my colleagues for their broad vote of confidence in the charter movement, and I look forward to working with them next year on new blueprint for education reform that will incor-

porate the substance and spirit of what we have achieved today. ●

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION CONTINUING GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate receives from the House the House joint resolution that will continue Government funding until midnight Monday, October 12, 1998, with no amendments, it be considered agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

APPOINTMENT BY THE VICE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, in accordance with 22 U.S.C. 1928a-1928d, as amended, appoints the following Senators as members of the Senate Delegation to the North Atlantic Assembly during the Second Session of the 105th Congress, to be held in Edinburgh, United Kingdom, November 9-14, 1998:

The Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH);
The Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER);

The Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY);

The Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER);

The Senator from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON);

The Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS);

The Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH);

The Senator from Tennessee (Mr. THOMPSON);

The Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BUMPERS);

The Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI); and

The Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA).

EXPRESSING SENSE OF SENATE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION OF WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 296 submitted earlier today by Senator KERREY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 296) expressing the sense of the Senate that, on completion of construction of a World War II Memorial in Area 1 of the District of Columbia and its environs, Congress should provide funding for the maintenance, security, and custodial and long-term care of the memorial by the National Park Service.

The Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and preamble be agreed to, en bloc; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 296) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is as follows:

S. RES. 296

World War II is the defining event of the 20th century;

Whereas in World War II, over 16,000,000 American men and women served the Nation, of which nearly 300,000 were killed and over 670,000 were wounded;

Whereas in Public Law 103-422 (108 Stat. 4356), Congress approved the location of a memorial to this epic event in Area I of the District of Columbia and its environs, as described in the Act entitled "An Act to provide standards for placement of commemorative works on certain Federal lands in the District of Columbia and its environs, and for other purposes", approved November 14, 1986 (40 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.); and

Whereas Congress has traditionally provided funding for the memorials commemorating President Thomas Jefferson and President Abraham Lincoln, the monument to President George Washington, and the Korean War Veterans Memorial: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. FUNDING OF A WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL.

It is the sense of the Senate that, on completion of construction of a World War II Memorial in Area I of the District of Columbia and its environs, as described in that Act, Congress should provide funding for the maintenance, security, and custodial and long-term care of the memorial by the National Park Service.

Mr. KERREY. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate has agreed to this Sense of the Senate Resolution which would provide funding for the maintenance, security, custodial and long-term care of the memorial by the National Park Service. This is a significant step forward in bringing the World War II Memorial to fruition. What this resolution does is put the Senate on record as supporting public funding of some sort for the World War II Memorial which will be placed on the National Mall—our nation's front yard.

I felt this resolution necessary because of the continued structural problems confronting the Korean War Veterans Memorial, which lies in the same flood plain that the World War II Memorial will call home. I felt it necessary that the Senate take on some precautionary responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of what will be the most prominent memorial on the Mall.

Next year, I intend to introduce legislation to fund not only maintenance, security, custodial and long-term care,

but also construction costs to assist the Honorable Bob Dole in his fund-raising endeavor.

I would again like to thank my colleagues, especially Senators MURKOWSKI and BUMPERS for their support and assistance.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF SENATE RELATIVE TO LOUISVILLE FESTIVAL OF FAITHS

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 274 and that the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 274) to express the sense of the Senate that the Louisville Festival of Faiths should be commended and should serve as a model for similar festivals in other communities throughout the United States.

The Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and preamble be agreed to, en bloc, and that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, without intervening action.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 274) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is as follows:

S. RES. 274

Whereas a Festival of Faiths celebrating the diversity of religion has been held in Louisville, Kentucky, in the month of November of each of the last 3 years;

Whereas the Louisville Festival of Faiths has provided an opportunity for representatives of different faiths to communicate with each other and learn about each other's heritage, experiences, and beliefs,

Whereas more than 60 faiths have participated in the Louisville Festival of Faiths over the past 3 years;

Whereas the freedom to practice religion in diverse ways is a principle that the United States was founded on and one that the United States has embraced throughout its history;

Whereas religious diversity, in addition to its other benefits, expands the perspectives and experiences available to this Nation as a whole;

Whereas the communication of diverse perspectives and experiences between representatives of different religions can enrich the lives of such individuals and can assist such individuals in developing an appreciation of the commonality between different religions;

Whereas such communication can also diminish the potential for conflict between religious groups at a time when the dangers of religious conflict pose increasingly serious problems throughout the world; and

Whereas the Louisville Festival of Faiths experience can be replicated without great difficulty in other communities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the Louisville Festival of Faiths—

(1) should be commended for its concept and its achievements to date; and

(2) should serve as a model for similar festivals in other communities throughout the United States.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF SENATE ON DESIGNATING NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 260.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 260) expressing the sense of the Senate that October 11, 1998, should be designated as "National Children's Day".

The Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to; that the preamble be agreed to; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 260) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is as follows:

S. RES. 260

Whereas the people of the United States should celebrate children as the most valuable asset of the Nation;

Whereas children represent the future, hope, and inspiration of the United States;

Whereas the children of the United States should be allowed to feel that their ideas and dreams will be respected because adults in the United States take time to listen;

Whereas many children of the United States face crises of grave proportions, especially as they enter adolescent years;

Whereas it is important for parents to spend time listening to their children on a daily basis;

Whereas modern societal and economic demands often pull the family apart;

Whereas encouragement should be given to families to set aside a special time for all family members to engage together in family activities;

Whereas adults in the United States should have an opportunity to reminisce on their youth and to recapture some of the fresh insight, innocence, and dreams that they may have lost through the years;

Whereas the designation of a day to commemorate the children of the United States will provide an opportunity to emphasize to children the importance of developing an ability to make the choices necessary to distance themselves from impropriety and to contribute to their communities;

Whereas the designation of a day to commemorate the children of the Nation will emphasize to the people of the United States the importance of the role of the child within the family and society;

Whereas the people of the United States should emphasize to children the importance of family life, education, and spiritual qualities; and