

leader in support of the Nation's space program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 1466, the resolution now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

□ 1545

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of House Resolution 1466, honoring Dr. Guion S. "Guy" Bluford, Jr. on the 25th anniversary of his historic flight as the first African American in space.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the House Committee on Science and Technology and also the 50th anniversary of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA.

The past five decades of our space program have brought remarkable achievements in human space flight and in human exploration, in space and Earth science and in aeronautics. Mr. Speaker, these achievements would not have been possible without the contributions of many individuals who have served NASA and our space program. Some of those individuals also broke barriers along the way and have provided inspiration to all of those who have followed them.

Earlier this year, we honored the 25th anniversary of Dr. Sally K. Ride's flight as the first woman in space. Today, we celebrate the 25th anniversary of Dr. Guion S. Bluford, Jr. as the first African American in space.

Dr. Bluford's path to his pioneering flight exemplifies the "right stuff" so characteristic of NASA's astronauts. He graduated from Penn State University with a degree in aerospace engineering. As a distinguished Air Force ROTC graduate, he went on to complete pilot training and combat crew training, flew combat missions, and returned to serve with the 3630th Flying Training Wing at Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas.

Dr. Bluford went on to earn master's and doctoral degrees in aerospace engineering from the Air Force Institute of Technology, and he held several positions in the Air Force Flight Dynamics Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

In 1979, Dr. Bluford became a NASA astronaut. On August 30, 1983, he made

history when he lifted off with the space shuttle crew of STS-8 as the first African American in space. During the mission, the crew successfully deployed a satellite, conducted operations with the shuttle's robotic arm and collected measurements to improve our understanding of how space affects biophysiological systems.

On October 30, 1985, Dr. Bluford flew with the crew of STS-61-A, a German D-1 spacelab mission that included over 70 scientific experiments in materials processing, in life sciences, in fluid physics, and in navigation.

I would add, Mr. Speaker, that, indeed, that was my mission at spacelab while I was at Goddard Space Flight Center.

His third and fourth flights on shuttle STS-39 in 1991 and on shuttle STS-53 in 1992 involved deploying payloads and in conducting numerous experiments. During his astronaut service, Dr. Bluford logged over 688 hours in space. In 1993, Dr. Bluford left NASA and retired from the Air Force to accept a position in private industry.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Guion Bluford's leadership as an aviator, as an astronaut and as a private sector official is an inspiration for all Americans. I urge my colleagues in Congress to join me in saluting Dr. Guion S. "Guy" Bluford, Jr. on the 25th anniversary of his historic flight as the first African American in space and to honor his distinguished service to the Nation and to the space program.

I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Arkansas is recognized.

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of House Resolution 1466, which honors the life and accomplishments of an amazing man, astronaut Dr. Guy Bluford, Jr.

Guy Bluford was born in West Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on November 22, 1942, and he is perhaps best known as the first African American in space. He was selected for NASA's astronaut program in August 1979, and he became a mission specialist on the eighth space shuttle mission, which launched from the Kennedy Space Center, Florida on August 30, 1983. This was the third flight of the space shuttle Challenger and the first mission with a night launch and with a night landing.

Dr. Bluford is a veteran of four space flights. After STS-8, Dr. Bluford went on to serve as mission specialist on STS-61-A, on STS-39 and on STS-53, and he logged over 688 hours in space.

These early missions paved the way for the scientific research and international cooperation that today are vital aspects of the International Space Station.

Prior to his service with NASA, Guy Bluford received a bachelor of science

degree in aerospace engineering from Pennsylvania State University in 1964, a master's of science degree with distinction in aerospace engineering from the Air Force Institute of Technology in 1974, a doctor of philosophy in aerospace engineering with a minor in laser physics from the Air Force Institute of Technology in 1978, and a master's of business administration from the University of Houston, Clear Lake, in 1987.

What is, perhaps, less well-known about Guy Bluford is the service he has given to the Nation since leaving the astronaut corps. After leaving NASA in July 1993, he retired from the Air Force and held several executive-level positions in America's aerospace industry. Dr. Bluford also served the Nation in other capacities, including as a member of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board. He has been a member of the National Research Council Aeronautics and Space Engineering Board. He has served on the board of trustees of the Aerospace Corporation and on the board of advisors for the Coalition for Space Exploration.

I am proud to support this resolution honoring such a prominent American citizen, executive and astronaut. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 1466.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. If the gentlelady has no other speakers, I will go ahead and yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1466.

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.

UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 2606) to reauthorize the United States Fire Administration, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 2606

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the “United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2008”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The number of lives lost each year because of fire has dropped significantly over the last 25 years in the United States. However, the United States still has one of the highest fire death rates in the industrialized world. In 2006, the National Fire Protection Association reported 3,245 civilian fire deaths, 16,400 civilian fire injuries, and \$11,307,000,000 in direct losses due to fire.

(2) Every year, more than 100 firefighters die in the line of duty. The United States Fire Administration should continue its leadership to help local fire agencies dramatically reduce these fatalities.

(3) The Federal Government should continue to work with State and local governments and the fire service community to further the promotion of national voluntary consensus standards that increase firefighter safety.

(4) The United States Fire Administration provides crucial support to the 30,300 fire departments of the United States through training, emergency incident data collection, fire awareness and education, and support of research and development activities for fire prevention, control, and suppression technologies.

(5) The collection of data on fire and other emergency incidents is a vital tool both for policy makers and emergency responders to identify and develop responses to emerging hazards. Improving the data collection capabilities of the United States Fire Administration is essential for accurately tracking and responding to the magnitude and nature of the fire problems of the United States.

(6) The research and development performed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the United States Fire Administration, other government agencies, and nongovernmental organizations on fire technologies, techniques, and tools advance the capabilities of the fire service of the United States to suppress and prevent fires.

(7) Because of the essential role of the United States Fire Administration and the fire service community in preparing for and responding to national and man-made disasters, the United States Fire Administration should have a prominent place within the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Homeland Security.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION.

Section 17(g)(1) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2216(g)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding after subparagraph (D) the following:

“(E) \$70,000,000 for fiscal year 2009, of which \$2,520,000 shall be used to carry out section 8(f);

“(F) \$72,100,000 for fiscal year 2010, of which \$2,595,600 shall be used to carry out section 8(f);

“(G) \$74,263,000 for fiscal year 2011, of which \$2,673,468 shall be used to carry out section 8(f); and

“(H) \$76,490,890 for fiscal year 2012, of which \$2,753,672 shall be used to carry out section 8(f).”.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY TRAINING PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS AND REPORTS.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO FIRE ACADEMY TRAINING.—Section 7(d)(1) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2206(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) by amending subparagraph (H) to read as follows:

“(H) tactics and strategies for dealing with natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters;”;

(2) in subparagraph (K), by striking “forest” and inserting “wildland”;

(3) in subparagraph (M), by striking “response”;

(4) by redesignating subparagraphs (I) through (N) as subparagraphs (M) through (R), respectively; and

(5) by inserting after subparagraph (H) the following:

“(I) tactics and strategies for fighting large-scale fires or multiple fires in a general area that cross jurisdictional boundaries;

“(J) tactics and strategies for fighting fires occurring at the wildland-urban interface;

“(K) tactics and strategies for fighting fires involving hazardous materials;

“(L) advanced emergency medical services training;”.

(b) ON-SITE TRAINING.—Section 7 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 2206) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)(6), by inserting “, including on-site training” after “United States”;

(2) in subsection (f), by striking “4 percent” and inserting “7.5 percent”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(m) ON-SITE TRAINING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Administrator may enter into a contract with nationally recognized organizations that have established on-site training programs that comply with national voluntary consensus standards for fire service personnel to facilitate the delivery of the education and training programs outlined in subsection (d)(1) directly to fire service personnel.

“(2) LIMITATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may not enter into a contract with an organization described in paragraph (1) unless such organization provides training that—

“(i) leads to certification by a program that is accredited by a nationally recognized accreditation organization; or

“(ii) the Administrator determines is of equivalent quality to a fire service training program described by clause (i).

“(B) APPROVAL OF UNACCREDITED FIRE SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAMS.—The Administrator may consider the fact that an organization has provided a satisfactory fire service training program pursuant to a cooperative agreement with a Federal agency as evidence that such program is of equivalent quality to a fire service training program described by subparagraph (A)(i).

“(3) RESTRICTION ON USE OF FUNDS.—The amounts expended by the Administrator to carry out this subsection in any fiscal year shall not exceed 7.5 per centum of the amount authorized to be appropriated in such fiscal year pursuant to section 17.”.

(c) TRIENNIAL REPORTS.—Such section 7 (15 U.S.C. 2206) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(n) TRIENNIAL REPORT.—In the first annual report filed pursuant to section 16 for which the deadline for filing is after the expiration of the 18-month period that begins on the date of the enactment of the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2008, and in every third annual report thereafter, the Administrator shall include information about changes made to the National Fire Academy curriculum, including—

“(1) the basis for such changes, including a review of the incorporation of lessons learned by emergency response personnel after significant emergency events and emergency preparedness exercises performed under the National Exercise Program; and

“(2) the desired training outcome of all such changes.”.

(d) REPORT ON FEASIBILITY OF PROVIDING INCIDENT COMMAND TRAINING FOR FIRES AT PORTS AND IN MARINE ENVIRONMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility of providing training in incident command for appropriate fire service personnel for fires at United States ports and in marine environments, including fires on the water and aboard vessels.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A description of the necessary curriculum for training described in paragraph (1).

(B) A description of existing training programs related to incident command in port and maritime environments, including by other Federal agencies, and the feasibility and estimated cost of making such training available to appropriate fire service personnel.

(C) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of the United States Fire Administration developing such a training course in incident command for appropriate fire service personnel for fires at United States ports and in marine environments, including fires on the water and aboard vessels.

(D) A description of the delivery options for such a course and the estimated cost to the United States Fire Administration for developing such a course and providing such training for appropriate fire service personnel.

SEC. 5. NATIONAL FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM UPGRADES.

(a) INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM DATABASE.—Section 9 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2208) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) NATIONAL FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM UPDATE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall update the National Fire Incident Reporting System to ensure that the information in the system is available, and can be updated, through the Internet and in real time.

“(2) LIMITATION.—Of the amounts made available pursuant to subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of section 17(g)(1), the Administrator shall use not more than an aggregate amount of \$5,000,000 during the 3-year period consisting of fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011 to carry out the activities required by paragraph (1).”.

(b) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Section 9(b)(2) of such Act (15 U.S.C. 2208(b)(2)) is amended by striking “assist State,” and inserting “assist Federal, State.”.

SEC. 6. FIRE TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE AND RESEARCH DISSEMINATION.

(a) ASSISTANCE TO FIRE SERVICES FOR FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL IN WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE.—Section 8(d) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2207(d)) is amended to read as follows:

“(d) RURAL AND WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE ASSISTANCE.—The Administrator may, in coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Wildland Fire Leadership Council, assist the fire services of the United States, directly or through contracts, grants, or other forms of assistance, in sponsoring and encouraging research into approaches, techniques, systems, equipment, and land-use

policies to improve fire prevention and control in—

“(1) the rural and remote areas of the United States; and

“(2) the wildland-urban interface.”.

(b) TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH DISSEMINATION.—Section 8 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 2207) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) PUBLICATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—For each fire-related research program funded by the Administration, the Administrator shall make available to the public on the Internet website of the Administration the following:

“(A) A description of such research program, including the scope, methodology, and goals thereof.

“(B) Information that identifies the individuals or institutions conducting the research program.

“(C) The amount of funding provided by the Administration for such program.

“(D) The results or findings of the research program.

“(2) DEADLINES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the information required by paragraph (1) shall be published with respect to a research program as follows:

“(i) The information described in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of paragraph (1) with respect to such research program shall be made available under paragraph (1) not later than 30 days after the Administrator has awarded the funding for such research program.

“(ii) The information described in subparagraph (D) of paragraph (1) with respect to a research program shall be made available under paragraph (1) not later than 60 days after the date such research program has been completed.

“(B) EXCEPTION.—No information shall be required to be published under this subsection before the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2008.”.

SEC. 7. ENCOURAGING ADOPTION OF STANDARDS FOR FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND SAFETY.

The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 37. ENCOURAGING ADOPTION OF STANDARDS FOR FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND SAFETY.

“The Administrator shall promote adoption by fire services of national voluntary consensus standards for firefighter health and safety, including such standards for firefighter operations, training, staffing, and fitness, by—

“(1) educating fire services about such standards;

“(2) encouraging the adoption at all levels of government of such standards; and

“(3) making recommendations on other ways in which the Federal Government can promote the adoption of such standards by fire services.”.

SEC. 8. STATE AND LOCAL FIRE SERVICE REPRESENTATION AT NATIONAL OPERATIONS CENTER.

Section 515 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 321d) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) STATE AND LOCAL FIRE SERVICE REPRESENTATION.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF POSITION.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration, establish a fire service position at the National Operations Center established under subsection (b) to ensure the effective sharing of information between the Federal Government and State and local fire services.

“(2) DESIGNATION OF POSITION.—The Secretary shall designate, on a rotating basis, a State or local fire service official for the position described in paragraph (1).

“(3) MANAGEMENT.—The Secretary shall manage the position established pursuant to paragraph (1) in accordance with such rules, regulations, and practices as govern other similar rotating positions at the National Operations Center.”.

SEC. 9. COORDINATION REGARDING FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 21(e) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2218(e)) is amended to read as follows:

“(e) COORDINATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—To the extent practicable, the Administrator shall use existing programs, data, information, and facilities already available in other Federal Government departments and agencies and, where appropriate, existing research organizations, centers, and universities.

“(2) COORDINATION OF FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL PROGRAMS.—The Administrator shall provide liaison at an appropriate organizational level to assure coordination of the activities of the Administrator with Federal, State, and local government agencies and departments and nongovernmental organizations concerned with any matter related to programs of fire prevention and control.

“(3) COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PROGRAMS.—The Administrator shall provide liaison at an appropriate organizational level to assure coordination of the activities of the Administrator related to emergency medical services provided by fire service-based systems with Federal, State, and local government agencies and departments and nongovernmental organizations so concerned, as well as those entities concerned with emergency medical services generally.”.

(b) FIRE SERVICE-BASED EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES BEST PRACTICES.—Section 8(c) of such Act (15 U.S.C. 2207(c)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (4) as paragraphs (3) through (5), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph:

“(2) The Administrator is authorized to conduct, directly or through contracts or grants, studies of the operations and management aspects of fire service-based emergency medical services and coordination between emergency medical services and fire services. Such studies may include the optimum protocols for on-scene care, the allocation of resources, and the training requirements for fire service-based emergency medical services.”.

SEC. 10. AMENDMENTS TO DEFINITIONS.

Section 4 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2203) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “Administration” and inserting “Administration, within the Federal Emergency Management Agency”;

(2) in paragraph (7), by striking the “and” after the semicolon;

(3) in paragraph (8), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(9) ‘wildland-urban interface’ has the meaning given such term in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511).”.

SEC. 11. SUPPORTING THE ADOPTION OF FIRE SPRINKLERS.

Congress supports the recommendations of the United States Fire Administration regarding the adoption of fire sprinklers in

commercial buildings and educational programs to raise awareness of the important of installing fire sprinklers in residential buildings.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on S. 2606, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in strong support of S. 2606, the U.S. Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2008. This bill is a companion bill to H.R. 4847 that passed out of the House last April.

The U.S. Fire Administration is an invaluable resource for our Nation's firefighters and for the communities they protect. Through training, data collection, fire education for the public, and for the support for fire-related research and development, the USFA provides critical tools and leadership. To the fire service from small-scale individual tragedies such as house fires and car accidents to the community- and region-wide disasters of terrorist attacks or floods, firefighters are often the first to arrive on the scene and are the last to leave.

We depend on our firefighters, but firefighters also depend on us. They depend on the public and on their elected officials to make sure that they have the resources, the equipment and the training they need to do their job. If they are not properly equipped, we are all at risk.

Congress saw the need to create the USFA in 1973 when the America Burning report called attention to over 6,000 Americans each year who died in fires and to the 100,000 who were injured. Through the leadership of the USFA and others, the number of people killed in fires each year has dropped by 50 percent down to approximately 3,000, and injuries have dropped by 84 percent. While impressive, 3,000 deaths are still far too many, especially when so many of these deaths and injuries are from our most vulnerable populations—children and the elderly.

S. 2606 is nearly identical to the House bill that passed unanimously on this floor in April. The bill reauthorizes this important agency for 4 years at funding levels that will enable the USFA to fully carry out its mission.

I want to highlight that S. 2606 reflects the priorities for this agency as expressed by members of the fire service community at a Science and Technology Committee meeting held last year.

S. 2606 authorizes the USFA to focus on the pressing challenges of fighting fires in the wildland-urban interface. As communities spread deeper into fire-prone wildlands, local fire departments are faced with the daunting challenge of fighting fires that differ significantly from those they are trained to tackle. The bill also authorizes the USFA to offer training for fires involving hazardous materials as well as advanced topics on emergency medical services.

Firefighters today are called upon to respond to an ever broader array of emergencies. This authorization bill gives the USFA the authority to make sure its training program keeps pace with the increasing challenges to the fire service.

S. 2606 is the product of bipartisan and bicameral collaboration, and it is supported by major fire service organizations, including the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Firefighters, the National Volunteer Fire Council, the National Fire Protection Association, and the Congressional Fire Services Institute.

The resources and leadership of USFA are an essential part of the ability of the fire service to protect our cities, towns and communities. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise, of course, in support of S. 2606, a bill reauthorizing the United States Fire Administration. It's a companion bill to H.R. 4847, which passed the House in April with unanimous support after moving through the Committee on Science and Technology by regular order.

This act authorizes the activities of the United States Fire Administration for fiscal year 2009 through 2012. USFA provides critical support to our Nation's firefighters through training, through research and development and through logistical support. For instance, the USFA provides firefighter training to over 80,000 firefighters per year; it compiles nationwide data on fire control and prevention activities, and it oversees the fire grants programs that have dramatically improved the capabilities and the preparedness of our Nation's fire services.

This is an extremely important agency in our committee's jurisdiction. I'd like to thank Mr. MITCHELL and Dr. GINGREY, vice chair and ranking member of the Technology and Innovation Subcommittee, for their hard work over the past year on this matter.

The United States Fire Administration does a wonderful job of providing support to first responders across the country. The reauthorization of this agency is an important priority for me, and I urge the passage of S. 2606.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HALL of Texas. I have no other speakers. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I risk in strong support of S. 2606, the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2008.

This legislation reauthorizes the United States Fire Administration (USFA) for fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for the agency's activities in training, fire education and awareness, data collection, research, and standards development and promotion. S. 2606 provides \$291 million in federal funds over this 5-year period, which is consistent with previously authorized levels and allows only for a modest growth in funding, capped at 3 percent in any of the fiscal years covered by this bill.

The mission of USFA is to limit economic and life loss "due to fire and related emergencies, through leadership, advocacy, coordination and support." This organization provides vital assistance in the areas of training, fire education and awareness, and awards grants to a number of local fire departments across the country. Since its inception in 1974, USFA has trained over 1 million firefighters through local delivery courses as well as through the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. USFA has provided support critical to reducing deaths and injuries in the U.S. from fire by 25 percent between 1996 and 2006.

S. 2606 is the Senate companion bill to H.R. 4847, which the House passed on April 3rd of this year by a vote of 412-0. The Senate bill includes the same authorization amounts and makes minor modifications to the House-passed version that only further improve the legislation. I am proud to say that this legislation has been crafted in both a bipartisan and bicameral way—with community stakeholders—to ensure that it meets the needs of our firefighting community. I commend my colleagues on the Science Committee in particular Chairman GORDON, Ranking Member HALL and Mr. MITCHELL of Arizona, who is the lead sponsor of the House-passed bill—for their diligence in bringing this important legislation to the House floor today.

Mr. Speaker, S. 2606 authorizes USFA to continue its current operations and expand training and research in a fiscally responsible manner. The bill will provide firefighter training to over 80,000 firefighters per year and facilitate the delivery of education and training programs to firefighters through local training efforts. S. 2606 also aids research into techniques, systems, and equipment to improve fire prevention and control in sparsely developed communities that have been particularly hard hit by fire in the past few years. This legislation also specifically addresses the issue of fighting fires in an urban-wildland interface—like the wildfires we saw last year in Southern California—by implementing methods to better respond and prepare for fires that move from wildlands to suburban and urban areas.

As a physician, I am particularly pleased that S. 2606 includes language I offered in the Science Committee to improve emergency medical care by facilitating USFA's coordination with other groups as well as its ability to disseminate information on best-practices for EMS operations and management.

Firefighters are called upon to extract victims from car crashes, building fires or collapses, and all other emergencies. It is critical that patients receive consistent care under medical direction. While I do not expect USFA to pursue studies into the medical care EMS patients should receive, I believe that this lan-

guage in S. 2606 will give the Administrator the authority and flexibility to conduct studies into training, system design, and on-scene patient management. This will allow the Administrator to work with appropriate federal agencies and existing medical services in these local communities.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a great honor to work with the men and women of our Nation's fire services—including the Congressional Fire Services Institute, the International Association of Fire Fighters, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the National Volunteer Fire Council—on this important legislation. The United States Fire Administration is a vital link to these first responders and this agency has made substantial contributions to improving fire services throughout the country. S. 2606 will ensure that USFA remains vibrant and productive in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their support and thoughtful contributions to this bill. I urge passage of S. 2606 that will enable the USFA to continue its record of achievement as well as prepare firefighters for the challenges they will face in the future.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2606, the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization.

Last year, I was proud to introduce H.R. 4847, the House version of the U.S. Fire Administration Reauthorization along with my colleague from Georgia, Dr. GINGREY. I voted for and the House unanimously passed H.R. 4847 by a vote of 412 to zero on April 3, 2007.

Firefighters are often the first—and the last—to leave an emergency scene. Whether it's putting out a house fire or a wildfire—or responding to a terrorist attack or a car accident—we depend on firefighters every day.

But firefighters also depend on us. They depend on the public and their elected officials to make sure that they have the resources, the equipment and the training they need to do their job. Without those tools, we put them and all of us at unnecessary risk.

The U.S. Fire Administration is an invaluable resource for our Nation's firefighters and the communities they protect. Through training, data collection, fire education for the public, and support for fire related research and development, USFA provides critical tools and leadership to the fire service. The resources and leadership of USFA are an essential part of the ability of the fire service to protect our cities, towns, and communities.

Firefighters today are called upon to respond to an ever broader array of emergencies. This authorization bill gives USFA the authority to make sure its training program keeps pace with the increasing challenges to the fire service.

S. 2606 reauthorizes this important agency for four years at funding levels that will enable USFA to fully carry out its mission.

Last fall, the Science and Technology Committee's Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation, of which I am a member, heard testimony about the priorities of the Nation's fire service community for USFA. This bill directly reflects these priorities.

Fighting wildfires in urban areas requires special training—and I'm proud that this legislation enhances Fire Administration training for wildland-urban interface fires. In Arizona, one of the toughest challenges our firefighters face is wildfires in the wildland-urban interface.

This bill also authorizes USFA to focus on the pressing challenges of fires involving hazardous materials as well as advanced topics in emergency medical services.

This legislation is the product of bipartisan collaboration and is supported by major fire service organizations, including the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Fire Fighters, the National Volunteer Fire Council, the National Fire Protection Association, and the Congressional Fire Services Institute.

The Senate passed S. 2606 unanimously on September 18, 2008. I urge my colleagues to support this vital legislation, bringing it one step closer to becoming law.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 2606.

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. HALL of Texas. 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.

□ 1600

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF A 4-H NATIONAL YOUTH SCIENCE DAY

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1390) expressing support for the designation of a 4-H National Youth Science Day.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1390

Whereas barely 18 percent of 12th grade students perform at or above the proficient level in science;

Whereas the need for science education, especially outside the classroom, is crucial to our country's ability to remain globally competitive;

Whereas today only 32.4 percent of undergraduates in the United States are leaving college with a bachelor's degree in science or engineering, compared to 63.3 percent in Japan, 62.1 percent in Germany, and 56.2 percent in China;

Whereas American businesses will face a competitive crisis with the advancing science- and technology-driven global economy unless they have a workforce that has been trained in scientific fields;

Whereas the future global economy will be driven by market sectors that are based in science, engineering, and technology;

Whereas current scientists and engineers are retiring in record numbers, creating a potentially large void of skilled workers;

Whereas 4-H and other out-of-school programs that focus on science, engineering and technology are an important part of edu-

cating and developing leaders who are well-trained and technically competent;

Whereas 4-H is preparing America's future workforce by developing their passion for science, engineering, and technology at an early age;

Whereas 4-H's educational programs have an unparalleled reach of more than 6,000,000 youth in all 50 States;

Whereas 4-H, in partnership with more than 106 land-grant universities, shape programs in the sciences that are important to today's workforce and critical for managing the world's resources for years to come;

Whereas youth, parents, teachers, schools, and youth organizations have the ability to participate in fun, accessible, science-related activities that encourage youth exploration and experimentation at an early age; and

Whereas October 8, 2008 would be an appropriate day to designate as 4-H National Youth Science Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses support for the designation of a 4-H National Youth Science Day;

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe 4-H National Youth Science Day;

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities; and

(4) encourages young people of all ages and backgrounds to pursue science studies and enter into science careers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 1390, the resolution now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 1390 and 4-H programs across America. 4-H works with over 6 million youths in all 50 States to help develop citizenship, leadership and life skills. 4-H has been doing this and doing it well for over 100 years.

What some people may not know is that one of 4-H's primary focuses today is in the area of science and technology. Through its summer camps, fairs, cultural events and other programs, 4-H has focused on the goal of providing American youths with a solid background in science and technology. Moreover, 4-H programs get children excited and interested in these fields, which we know is a critical element in a child's education success in the sciences.

As this resolution correctly points out, American students consistently rank behind our international peers in

the fields of science and technology. We clearly need to do more if we want to ensure that the next generation of Americans have the high-tech skills to compete in the global marketplace. That is why it is so important that organizations like 4-H continue to do the excellent work they are doing.

I would like to thank the sponsor of this resolution, Mr. CARDOZA, for recognizing the importance of the work of 4-H in the advancement of science, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us today would designate October 8 as 4-H National Youth Science Day. I, as well as 21 other Members of this body, was a proud member of 4-H and know firsthand the good work that this organization performs. "Head, heart, hands and health," that is what the four Hs stand for.

With over 6 million youth participating, it is a much larger organization today than it was when I was a boy, but it has the focus of helping young people reach their full potential. That focus remains the same.

As we discuss frequently on this floor, and as the newspapers reflect almost daily, our innovative spirit is the stronghold of the Nation's success. But we must do a better job of energizing our children to be interested in science, engineering and technology if we are to remain the world's leader in innovation.

The purpose of the 4-H National Youth Science Day is to do just that. The National Science Experiment is the designated activity for the first annual 4-H National Youth Science Day and will focus on water conservation. Through this special day and through its science, engineering and technology programs, 4-H has a goal of preparing 1 million new young people to excel in science, engineering and technology by 2013. I applaud them for these endeavors, and encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in full support of officially recognizing October 8, 2008, as 4-H National Youth Science Day.

To show its commitment to providing a quality science education, 4-H National Youth Science Day will take place during National 4-H Week and features a "National Science Experiment"—a designated science activity that will engage youth across the country in environmental issues relating to water conservation and groundwater contamination.

Over 100 years ago, 4-H began with the creation of agriculture projects geared at ensuring the future of our Nation's rural youth. Today, with a membership of 6 million young people, 4-H is America's largest youth organization and is an essential tool to engage and educate our future generations of scientists and inventors at a young age.

My own daughter Brittany had a very positive experience with 4-H in California learning