

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1780

Supporting the goals and ideals of “National Nonviolence Week” to raise awareness of youth violence in the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 17, 2010

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals and ideals of “National Nonviolence Week” to raise awareness of youth violence in the United States.

Whereas the Sojourn to the Past program annually takes high school students to the historic locations of the civil rights movement, teaching them how nonviolence protest mitigated discrimination, violence, hatred, bigotry, and inequity in schools and communities;

Whereas the goal of the Sojourn to the Past program, created by Jeff Steinberg, is to inspire students to become civic leaders with a duty and ability to unite people in their communities in equality and justice, through knowledge, understanding, and compassion;

Whereas, in 2009, a small group of Youngstown, Ohio, high school students who experienced Sojourn to the Past, a

10-day journey to the civil rights sites in the Southern United States, created activities for a nonviolence week for the city high schools;

Whereas Mrs. Penny Wells, a social studies teacher in the Youngstown, Ohio, school district aligned the Sojourn to the Past program to Ohio State standards and the school district pacing guides;

Whereas the Sojourn to the Past program offers an independent study program credit for Sojourn to the Past participants in support of Mrs. Wells' effort;

Whereas, at the request of school superintendent Dr. Wendy Webb, the Youngstown Sojourn students implemented Nonviolence Week in all the Youngstown schools during the first week of October 2009;

Whereas these Youngstown Sojourn students received a declaration from Mayor Jay Williams declaring the first week in October 2009 as Nonviolence Week;

Whereas the 2010 Youngstown Sojourn to the Past students successfully petitioned the Youngstown School Board, the Youngstown City Council, and the Youngstown State University trustees to declare the first week in October each year to be Nonviolence Week;

Whereas the Sojourn to the Past program has afforded participating students an experience that is far reaching and life changing and serves as a catalyst for their becoming activists in applying nonviolence principles throughout their lives;

Whereas 48 percent of schools in the United States reported at least one student threat of physical attack per year;

Whereas most victims of school violence are first exposed as early as middle school;

Whereas hostility toward homosexuality and gender nonconformity continues to plague gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth and adults in United States schools;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), youth violence results in considerable physical, social, and economic consequences;

Whereas, according to the CDC, over 656,000 young people were treated for physical assaults in United States emergency rooms in 2008;

Whereas, according to the CDC, roughly 20 percent of high school students reported being bullied and subjected to threatening language at school in 2009;

Whereas the United States child homicide rate, for children less than 15 years of age, is 5 times greater than the combined rate of 25 other industrialized countries; and

Whereas the principle of nonviolence has been a core philosophy of many successful social change movements: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) supports the goals and ideals of “National
- 3 Nonviolence Week” to raise awareness of youth vio-
- 4 lence in the United States; and
- 5 (2) encourages the people of the United States,
- 6 State and local officials, middle schools and high
- 7 schools, law enforcement agencies, and other inter-
- 8 ested groups to observe National Nonviolence Week

- 1 with appropriate programs and activities that pro-
- 2 mote awareness and prevention of youth violence.

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