

feels this legacy strongly, so I commend Congresswoman MENG for introducing this legislation which directs the State Department to consult with South Korea and Korean Americans on opportunities to reunite families separated by the DMZ.

I also trust that the State Department will be vigilant in ensuring that organizations with ties to North Korea will not be exploiting the desire of these families to be reunited with their loved ones to raise hard currency for the Kim regime.

Mr. Speaker, with that in mind, I urge support for the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM), the vice ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific and an original cosponsor of this legislation.

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand in support of H.R. 826, the Divided Families Reunification Act, and I want to thank Congresswoman MENG for introducing this bill and the House Foreign Affairs Committee for ensuring a speedy passage of this timely legislation.

I am also proud to colead another bill under consideration today that addresses this issue, H. Res. 294, introduced by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS).

Since implementing family reunions in 1985, the South and North Korean Governments have facilitated 21 in-person reunions and seven video reunions. However, the nearly 100,000 Korean Americans with family members in North Korea have been left out of this process entirely.

As a longtime advocate for human rights and humanitarian aid in North Korea, I have consistently spoken on the need to prioritize these issues, especially by appointing a Special Envoy for North Korean human rights issues, which has remained vacant since 2017, and remains unfilled under President Biden.

Time is running out for separated family members, as many are in their eighties and nineties, and their numbers continue to dwindle. Congress and the Biden administration must come together to make Korean-American participation and reunifications a reality before it is too late.

My mother-in-law was one of the many Koreans who made the brave journey across the 38th parallel line to bring her family to South Korea. She crossed five times to go back and forth and bring family members across to South Korea.

As an immigrant from South Korea whose family lived through the Korean war, and now as one of the first Korean-American women to serve in Congress, I am proud to use my voice in

support of this issue that is deeply personal to me and our Korean-American community.

I want to again thank Representatives KAREN BASS and GRACE MENG for introducing these measures and for working to garner strong bipartisan support.

I urge my colleagues to support House passage of these bills today and for the Senate to prioritize consideration of this issue on behalf of the tens of thousands of Korean Americans alive today waiting to reunite with their long lost family members.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, for decades Korean Americans have been unable to see or speak with their family members in North Korea, and for too many, time is running out. This heartbreaking reality has taken a huge toll, and it is time to take action.

This bill, introduced by my colleague, Representative MENG, would spur the State Department into finding opportunities to reunite them with their loved ones and to address this humanitarian issue that has caused so much heartache for countless Korean Americans.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in favor of H.R. 826, the Divided Families Reunification Act, a bill I authored to raise the voices of families who have been separated for decades both across the DMZ and across the Pacific Ocean.

I want to thank Chairman MEEKS for working with me on this important issue, and for his efforts to bring this bill to the floor. I also want to thank Congressman VAN TAYLOR who partnered with me to introduce this humane and commonsense legislation, which, during the 116th Congress, unanimously passed the House of Representatives.

Over seventy years ago, millions of Koreans were plunged into a harrowing war that brought misery, death, and destruction to their lives. Since then, the war has been frozen by an armistice agreement, signed on July 27, 1953, that persists to today. The division of the Korean Peninsula into South and North Korea separated millions of Koreans from their family members. Through the years, there have been some agreed upon reunions between South and North Koreans. For Korean Americans, however, there is no pathway for such reunions, as they have not been permitted to participate in these inter-Korean family reunions. Many of these Americans are in their 70s through 90s, and time is of the essence to be reunited with their families. I have had the honor to meet some of these divided Korean American family members, and it breaks my heart that their chance of a reunion with their loved ones grows less likely each day.

As a member of the State and Foreign Operations (SFOPS) Subcommittee on the

House Appropriations Committee, I am proud to have secured provisions in the Fiscal Year 2020 and 2021 accompanying reports that support the reunification of Korean Americans and their families in North Korea. And in the SFOPS Fiscal Year 2022, which recently passed out of the full committee, a provision calling on the Office of North Korean Human Rights to investigate the risks associated with third-party brokers who offer to locate and reunite divided families.

The unresolved status of the war continues to impact multiple generations of Korean Americans, particularly women, in myriad ways. All these years later, many survivors of the war are still haunted by their trauma. And younger generations who are responsible for their caregiving often internalize this unresolved grief.

The Divided Families Reunification Act requires the Secretary of State or a designee to consult with officials in South Korea on potential opportunities to reunite Korean American families with family members in North Korea. This bill will also require the Special Envoy on North Korean Human Rights to submit a report on the opportunities for video reunions between Korean Americans and family members in North Korea.

With that Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this bipartisan bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 826.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

ENCOURAGING REUNIONS OF DIVIDED KOREAN-AMERICAN FAMILIES

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 294) encouraging reunions of divided Korean-American families.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 294

Whereas the Korean Peninsula, with the Republic of Korea (in this resolution referred to as "South Korea") in the South and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (in this resolution referred to as "North Korea") in the North, remains divided following the signing of the Korean War Armistice Agreement on July 27, 1953;

Whereas the division of the Korean Peninsula separated more than 10,000,000 Korean family members, including some who are now citizens of the United States;

Whereas there have been 21 rounds of family reunions between South Koreans and North Koreans along the border since 2000;

Whereas Congress signaled its support for family reunions between United States citizens and their relatives in North Korea in section 1265 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181), signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 28, 2008;

Whereas most of the population of divided family members in the United States, initially estimated at 100,000 in 2001, has significantly dwindled as many of the individuals have passed away;

Whereas the summit between North Korea and South Korea on April 27, 2018, has prioritized family reunions;

Whereas the United States and North Korea have engaged in talks during 2 historic summits in June 2018 in Singapore and February 2019 in Hanoi; and

Whereas many Korean Americans are waiting for a chance to meet their relatives in North Korea for the first time in more than 60 years: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) calls on the United States and North Korea to begin the process of reuniting Korean-American divided family members with their immediate relatives through ways such as—

(A) identifying divided families in the United States and North Korea who are willing and able to participate in a pilot program for family reunions;

(B) finding matches for members of such families through organizations such as the Red Cross; and

(C) working with the Government of South Korea to include American citizens in inter-Korean video reunions;

(2) reaffirms the institution of family as inalienable and, accordingly, urges the restoration of contact between divided families physically, literally, or virtually; and

(3) calls on the United States and North Korea to pursue reunions as a humanitarian priority of immediate concern.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 294.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 294, a resolution encouraging reunions of divided Korean-American families, introduced by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS).

The Korean war claimed millions of lives and left the Korean peninsula and its people absolutely devastated. Though an armistice ended hostilities between North and South Korea nearly 70 years ago, many of the wounds inflicted by the war have never fully healed, in part because more than 10 million Koreans were separated from their family members during that conflict.

Today, there are still thousands of Korean Americans who live waiting and hoping for the chance to see their relatives living in North Korea.

Mr. Speaker, the pain of being separated from your family does not dull with time. This resolution would give peace of mind to many by identifying families in the United States and in North Korea who are willing and able to participate in family reunification.

This resolution would also allow for organizations like the Red Cross to assist in reuniting families and working with our allies in South Korea to reunite families through video reunions.

We must act now because the number of surviving relatives is declining, and time is running out to right the wrong these families have suffered. There is an urgent humanitarian need to reunite Korean Americans with their war-torn loved ones and to provide much-needed healing, closure, and restoration of bonds broken seven decades ago.

By passing this humane, bipartisan resolution, this body will provide Korean Americans the precious opportunity they have been denied for too long. I thank Representative BASS for authoring this important humanitarian legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 294, which reaffirms the House's commitment to support our Korean-American families seeking to reunite with relatives who are trapped in North Korea.

The resolution, authored by my good friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS), rightly observes that family reunification is a humanitarian priority.

As she points out, it calls on the United States and North Korea to begin the process of reuniting North Korean and Korean-American divided family members with their immediate relatives through ways such as—and I quote from the resolution:

“Identifying divided families in the United States and North Korea who are willing and able to participate in a pilot program for family reunions;

“Finding matches for members of such families through organizations such as the Red Cross; and

“Working with the Government of South Korea to include American citizens in inter-Korean video reunions;

“Reaffirms the institution of the family as inalienable and, accordingly, urges the restoration of contact between divided families physically, literally, or virtually.”

Mr. Speaker, it is a very, very good resolution. I thank my good friend and colleague for authoring it. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from

California (Ms. BASS), my great friend, who is a champion of these issues.

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman MEEKS, Ranking Member MCCAUL, and Ranking Member SMITH for bringing this important legislation encouraging reunions of divided Korean-American families to the House floor today.

H. Res. 294 is a bipartisan resolution that calls on the United States and North Korea to begin the process of reuniting Korean-American divided family members with their immediate relatives by identifying the families in the U.S. and North Korea who are willing and able to participate, finding matches for members of such families through organizations such as the Red Cross, and working with the Government of South Korea to include American citizens in inter-Korean video reunions.

Both Representative KIM and I have heard or know the awful stories of constituents who were divided from family members for nearly 70 years. A couple of years ago I had a constituent in my office who was quite elderly, and he was very concerned that he actually was not going to live to see his siblings that he has not been able to see for many decades.

This resolution also urges the restoration of contact between the divided families physically, literally, or virtually, and calls on the U.S. and North Korea to pursue reunions as a humanitarian priority of immediate concern.

When the Korean War Armistice Agreement was signed in 1953, it was meant to be a temporary measure. There has been relative peace between North and South Korea, but tensions remain volatile, and the border separating them is heavily militarized. More than 10 million families, including those who are now U.S. citizens, have been divided, and we must do everything we can to prevent this from continuing.

Representative KIM and I agree that Korean Americans should not have to wait another day, let alone another 70 years to meet their family members who live in North Korea. The bipartisan support shows that this resolution wants to support the administration and find a sustainable solution to this important issue.

I want to thank Representative KIM and many of my other colleagues on both sides of the aisle for cosponsoring H. Res. 294.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, for nearly 70 years, Korean Americans and their relatives have hoped and prayed to one day be together again. We cannot allow any

further delay in reuniting these families with their loved ones. This resolution is commonsense, bipartisan legislation that is long overdue, and it will make an invaluable impact on the lives of thousands of Korean Americans and their families.

I thank Representative KAREN BASS for working so diligently on this essential humanitarian resolution. I ask all of my colleagues to give it their support.

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 Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 294.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

SECURING AMERICA FROM EPIDEMICS ACT

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2118) to authorize United States participation in the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2118

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Securing America From Epidemics Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Due to increasing population and population density, human mobility, and ecological change, emerging infectious diseases pose a real and growing threat to global health security.

(2) While vaccines can be the most effective tools to protect against infectious disease, the absence of vaccines for a new or emerging infectious disease with epidemic potential is a major health security threat globally, posing catastrophic potential human and economic costs.

(3) The COVID-19 pandemic has infected more than 119,960,700 individuals and has killed at least 2,656,822 people worldwide, and it is likely that unreported cases and deaths are significant.

(4) Even regional outbreaks can have enormous human costs and substantially disrupt the global economy and cripple regional economies. The 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa killed more than 11,000 and cost \$2,800,000,000 in losses in the affected countries alone.

(5) While the need for vaccines to address emerging epidemic threats is acute, markets to drive the necessary development of vaccines to address them—a complex and expen-

sive undertaking—are very often critically absent. Also absent are mechanisms to ensure access to those vaccines by those who need them when they need them.

(6) To address this global vulnerability and the deficit of political commitment, institutional capacity, and funding, in 2017, several countries and private partners launched the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI). CEPI's mission is to stimulate, finance, and coordinate development of vaccines for high-priority, epidemic-potential threats in cases where traditional markets do not exist or cannot create sufficient demand.

(7) Through funding of partnerships, CEPI seeks to bring priority vaccine candidates through the end of phase II clinical trials, as well as support vaccine platforms that can be rapidly deployed against emerging pathogens.

(8) CEPI supported the manufacturing of the United States-developed Moderna COVID-19 vaccine during its Phase 1 clinical trial, and CEPI has initiated at least 12 partnerships to develop vaccines against COVID-19.

(9) CEPI is co-leading COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the ACT-Accelerator, which is a global collaboration to quickly produce and equitably distribute safe and effective vaccines and therapeutics for COVID-19.

(10) Support for and participation in CEPI is an important part of the United States own health security and biodefense and is in the national interest, complementing the work of many Federal agencies and providing significant value through global partnership and burden-sharing.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION FOR UNITED STATES PARTICIPATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The United States is hereby authorized to participate in the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (“Coalition”).

(b) DESIGNATION.—The President is authorized to designate an employee of the relevant Federal department or agency providing the majority of United States contributions to the Coalition, who should demonstrate knowledge and experience in the fields of development and public health, epidemiology, or medicine, to serve—

(1) on the Investors Council of the Coalition; and

(2) if nominated by the President, on the Board of Directors of the Coalition, as a representative of the United States.

(c) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that includes the following:

(1) The United States planned contributions to the Coalition and the mechanisms for United States participation in such Coalition.

(2) The manner and extent to which the United States shall participate in the governance of the Coalition.

(3) How participation in the Coalition supports relevant United States Government strategies and programs in health security and biodefense, including—

(A) the Global Health Security Strategy required by section 7058(c)(3) of division K of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141);

(B) the applicable revision of the National Biodefense Strategy required by section 1086 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (6 U.S.C. 104); and

(C) any other relevant decision-making process for policy, planning, and spending in global health security, biodefense, or vaccine and medical countermeasures research and development.

(d) UNITED STATES CONTRIBUTIONS.—Amounts authorized to be appropriated under chapters 1 and 10 of part I and chapter 4 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) are authorized to be made available for United States contributions to the Coalition.

(e) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2118.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2118, the Securing America From Epidemics Act.

I thank my colleague, Representative AMI BERA, chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia and Nonproliferation for championing this important bill that will save the lives and protect the United States from the threat of future pandemics.

This bill would authorize the United States to participate in the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, or CEPI, a private-public partnership that helps accelerate the development of vaccines against emergent infections, including Ebola and COVID-19.

The COVID-19 crisis has shown just how interconnected our world is and how important vaccines are to ending one of the greatest catastrophes of the 21st century. By developing vaccines and enabling countries to administer vaccine doses effectively, we can end pandemics. We do this by ensuring vaccines get into the arms of the most vulnerable, and by instilling confidence in people that the vaccine saves lives.

Now more than ever with the rise of the deadly delta variant, and COVID-19 cases ravaging clusters across the country where vaccination rates are low, the collective resources of the private sector, multilateral organizations, national governments, civil society, and health experts are all vital to ending the pandemic.

By supporting CEPI, we demonstrate the value of leveraging individual strengths towards collective action and create a leading global framework of developing an effective vaccine response to stop future pandemics.