

their teachers and mentors. The staff of the Garden State Pathways is headed by Ms. Bernadette Gismonde, who is the program coordinator. Her staff includes Ms. Bernadette Stettler, Administrative Assistant; Ms. Danielle Brittin, Job Coach; Ms. Hazel Thompson, Lead Mentor; and Ms. Joyce Howie, Assistant Mentor.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate these young men and women on the hard work they've put in and they have already accomplished. These students have bright futures ahead of them, and I wish them the best in all coming endeavors.

ATTACK ON THE U.S. CONSULATE
IN BENGHAZI

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2013

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, on March 21, 2013 I joined as a cosponsor of H. Res. 36 to establish a select committee to investigate and report on the attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi. That action was taken to insure a thorough review of the loss of four Americans.

Officials including our U.S. Ambassador and the Obama Administration's attempt to keep witnesses and information from Congress. Fortunately, five committees in the U.S. House acted and produced a joint report on April 23, 2013. The House Government Oversight and Reform Committee, which has government-wide investigative powers and authority, has since begun a series of hearings to examine the Benghazi matter.

It is my belief with this thorough review underway, it is no longer necessary to pursue a select committee on this matter.

Therefore, I am withdrawing my cosponsorship of H. Res. 36.

With the extensive work now underway in the House Government Oversight Reform Committee, a select committee would delay, add cost and not benefit the urgent need to properly review the Benghazi matter.

CONGRATULATING JOE IRONSIDE

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2013

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friend Joe Ironside on his retirement as Directing Business Agent for District 6 of the Machinists union, which includes Iowa, Illinois and Nebraska. Joe has been an influential and important leader for the Iowa labor community.

Joe began his career in 1972 at the old Iowa Steel and Iron Works factory in Cedar Rapids. Joe was initiated into the Machinists union in March of that year, and wore the badge for 41 years. In 1978, Joe went to Rockwell Goss where he was chief steward, committee person and committee chairperson. He was later elected Business Representative before assuming his current responsibilities. He also served as Vice President of the Iowa Federation of Labor.

Joe's leadership in the labor movement has been felt around the state of Iowa and across

the country. He has been awarded numerous awards over the years including the Gary Ketchum Union Citizen of the Year Award. Anyone who knows Joe will tell you that he is a force to be reckoned with, and that he will be missed.

I'm proud to call Joe my constituent and my friend. I congratulate him on his successful career and more importantly for the work he has done to strengthen the labor movement and expand Iowa's middle class. I wish Joe and his wife Debbie all the best in their future plans.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE
EVERY CHILD DESERVES A FAMILY
ACT

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2013

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today with my good friend, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), to introduce the Every Child Deserves a Family Act in honor of National Foster Care Awareness Month. Our colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) will sponsor the companion legislation in the Senate.

First, I would like to thank my friend, my sister, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN for being my partner in this important fight. I would also like to pay tribute to our former colleague, Congressman Stark, and the hard work of his staff, Jeff Hild, in first championing this important bill. I am fully committed to moving this landmark legislation across the finish line.

Last week, our constituents—including Philip McAadoo and his son Zaden from Atlanta—came to Washington, DC to highlight how essential a loving home can be to a child in need of support and understanding. Philip, his partner Sean Cavanaugh, and Zaden are a beautiful, loving, globe-trotting family; simply being with them just warms your heart. Their story is the happy ending which every foster care youth and potential parent should have the opportunity to experience.

Today, there are more than 400,000 children in our foster care system, with over 104,000 of them waiting for a permanent family. There are ample "qualified" adoptive and foster parents who are overlooked. As result, far too many youth "age out" without any family to support and love them. This bill would fix this problem—saving money and heartache and restoring hope and happiness in the process.

The Every Child Deserves a Family Act is a simple and straightforward proposal. It would prohibit any entity that receives federal child welfare funds from discriminating against prospective adoptive or foster parents on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender identification, or marital status. This bill also prevents discrimination against foster care youth on the basis of the sexual orientation or gender identity.

Mr. Speaker, I fought too long and too hard against discrimination of every kind. This is a problem that is fixable. Our common-sense legislation is supported by nearly 100 child welfare, civil rights, GLBT advocacy, and faith-based organizations because it places the best interest of every child first.

Today, we are joined by over 50 Members of Congress in introducing this bill, and I hope all of my colleagues will join us in support of this good will effort. Simply said, the Every Child Deserves a Family Act is just the right thing to do.

RESOLVING INTERNATIONAL PA-
RENTAL CHILD ABDUCTIONS TO
NON-HAGUE CONVENTION COUN-
TRIES

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2013

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, last week, the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, which I chair, held a hearing focused on the persistent and devastating problem of international parental child abduction, which occurs when one parent unlawfully moves a child from his or her country of residence, often for the purpose of denying the other parent access to the child.

The damage to the child and the left behind parent is incalculable and too often life-long. The children especially are at risk of serious emotional and psychological problems and may experience anxiety, eating problems, nightmares, mood swings, sleep disturbances, aggressive behavior, resentment, guilt and fearfulness. These victims are American citizens who need the help of their government when normal legal processes are unavailable or fail.

In 1983, the United States ratified the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction to try to address this serious issue. This Convention creates a civil framework for the quick return of abducted children, and for rights of access to both parents. Absent extenuating circumstances, the child is to be returned within 6 weeks to their country of habitual residence for the courts there to decide on custody or to enforce any previous custody determinations.

The Convention has helped return many children, but it is far from a silver bullet. Even in countries where the Convention is allegedly working, only about 40 percent of children are returned. Other cases are "resolved," but too often with dubious application of the Convention.

Susceptible to abuse by taking parents or unwilling judges, the Convention has too often been stretched to provide cover for abduction rather than recovery of the child. Taking parents have figured out that they can drag out hearing after hearing, appeal after appeal for years until the courts can claim that, "Yes, the child should have been returned but that the child is settled in the new country now and does not have to be returned under an exception in the Convention."

Some Hague Convention signatories are simply not enforcing legitimate return orders. The State Department's 2012 Hague Convention Compliance Report highlights six countries—Argentina, Australia, France, Mexico, Netherlands, and Romania—for failing to enforce return orders. Other countries—Costa Rica, Guatemala, The Bahamas, Brazil, and Panama—are non-compliant with the Convention or showing patterns non-compliance.