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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES.

Expressing support for the designation of February 2024 as “National Youth Leadership Month”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the designation of February 2024 as “National Youth Leadership Month”.

Whereas youth are children and adolescents as well as those transitioning into early adulthood;

Whereas while it is essential that we, as adults, care for our youth, it is also our responsibility to ensure that the youth are among today’s leaders and are well prepared to lead future generations;

Whereas, as of 2020, 73,106,000 Americans were under 18 years of age, comprising 22.1 percent of the United States population;

Whereas it is especially critical that youth voices are uplifted in policy conversations because despite the fact that youth do not have the right to vote in elections, each policy enacted by their representatives impacts them;

Whereas effective policymaking requires a clear and nuanced understanding of the problems and of the context within which policy solutions will take place;

Whereas only youth can speak firsthand and authoritatively on their own lived experiences;

Whereas history has reflected that youth have been at the vanguard of every social movement;

Whereas youth are capable of engaging in substantive and productive discussions of issues and as partners in the policymaking process;

Whereas the nuanced perspectives that youth can offer based on their aforementioned experiences are critical to crafting effective policies that avoid unintended consequences;

Whereas policies that impact youth are incomplete and insufficient if youth are not authentically engaged in the policymaking process;

Whereas specifically youth who are or have been involved in the child welfare, foster care, and youth justice systems have crucial firsthand perspectives about the functioning of those systems and how they impact youth and families;

Whereas when youth are empowered to lead throughout their formative years, they develop a strong sense of identity and establish themselves as engaged civic participants, taking pride and ownership of their impact as leaders;

Whereas likewise, as youth serve in leadership roles, they can take pride in their stewardship and the work of others whom they have lead;

Whereas these benefits are especially meaningful for youth from communities that have been historically excluded from leadership roles, including youth of color, Native youth, LGBTQ+ youth, youth from religious minorities, poor youth, youth with disabilities, and youth in foster care;

Whereas the youth in the aforementioned groups represent hundreds of thousands of perspectives that are critically needed in policy and other discussions about their present situations but also their future;

Whereas in the context of child welfare, authentic youth engagement is an approach that prioritizes elevating youth to be leaders in shaping their lives and directing their futures alongside the adults in their communities and the child welfare workforce;

Whereas for example, there are 407,000 youth in foster care on any given day, many of whom could benefit from efforts to develop and empower them to be leaders;

Whereas child welfare experts agree that implementing authentic youth engagement for the purposes of case planning, court processes, and the implementation of youth advisory boards is a best practice that can lead to markedly better outcomes for youth within the child welfare system as well as positive systems changes overall;

Whereas, as stated in the academic article, The Need to Study Leadership in Adolescents, that “despite the benefits of youth leadership, the subject is critically under-studied”;

Whereas conducting further empirical research on youth leadership would yield immediate application and benefits for policymakers, educators, child welfare professionals, parents, and employers, and youths themselves; and

Whereas we support designating February 2024 as “National Youth Leadership Month” to uplift current youth leaders, encourage future youth leaders, and, support those empowering youth leaders: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
 - 2 (1) supports the designation of a “National Youth Leadership Month”;
 - 3 (2) encourages Congress to implement policies to elevate youth voices to lead, support youth leadership development opportunities, and encourage additional research on youth leadership;
 - 4 (3) honors the work of adults that help cultivate youth leadership; and
 - 5 (4) honors the dedication of youth leaders who advocate for the interest of their generation and future generations.