

108TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 295

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Congratulating and saluting Focus: HOPE on the occasion of its 35th anniversary and for its remarkable commitment and contributions to Detroit, the State of Michigan, and the United States.

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Whereas Focus: HOPE began as a civil and human rights organization in 1968 in the wake of the devastating Detroit riots, and was co-founded by the late Father William T. Cunningham, a Roman Catholic priest, and Eleanor M. Josaitis, a suburban housewife, who were inspired to establish Focus: HOPE by the work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.;

Whereas Focus: HOPE is committed to bringing together people of all races, faiths, and economic backgrounds to overcome injustice and build racial harmony, and it has grown to one of the largest nonprofit organizations in Michigan;

Whereas the Focus: HOPE mission statement states: “Recognizing the dignity and beauty of every person, we pledge intelligent and practical action to overcome racism, poverty and injustice. And to build a metropolitan community where all people may live in freedom, harmony, trust and affection. Black and white, yellow, brown and red from Detroit and its suburbs of every economic status, national origin and religious persuasion we join in this covenant.”;

Whereas one of Focus: HOPE’s early efforts was to support African-American and female employees in a seminal class action suit against AAA, resulting in one of the finest affirmative action commitments made by any corporation up to that time;

Whereas Focus: HOPE helped to conceive of and develop the Department of Agriculture’s Commodity Supplemental Food Program which has been replicated in 32 states, and through this program Focus: HOPE helps to feed 43,000 people per month throughout Southeast Michigan;

Whereas Focus: HOPE has revitalized several city blocks in central Detroit by redeveloping obsolete industrial buildings, beautifying and landscaping Oakman Boulevard, creating pocket parks, and rehabilitating homes in the surrounding areas;

Whereas Focus: HOPE’s Machinist Training Institute has been training individuals from Detroit and beyond for ca-

reers in advanced manufacturing and precision machining since 1981, and has sent forth nearly 2,500 certified graduates, providing an opportunity for primarily under-represented minority youth, women, and others to gain access to the financial mainstream and learn in-demand skills;

Whereas Focus: HOPE, with assistance from Michigan, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and other generous private and public partners, has within the last two years invested over \$10 million to complete the renovation of the industrial building housing its Machinist Training Institute;

Whereas Focus: HOPE has recognized that manufacturing and information technologies are key to the economic growth and security of Michigan and the United States, and is committed to designing programs that would contribute to the participation of under-represented urban individuals in these critical sectors;

Whereas, in 1982, Focus: HOPE began a for-profit subsidiary that was initiated for community economic development purposes and is now designated with Federal HUBZone status;

Whereas Focus: HOPE created two pioneering programs—FAST TRACK and First Step—designed to help individuals improve their reading and math competencies by a minimum of two grade levels in 4–7 weeks;

Whereas these programs have graduated over 7,000 individuals since their inception, a new offsite training facility in Detroit's Empowerment Zone in southwest Detroit has been established to reach out to individuals in other parts of the city, and the success of the programs has inspired

Michigan (in its State-wide FAST BREAK program) and other States to replicate the efforts of Focus: HOPE;

Whereas, in 1987, Focus: HOPE reclaimed and renovated an abandoned building and opened it as a Center for Children, which has now served over 5,000 children of colleagues, students, and neighbors with quality child care, including latchkey, early childhood education, and other educational services;

Whereas Focus: HOPE, through an unprecedented co-operative agreement between the Departments of Defense, Commerce, Education, and Labor, established a National demonstration project—the Center for Advanced Technologies—in which candidates earn associates and bachelors degrees in either manufacturing engineering or technology, and engage in hands-on manufacturing within-real world conditions, producing parts for DaimlerChrysler, Detroit Diesel, Ford Motor Company, General Motors Corporation, the Department of Defense, and others;

Whereas Focus: HOPE has caused over \$22 million to be invested in renovating a previously obsolete building to house the Center for Advanced Technologies, transforming the building into a model facility for 21st century advanced manufacturing, education, and research;

Whereas Focus: HOPE has made outstanding contributions toward increasing diversity within the traditional homogeneous science, math, engineering, and technology fields, and 95 percent of currently enrolled degree candidates are African-American, representing perhaps the United States' largest producer of bachelor-degreed minority graduates in manufacturing engineering;

Whereas Focus: HOPE's unique research and development partnership with the Department of Defense has resulted in a nationally recognized demonstration project, the Mobile Parts Hospital, whose Rapid Manufacturing System has recently been deployed to Kuwait in support of the Armed Forces' current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq;

Whereas Focus: HOPE began a community arts program in 1995, presenting multicultural arts programming and gallery exhibitions designed to educate and encourage area residents, while fostering integration in a culturally diverse metropolitan community, and over 43,000 people have viewed sponsored exhibits or participated in this program;

Whereas Focus: HOPE established an Information Technologies Center in 1999, providing Detroit students with industry-certified training programs in network administration, network installation, and desktop and server administration, and has graduated nearly 475 students to date, and has initiated, in collaboration with industry and academia, the design of a new bachelors degree program to educate information management systems engineers;

Whereas Focus: HOPE's initiatives and programs have been nationally recognized for excellence and leadership by such organizations as the Government Accounting Office, the Department of Labor, the International Standards Organization, the National Science Foundation, the Cisco Networking Academy Program, Fortune Magazine, Forbes Magazine, the Aspen Institute, and many others, and former Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton have visited Focus: HOPE's campus;

Whereas Focus: HOPE is currently led by Eleanor M. Josaitis, its co-founder and chief executive officer, and she has received honorary degrees from 11 outstanding universities and colleges, was named one of the 100 Most Influential Women in 2002 by Crain's Detroit Business, has been inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame, has received the Detroit NAACP Presidential Award, the Arab-American Institute Foundation's Kahlil Gibran Spirit of Humanity Award, as well as many other awards;

Whereas through the generous partnerships and support of individuals from all walks of life, Federal, State, and local government, and foundations and corporations across the United States, the vision of Focus: HOPE will continue to grow and inspire;

Whereas Focus: HOPE has been blessed with an active board of directors and advisory board from the senior most levels of corporate and public America, and has benefited from an annual average of 25,000 volunteers and countless colleagues;

Whereas Focus: HOPE has been a tremendous force for good in the City of Detroit, the State of Michigan, and the United States for the past 35 years;

Whereas Focus: HOPE continues to strive to eliminate racism, poverty, and injustice through the use of passion, persistence, and partnerships, and continues to seek improvement in its quality of service and program operations; and

Whereas Focus: HOPE and its colleagues will continue to identify ways in which it can lead Detroit, the State of

Michigan, and the United States into the future with creative urban leadership initiatives: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That Congress—

3 (1) congratulates and salutes Focus: HOPE for
4 its remarkable commitment and contributions to De-
5 troit, the State of Michigan, and the United States;
6 and

7 (2) directs the Clerk of the House of Represent-
8 atives to make available enrolled copies of this reso-
9 lution to Focus: HOPE and Ms. Eleanor M. Josaitis
10 for appropriate display.

Passed the House of Representatives June 1, 2004.

Attest:

Clerk.