

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 971

Commemorating the 60th anniversary of the War on Poverty and
acknowledging its shortcomings.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 17, 2024

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN (for herself, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mrs. PELTOLA, Mr. MULLIN, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MCGARVEY, Ms. TOKUDA, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. TRONE, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Ms. OMAR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 60th anniversary of the War on Poverty
and acknowledging its shortcomings.

Whereas, 60 years ago, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared an unconditional War on Poverty in his first State of the Union Address on January 8, 1964;

Whereas the War on Poverty sought to address the high rate of poverty in the United States, including by implementing measures to prevent poverty;

Whereas the War on Poverty was defined by the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act which created the Office of Eco-

conomic Opportunity to focus Federal attention and administration of antipoverty initiatives;

Whereas the War on Poverty permanently codified the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in 1964 and other critical food assistance programs;

Whereas the War on Poverty implemented one of the biggest reformations in education policy through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965;

Whereas the War on Poverty created Medicare and Medicaid through the Social Security Amendments of 1965;

Whereas the War on Poverty established the Department of Housing and Urban Development and what would become the Department of Health and Human Services;

Whereas poverty declined by 30 percent within 5 years after the War on Poverty was declared and the country was on track to effectively end poverty within two decades;

Whereas subsequent progress has been incomplete and sometimes temporary, in part due to the failure of economic growth to deliver widely shared prosperity;

Whereas the Johnson administration rejected calls for a guaranteed income and former Presidents of both parties have acknowledged limited income security initiatives as a shortcoming of the War on Poverty;

Whereas the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom brought nationwide attention to issues of poverty by fighting for economic justice through guaranteed employment, education, and guaranteed housing as means to ensure a minimum living standard for all;

Whereas the War on Poverty failed to address ensuring fair and good jobs for all who can work and failed to adequately prepare people for the workforce;

Whereas the United States has the highest incidence of low-paid work among the wealthiest nations;

Whereas antipoverty legislation has not adapted to the poverty landscape today and has not followed through on the successes of the War on Poverty; and

Whereas the 2021 fully refundable child tax credit cut children's poverty in half for that year, and thus proved that there are policy options that the Federal Government is failing to use: Now therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) commemorates the 60th anniversary of
3 President Lyndon B. Johnson's declared War on
4 Poverty;

5 (2) acknowledges that the War on Poverty was
6 a resolute effort to decrease poverty and laid the
7 groundwork to create an equitable and prosperous
8 society for all Americans;

9 (3) acknowledges that the War on Poverty had
10 shortcomings that need to be rectified;

11 (4) acknowledges that the shortcomings of the
12 War on Poverty disproportionately affect racial mi-
13 norities and those low on the socioeconomic ladder;

1 (5) acknowledges that as long as poverty exists,
2 citizens will not be able to take full advantage of op-
3 portunities in the United States;

4 (6) recognizes that poverty is harmful to the
5 economy and results in lost economic productivity;

6 (7) encourages the Federal Government to con-
7 tinue to undo harmful policies that have kept Ameri-
8 cans in poverty, such as reforming the criminal jus-
9 tice system, making education affordable and acces-
10 sible, and guaranteeing housing and other basic ben-
11 efits; and

12 (8) calls upon the Federal Government to con-
13 tinue to address poverty in the United States by
14 building upon and extending the framework of the
15 War on Poverty.

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