

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 846

Commemorating the 30th anniversary of the eradication of wild poliovirus
from the Americas.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 24, 2024

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. REED, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 30th anniversary of the eradication of
wild poliovirus from the Americas.

Whereas nearly 60,000 children in the United States were reported to have polio in 1952 alone, with more than 20,000 cases of paralysis;

Whereas, thanks to vaccination, polio was eliminated from the United States in 1979;

Whereas the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), a unique public-private partnership that includes the Federal Government, Rotary International, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (commonly known as "UNICEF"), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and GAVI, was established in

1988 with a goal of eradicating polio globally, at a time when there were more than 350,000 cases of polio recorded annually;

Whereas Rotary International, a global association founded in Illinois, has contributed more than \$2,700,000,000 and volunteered countless hours in the global fight against polio since 1979;

Whereas, since the goal of global polio eradication was set in 1988, incidences of polio have been reduced by more than 99.9 percent through the use of the inactivated polio vaccine developed by Jonas Salk and the oral polio vaccine developed by Albert Sabin;

Whereas the Americas were the first region to be certified free from wild poliovirus by the WHO in 1994, with the last case of wild poliovirus in the Americas confirmed in Peru in 1991;

Whereas, since 1994, 4 other regions of the world have been certified free from wild poliovirus and 2 of the 3 strains of wild poliovirus have been certified eradicated worldwide;

Whereas, as of September 2024, only Afghanistan and Pakistan have been unable to fully stop transmission of wild poliovirus, a decrease from more than 125 countries in 1988;

Whereas the GPEI reaches the world's most vulnerable children, including those who have been displaced, living in areas of insecurity or conflict, where cases of variant poliovirus remain of concern;

Whereas, as of September 2024, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 20,000,000 people are walking who have been spared from paralysis

and 1,500,000 deaths have been averted worldwide thanks to the efforts of the GPEI;

Whereas, in addition to combating polio, the global workforce and infrastructure of the GPEI has frequently served as first responders for natural disasters and other public health crises, including outbreaks of Ebola and the COVID–19 pandemic;

Whereas, when polio is eradicated, it will be only the second human disease in history to make such an achievement, the first being smallpox;

Whereas progress toward global polio eradication is a testament to what can be achieved through sustained global commitment and collaboration; and

Whereas, as long as poliovirus circulates anywhere, it remains a threat to children everywhere: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) commemorates the 30th anniversary of the
3 Americas being certified polio-free by the World
4 Health Organization on September 29, 1994;

5 (2) commends the work of the Pan American
6 Health Organization (PAHO) and its member states
7 on keeping the Americas wild poliovirus free;

8 (3) supports the goals and ideals of the Global
9 Polio Eradication Initiative;

10 (4) encourages and supports the international
11 community of governments and nongovernmental or-
12 ganizations in remaining committed to the eradi-
13 cation of polio; and

1 (5) encourages the Federal Government to con-
2 tinue committing funding to the Global Polio Eradi-
3 cation Initiative.

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