

Congressman David Price (D-NC) cosponsored a resolution in the lead up to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, commemorating the National Day of Service. As co-chair of the National Service Caucus, he spoke on the House floor on the importance of service to one's country, and challenged Americans to participate in President-elect Obama's call to serve on the King Holiday.

His remarks can be found below, followed by the text of the resolution, which passed the House unanimously on January 13, 2009.

Rep. David Price

Remarks on H.Res.43 – Honoring Service on MLK Day

Tuesday January 13, 2009

As a co-chair of the National Service Caucus, I am pleased to be a cosponsor of H. Res. 43, recognizing the importance of national service, supporting the efforts of those who serve their communities on Martin Luther King Day, and promoting the Martin Luther King Day holiday as a day of national service.

During the 1950s and '60s, civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. recognized the power of service to strengthen communities and achieve common goals. King's ideas of unity and purpose highlighted the great things that can happen when we work together toward a common goal, and these ideas are as important today as they were 50 years ago.

In 1994, Congress passed the King Holiday and Service Act to transform the King Holiday into a national day of service to meet community needs. Since that time, millions of Americans have participated in community-building activities on King Day, treating the holiday as "a day on, not a day off."

The day before President-elect Obama's inauguration is the Martin Luther King holiday. With thousands of projects planned across the country, in addition to a call to serve from President-elect Obama, the 2009 King Day of Service on January 19 promises to be the most successful national service effort to date.

Both President-elect Obama and Vice-President-elect Biden, along with their families, will be participating in service events to honor Martin Luther King and commemorate the holiday. I encourage my colleagues and their staff to share in the spirit of volunteerism and unity by participating in a service opportunity here in Washington, DC, or back home with their constituents on January 19.

I am pleased that the president-elect has been part of the call to ensure that this day be a day devoted to service. However, I know, as President-elect Obama knows, that one day of good deeds is not enough. Throughout the presidential campaign, the President-elect spoke about a new era of civic engagement, and I hope that the passage of H. Res. 43 will build on Martin Luther King day and the Inauguration and reaffirm our ongoing commitment to service.

111th CONGRESS

1st Session

H. RES. 43

Recognizing the efforts of those who serve their communities on Martin Luther King Day and promoting the holiday as a day of national service.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

January 9, 2009

Mr. PLATTS (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the efforts of those who serve their communities on Martin Luther King Day and promoting the holiday as a day of national service.

Whereas the King Holiday and Service Act, a law designating Martin Luther King Day as a national day of volunteer service, was signed into law in 1994;

Whereas millions of Americans have been inspired by the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to serve their neighbors and communities every third Monday of January;

Whereas serving one's community for the betterment of every individual speaks to the high character, transformative world view, and everyday practice of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.;

Whereas the efforts of national service volunteers have been a steadfast foundation of our Nation's infrastructure, supporting not only individuals and families in need, but acting in response to national catastrophes and natural disasters;

Whereas citizens have the opportunity to participate in thousands of already scheduled events all across the country, as well as create and implement a community service project where they identify the need;

Whereas the Corporation for National and Community Service, is working with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, and thousands of other nonprofit, community, national service, and education organizations across the country to encourage Americans to serve on this holiday and throughout the year; and

Whereas leaders at the Federal, State and local level are planning to use the Martin Luther King Day and Inauguration Day to rally our Nation to commit to serve and to make an ongoing commitment to service: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives--

(1) encourages all Americans to pay tribute to the life and works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through participation in community service projects on Martin Luther King Day;

(2) recognizes the inherent value of community service and volunteerism in the creation of civil society and as a means of non-violent community progress consistent with the works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.;

(3) recognizes the benefits of the collaborative work by the many organizations that promote, facilitate, and carry out needed service projects nationwide;

(4) encourages its members and colleagues to urge their constituents, both in congressional districts and those visiting the District of Columbia on Inauguration Day, to participate in community service projects; and

(5) acknowledges that by serving one's country, one's community and one's neighbor our Nation makes progress in civility, equality, and unity consistent with the values and life's work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.