

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to commend the efforts of Operation Smile during their 25 years of service to the United States and to the world. I would like to thank my distinguished colleague, Congresswoman **DRAKE**, for sponsoring this resolution and bringing it to the floor. As we both represent the city of Norfolk, VA, the home of Operation Smile, I would just like to say a few words about Operation Smile and its efforts to help children around the world.

What Operation Smile has accomplished since its inception is truly remarkable. Since its first mission in the Philippines in 1982, Operation Smile volunteers have treated more than 100,000 children and young adults and have trained thousands of health professionals around the world. In addition, through pure determination, Operation Smile has built bridges and built trust. As a result, it has created a presence, earned the respect of governments and ministries of health, and united cultures in over 25 developing countries.

Operation Smile consists of a diverse group of volunteers from various countries and cultures, who come together with the common goal of repairing childhood facial deformities. Through these missions, the strongest bonds of friendships are forged as people who have very little in common work together to change a life. Operation Smile has demonstrated an ability to find working partnerships amid unstable and controversial conditions. Through diplomacy and leadership, coupled with medical aid and technology, it is able to heal and inspire cross-cultural cooperation.

While promoting medical diplomacy, Operation Smile continues to cross borders, bridge cultural and ethnic divides, and encourage collaboration and commitment. Its success has been astounding and as a result, Operation Smile has become the largest volunteer charity of its kind. Its efforts go beyond children and their families--Operation Smile changes communities, students, medical professionals, and healthcare systems.

Just this past year, Operation Smile traveled to Jordan on two separate occasions in order to provide life-changing surgeries to 138 Iraqi children who were transported to Amman from Baghdad, and it worked with the Mercy ships to treat 54 children in Bangladesh. These missions consisted of volunteers from over a dozen countries who worked together side by side to help these children. In this time of war, the volunteers of Operation Smile managed to bring a bright light to the lives of these children that will last a lifetime.

In the war against terrorism, hatred of Americans by other populations is a significant problem. The work of Operation Smile is immeasurable in developing good will to counteract that hatred. The doctors and other volunteers who work with Operation Smile and the children who have been helped by Operation Smile will serve as perpetual evidence of our good will and the best America has to offer. I cannot think of better ambassadors for the United States than the founders of Operation Smile, Dr. Bill and Kathleen Magee.

In 1982, Bill and Kathleen saw a need both abroad and here at home to help children with deformities live a better and happier life. Because of their diligence, and that of the many volunteers and donors that have worked with Operation Smile over the past 25 years, Operation Smile has not only created smiles, but has changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of children across the globe.

I would like to once again commend Operation Smile on the occasion of their 25th anniversary, and I wish them continued success bringing smiles to the faces of children and families worldwide.