

going to cost money from somewhere, yet the Democrats and the President have promised, they have guaranteed the elderly, and I happen to be one that collects Social Security, they guaranteed us that they are going to protect Social Security come hell or high water. They are going to take care and make sure that it is untouched. Yet, just in the education programs alone, they have to be spending billions and billions of dollars that we do not have.

So where do they get the money? The money obviously has to come from the surplus. There is, everybody knows, no surplus. It belongs to Social Security, so anything we do is basically Social Security money being used by the Democrats to fund their favorite dream.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GORDON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PARTISAN DIALOGUE ON EDUCATION NO LONGER HOLDS THE TRUTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, we are all aware this is a Sunday afternoon. As one of my colleagues noted earlier, we would rather be somewhere other than here. I, for one, would like to be home with my family, and with my children. I would have liked to have been there last night, when he played goalie for his soccer team for 2 games in a row, because the other goalie was out sick or had an obligation. But instead, we are in Washington, D.C. working on the Nation's business.

I noted with interest the President's speech yesterday. The Nation's business at this point is finalizing our budget process and coming to agreement. Yesterday we held a little press conference out on the steps of the Capitol. We called on the President to join us, to join us in resolving our differences in getting the Federal Government funded for the next year and to move on with the Nation's business. Unfortunately, we have not been able to achieve that because there is disagreement.

We should not set aside our principles. We disagree legitimately on the scope and role of the Federal Government. We believe that we need a smaller Federal Government. The other side believes we need a larger Federal Government. We believe we need more local control. The other side believes we should federalize almost all of the issues.

We have reached a point, though, where we must find a common middle ground. The President has decided that

we cannot reach that middle ground because, he says, the Republicans are failing to pass his education initiative.

It really is sad that the dialogue in this country becomes partisan and no longer holds the truth. In this case, the Republican record on education is one that the Nation should be proud of, and one that the President actually, I believe, supports and has supported.

In the 105th Congress, in this Congress, this Congress has sent the President seven different measures which he has enacted and signed into law: The Higher Education Act, the Special Education Fund, the WorkForce Investment Act, the Loan Forgiveness for New Teachers Act, the Quality Teaching Grants Act, The Emergency Student Loans Act, and The Prohibition on Federal Tests Act.

We also have seven additional bills waiting for the President's signature: school nutrition, charter schools, quality Head Start, vocational education, Community Service Block Grants, \$500 million plus for special education, and the Reading Excellence Act. This is a record of which every single American should be proud, a record of the Congress doing its job to fund education.

Yet, I was saddened to hear in the President's radio address yesterday this issue made partisan. The President, it seems, wants his ideas imposed on education. What does he want specifically? Number one, he wants national testing. Number two, he wants new teachers, 100,000 new teachers, but he does not want them hired under Title I, the existing Federal program that funds the hiring of teachers.

He wants them in a new program, the Bill Clinton new teachers program, and he wants 5,000 new classrooms. He wants those in the Bill Clinton New Federal Teacher Construction Classroom Act, so that he can have his name on it. That is what this issue is about.

Yet, let us look at the record, because the record is one in which Republicans have an excellent record on education, and in which the history of education is actually quite sad for the Federal Government in total and for the Democrat Congress in particular.

Let me talk specifically about the issue of special education. We all understand special education. We understand the IDEA Act. We have talked about it. I recall very distinctly standing on this floor last year and fighting for more funds for IDEA, for funding for children with special education needs.

Let us talk about why I was fighting for that, where this Congress stands and where this country is, and why what the President says he wants is not what this Congress did under Democrat leadership, and is not what this Congress is even doing now when we are trying to get funds into special education.

Let me make this very clear. Current Federal law, passed under a Democrat Congress, says that 40 percent of the cost of educating, that is, the increased

cost of educating a special education child, a child with special needs, 40 percent of that cost is supposed to be borne by the Federal Government. The remaining 60 percent is supposed to be picked up by the State and local governments; 40 percent Federal, 60 percent State and local.

That is what the law says, in theory, passed by the Democrat Congress and Congresses before the 104th Congress. But what is the reality? The reality is that when the Republicans took control of this Congress, only 6 percent was being funded by the Federal Government. Now we have moved that up to 12 percent, but we are falling millions of dollars short. This list shows how many millions. We are falling short in Los Angeles Unified District by \$60 million every single year.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues, if we will fund IDEA, the districts can take care of their own education needs without passing the President's Federalization initiative.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. LOFGREN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GREEN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DICKS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONGRESS ACHIEVES LITTLE, WHILE EDUCATION NEEDS IN AMERICA ARE GREAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, let me just make one comment, to start off with. First of all, let me just thank my colleagues who are here this late afternoon on a Sunday. There has been a lot said on the other side of the aisle about wanting to be home with family, and

that we are here working. We all would love to be home with our families today and yesterday, and for a holiday tomorrow, but let us put this in the context of what we are talking about, the reason that we are not home.

The reason is very simple, that this is a Republican-controlled Congress that in fact has failed to get done the very basics in terms of legislation and process that our Federal Government relies on. Do not take my word for it. The statistics are all there. This is a Congress that has worked the least number of days in decades, 108. It has been said that regular people, real people, over 250 days they have worked, hard work every single day.

They have enacted the least number of bills in decades. They have not even passed a budget, and that is the first time. I do not keep the records. They have not passed the budget, and that is the first time since the budget process in the United States was created. Think about that, Mr. Speaker. They have failed to pass even routine spending bills on time.

I want to make one more comment before I yield to my colleagues who are here. It has also been said on the other side of the aisle that the President has not been engaged in the process. I want to send to my Republican colleagues a very simple book that is called "How Bills Become Law" in this country. Every child in our school understands the process. That is that the House and the Senate must determine what gets done in a piece of legislation before the President signs that piece of legislation.

□ 1630

I will tell my colleagues that this Republican-controlled Congress has not brought the bills together so that, in fact, the President could act on it. So he is waiting for this crowd to get its act together.

One more point, I will say that there are Democrats and Republicans in this body. What we need to know and understand is that, in fact, yes, the majority party controls. When there is that control, that means that they have charge of the calendar; that is what bills come up, what bills do not come up. They are in charge of the schedule of when we do what we do. The long and the short of it, they are in charge. They are responsible for legislation that gets accomplished or not accomplished in this body.

Do not let them get away with saying that it is other people's fault.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. MILLER).

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for the points that she has made.

It might seem unusual to our visitors in the gallery that, on a Sunday afternoon, they would see Members of Congress on the floor of the House, or to people who are watching C-SPAN, it

would be unusual for live C-SPAN covering the House on a Sunday afternoon.

But the fact of the matter is that Congress is stuck in Washington, D.C. because the Republican Congress has failed to finish its work for the year. They have failed in the grossest fashion possible.

They were supposed to have a budget on October 1. There is no budget. They were supposed to have finished the appropriations bills to run the government of the United States and conduct our obligations. Only six of the appropriations bills have been passed. The major ones have not. They have, so far, been unable to get them to the President of the United States.

As the gentlewoman Connecticut has pointed out, this is a Congress that has only worked 108 days so far this year. The average American have worked somewhere around 250 days to this day. Many people in my district and others working, out of the 283 days, sometimes working almost the full 283 days as so many people work Saturdays and Sundays along with the 5-day week.

But this Congress decided that it could come in on Tuesday at 5 o'clock most weeks, Monday at 5 o'clock, and it can leave on Thursday. It can leave on Wednesday. It would not come in at the end of the August break. It would stay out an extra week. The result is they simply have not done their work.

They have not done their work for another reason also, and that is pointed out in the Washington post this morning in their lead editorial where they simply say that the Republicans had no agenda for this year.

The Republicans were coming to town just to manage the Congress to try to keep the numbers that they have so that they can retain the power in the Congress, but they really had no agenda for the American public.

The tragedy is that the American public had an agenda for this Congress. The American public had an agenda of improving public education, of asking the Congress to help local school districts rebuild crumbling schools to make them technologically competent, to deal with the education of our children, to make them safe for our children, to go and to repair the falling ceilings and repair the roofs, to try to help out the local communities.

Local communities are doing this. But many communities need additional help. They are just simply too poor to do that. The American public had an agenda to try to help get HMO reform, to get a Patients' Bill of Rights so that patients and doctors would once again be in control of their health care so that, when the doctor says you need an MRI or the doctor says you need a prescription of a certain drug, you get that because your doctor who has been trained in medicine knows best for you. He knows your care. He has watched you as a patient. He understands your problems.

What do we have today? We have doctors getting on the phone and calling

bureaucracies, calling 800 numbers, pleading so that they can have their parents have an MRI so that they can diagnose whether or not they might have a tumor or not have a tumor or so that they can do surgery or not do surgery.

They are constantly told by the HMO bureaucracies, wait 30 days, let us see if it cures itself. Rarely, ladies and gentlemen, do tumors cure themselves. Rarely do these kinds of things happen. But the HMO is trying to save money.

So the American public was asking the Congress, help us put doctors and patients back in the control of health care. That was not done.

Campaign finance reform. The American public was astonished 2 years ago at the campaign finance scandals, the amount of special interest money coming into our campaigns. The Congress refused to act on that agenda.

Tobacco legislation to try to stop teenage smoking to try to recover health care costs that we spent with people who received cancer from smoking. The Republican Congress failed on that to protect the environment.

Again, as the Washington Post said, that no serious problems were addressed, and no serious environmental problems either. In fact, they said the great success of this Congress was doing damage control against the Republican agenda to eviscerate the environmental laws of this country.

So that is why my colleagues and myself are on the floor here on a Sunday afternoon, because the Congress, the Republican Congress, I should say, we have had this agenda. We have proposed legislation. The Democrats have proposed all this legislation. The Republicans have refused to enact it. They refuse to the work.

So now we find ourselves here on a Sunday afternoon, we find ourselves with no budget the first time since 1974, and with many of the important appropriations bills not passed and an important agenda dealing with problems in this country not addressed by this Congress.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) very much. She has really brought us together.

It is interesting today. We have the Congress Member, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE). Congress Members from the West coast, obviously we could not get home this weekend, those of us from California, Oregon and Washington.

We are here to talk about that this year is the 105th session of Congress. We should have been home, adjourned sine die, all the business done. If this were a school year or business year, we would be over, and everything would be done.

Here we are on a Sunday afternoon talking about the failures of this Congress and particularly the failures in education. If the story is going to be written about education and the GOP leadership on education, I think the headlines would say "Republicans: Underachievers and proud of it," because they have never been able to put together a substantive program for education to really address the needs that have been unmet: the unmet needs of school buildings that need money for construction and repair, the unmet needs for new teachers, the unmet needs for educational opportunities, zones to provide in those hardest of areas sort of an involvement to really deal with the root causes of people unable to get a good education, expanding the access to after-school learning, and expanding access to educational technology.

They have all been the bills that the President asked us. As the gentlewoman pointed out, the President comes here and addresses the Nation every year and, in that speech, outlines what the goals for this Nation should be. He proposes to this Congress.

We are supposed to dispose. The only way we can dispose is to put our cards in that slot right there and around this room and get the majority vote of 218 votes.

Here today we hear the Republicans attacking the President of the United States for traveling, traveling on international business. I mean, he has had incredible successes in China, incredible successes in Europe, incredible successes in Latin America, and he is being criticized for it. He does not have to be here in this room to get his business done.

Members of Congress have to be here. Where are they? They are not getting the business done. So the leadership of this House, the Republican leadership of this House should be ashamed of the fact that we are here overtime without a budget, underbudgeted for education, and not meeting the felt needs, the desires of the men and women who have sent us here to provide what is essentially the only thing that the Federal Government can do, and that is that safety net for education.

We hear the debate here on the floor that we do not want safety nets anymore. We want to just privatize education. When the schools of the District of Columbia came up for funding, Congress did not approve that funding and turned around and said we want to privatize this education.

What my colleagues are saying is this voucher system. It did not work in California. It was rejected there. They want to ram it down our throats and say, "Californians, you were wrong. We are going to give you vouchers whether you like it or not."

It is time that we, the United States Congress, go back to the basics of this country, go back to what supports the domestic tranquility. We cannot have peace around the world until we have

peace at home. We cannot have peace at home until every father and mother, every parent of every child in this country has satisfaction that the schools they are sending their children to are safe, sound, and excellent centers for learning. We get there from here unless we adopt what the President of the United States asked this Congress to do.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentlewoman for allowing us to have this time to discuss that.

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DeFAZIO).

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, Congress is still in Washington, and we are here on a Sunday because the Republican leadership has simply failed to do their job. It is quite simple. For the first time in a quarter of a century, since the adoption of the Budget Act, Congress has failed to adopt even a first budget resolution.

The leaders of the House, otherwise known as the flatterer society, and the leaders of the Senate, perhaps a slightly more progressive group recognizing the shape of the earth, have failed to agree on the basics of a budget.

The leaders of the House want to have a huge tax cut raided from the Social Security trust funds. The leaders from the Senate somewhat prudently have not decided to do that.

But, then again, the leaders in the House, when confronted with anger across America from people being denied essential care for themselves and their loved ones, and physicians even rising in anger when they are being denied tests and care that they know that their patients want, with all that pressure, the insurance industry, which pretty much sponsors the other side of the aisle at election time, could not be fully protected.

So they passed, better than not, but not much of a patient and providers bill here in the House, an HMO bill. But even that was too much for the leaders in the Senate because it might jeopardize their fund-raising with the insurance industry in a year when they hope to make big gains in the Senate.

Of course tobacco, well, that did not go anywhere on either side with the Republican leaders, despite the fact that the American people are appalled to see the rise in teenage smoking and what that will yield 10 and 15 and 20 years down the road.

So here the Congress has no budget, many major bills denied. But at least we could salvage something. We could salvage the President's education initiative, something that all Members of Congress, no matter what side of the aisle they come from should be able to agree upon.

They should be able to go home to their own districts and see the fact that the schools are crumbling and

overcrowded, and there are trailers parked on what used to be the playground because there are too many kids to fit in the school.

If they went inside the school, the public schools, they would find that the classes were about twice what they were when they were kids when they went to public school. A lot of people on the other side of the aisle did not. They would see that the teachers are carrying more classes and working harder. There is no counselors anymore in most of the schools. They would support the President's initiative to help add teachers to the schools, reduce class size, and rebuild our crumbling schools and make them safe for our kids.

But they tell us there is no money to do that. There is no money to do that. Wait a minute. Was it not the same leadership here on the House side just a couple of weeks ago who jammed through tax cuts that were paid for by raiding the Social Security Trust Fund, otherwise known as the budget surplus?

□ 1645

They could find money to do that. They could find money to cut taxes in an election year favoring the usual suspects. But no, there is no money for the schools and the kids and the teachers. They say there is no money.

Look at the Department of Defense appropriation this year. It adds \$4.1 billion, not million, billion dollars of pork projects that were not requested by the Pentagon. This is the same Pentagon that has now come up to the hill and said, we need more money, we need gas for the tanks, the soldiers do not have ammunition, the housing is crumbling for the enlisted ranks. I want to take care of those things, but guess what, the Republican majority already spent that money. They spent it on pork projects that the Pentagon did not ask for. But they tell us there is no money for the kids and the schools and the teachers.

Now, somehow they can find money for the mythical space station that we are building with the former Soviet Union. This thing is only about 2,000, 3,000 percent over budget, 10 years behind schedule. We keep pretending that they are going to build parts of it over there. Now we have to pay them to build parts of it over there, in addition to building the parts over here, but pretending they are building them over there. It has no mission. There is \$40 billion over the next 10 years. But there is no money for the schools and the kids and the teachers. What is wrong with these people? What is wrong with them? Where are their priorities?

Well, they do have some priorities when it comes to education. Eliminate the Department of Education, priority number one. Divert billions of dollars from public school funding to private school vouchers. That is their answer to the crumbling public schools. And

the large class sizes and the lack of public funding, take that money and give it to the private schools. Cut school lunches for poor kids and end equal opportunity for higher education. Cut student loans, give higher subsidies to the banks so they will give some student loans.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I just think that it is interesting where the priorities are, as the gentleman points out. I am sorry I offended the gentleman earlier today about the intensity of my statement. Frankly, when I find friends and relatives and constituents losing their health care, dying because of bad health care, it does bring out an emotional response. It is infuriating and frustrating. But then when you look where they are putting their efforts, instead of trying to deal with HMO reform, trying to make sure that seniors do not get bumped out of their managed care health care, they are trying to get oil companies extra breaks in the royalties they owe the taxpayers of this country.

They came to this Congress saying they wanted to run it like a business. You tell me what business takes the family assets, the family owned oil reserves and says, let Exxon walk away with a little more of it. They spent time here, when they could not get any of the education product done, they got a \$50 billion tax break for the tobacco companies, snuck it in a bill, lo and behold, when we found out even they were unable to keep it there so we repealed that tax break. They gave, again, a \$50 billion tax break to tobacco companies.

On health care, they spent more time trying to make sure that unmarried couples in San Francisco could not get health care provided by their community than they did in trying to protect the health care of the rest of us. And if you go to education, the President seems to be able to figure things out in a way that works and a way the American people understand.

In the area of crime, the President said one of the things we need is more people on the street. That is how we all grew up. There was a cop on the corner. You got to know them. They knew what was going on. The President says, we want 100,000 cops. They say, that is terrible. They were against the 100,000 cops. It took them 3 years. The public was on board. Every first selectman and mayor was on board. The police chiefs knew it worked. The Republicans were still swinging around with guys who were against the crime bill. Then they figured that one out.

I do not know when they are going to figure out the education one. Let me tell you something, the United States is in a very competitive international market. It is in chaos now. We will now compete with countries that instead of paying 15 cents for every dollar an American makes, we will be competing with countries that make 2 and 3 and 4 cents for every dollar an American makes. Our workers have to be better

trained and better educated. And if we do not invest in education, we are not going to have the kind of future that we want for all of our children.

We need to make sure that we are here working on things for the people.

The Speaker has a new club. He got in enough trouble with his last set of clubs. This new club is the Speaker's people call you up and they tell you you have just been appointed to a panel. You are on an advisory panel for the Speaker of the House. Then they want you to send in, \$1000, \$2000, \$3000.

They talk about the President fundraising. What they do not tell anybody is they have a several hundred million dollar advantage in almost every account.

At the end of the day, the people know what this fight is about. They are trying to make sure we do not focus on health care, on education, and retirement security. They would rather have us talk about anything than the things that affect the people. Time enough to give big tobacco a tax break. Time enough to give oil companies some of their royalties that they should have paid us. Not enough time for average citizens. That is what is wrong with this Republican Congress.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman forgot a couple highlights of things they did propose. They did propose elimination of the School to Work program for high school students. I suppose somehow in their world that is going to better prepare our students for employment after school and to compete in the world economy. Beyond me. I wish they would come down here and explain that. I thought it was a pretty good thing to have school to work opportunities for high school kids. In fact, my State has embarked statewide on a program to bring that about.

They have also eliminated in school interest subsidy for student loans. I borrowed a bunch of money to go to college. I thought it was a lot of money when I graduated. I owed about \$12,000 when I got out. I am talking to kids now getting out with bachelor's degrees from higher education with \$25- and \$30,000.

Mr. MILLER of California. The gentleman raised the point of student loans. The President just signed the higher, reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. The tragedy of that bill is that the Republicans fought us for the last 2 years at every turn where we had the ability to make it less expensive for students who graduated from college to consolidate their loans, to save hundreds and hundreds of dollars in interest costs, to refinance those loans at lower rates. They fought that effort even when the administration tried to do it again this year, the Republicans came down on them like a ton of bricks.

Then when we tried to lower the cost of student loans, the Republicans fought us the whole way, finally agreed to lower the cost of student loans just

a little bit so that they could say they lowered the cost. The fact of the matter is, this whole year, I serve on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, this whole year they have fought on behalf of the banks to retain the ability of the banks to suck money out of the student loan program, to take it out in fees, to take it out in higher interest rates. And what does that do? That just means for more students they have to work more hours or they cannot go to college or they have to defer it or take fewer units, costing their families more and more money.

So it is just incredible that they would spend 2 years, at a time when we had a chance to dramatically lower the cost of student loans, they fought us at every turn. They fought us at every effort we made either to consolidate loans or to reduce the interest rates on loans. They just fought for the banks. It is what they have spent their time doing in this session, as you pointed out. They have fought in this session for every special interest.

But they missed a really very simple agenda for the American public. Take care of our health care. Make sure our doctor can prescribe what we need, provide a minimum wage so that families can support themselves, get rid of the teen smoking and recover the money that tobacco companies have taken from this country because of cancer and tobacco. Give our children a chance to get a world class education in a safe school by reducing class sizes, by repairing the buildings, by having high standards for our teachers, high standards for our students and accountability for the school districts back to the parents.

I had a provision in one of the bills and they fought me on it. I said, parents ought to know the qualifications of the teachers that teach their students. Is this teacher qualified to teach your student history or mathematics or biology? They fought that effort.

This is not a complicated agenda that the President brought to this Congress, that the Democrats have brought to this Congress, but more importantly, that the American people have brought to this Congress. Because the gentleman from Oregon points out, most of their time has been spent here on these efforts on behalf of special interests trying to protect little nuances and tax breaks and special deals that allow them to go around the public interest. I appreciate the gentleman raising those points.

Mr. DEFAZIO. To go back to the student loans for a moment, because that is something that I am pretty exercised about, there was an absolutely Titanic struggle here on behalf of the banks to say, the bankers actually came in to me and I said, I always thought the theory of interest was that there was risk. With these student loans, the government guarantees that you get 100 percent back no matter what happens, plus your interest, no matter what happens. The student dies, goes bankrupt,

leaves the country, you will get it back. So why are the interest rates so high?

Their eyes got big and they looked at me and said, well, very profitable. Yes. Guess what? We can charge the students 8, 9 percent interest for loans that are guaranteed by the Federal Government. So after much pressure from our side and from the parents and the families and the kids, the Republicans had to lower the interest rate just a little bit for the kids, but they gave an additional subsidy to the banks. So the banks are still going to get a guaranty of 100 percent repayment. They are still getting obscenely high interest rates. Interest rates are falling through the floor and the banks are getting an increase in the interest rates and the kids are not getting the loans.

Direct student loans, take out the middlemen. What do we need the banks in the middle for? Why should we guarantee the loans and give them a subsidy and give them those high interest rates and take the money out of the kids' pockets? If we had direct student loans through the institutions, through the kids, like I got when I was in college, another 600,000 kids could get student loans of \$4000 or \$5000 this year, if we just took out the banks' profits.

They say, that is too complicated. They said we tried to do an experiment. It did not work. Ross Perot was running the program.

But it can work, and that can be a much better way of doing this. And you can give more kids a higher education.

I just want to make one other point before I have to leave. The gentleman touched on this. From what they have not done, by not reforming HMOs and the insurance industry, from what they have not done in terms of dealing with teenage smoking, from what they have not done in terms of raising the minimum wage or protecting the environment, they have gotten some very rich and powerful friends. And those rich and powerful friends are rewarding them handsomely. That is why they are in a hurry to get out of Washington, D.C. now, not because they want to do a good job or get the job done or leave with the job done. They want to get home and start spending the obscene amounts of campaign cash that they have piled up.

I would just ask the people that are watching television today, when they watch those ads come piling out in October and up in the first few days of November, when they see them four and five to one, as a Democrat, I would like them to think, where did all that money come from? Where did all that money come from? It came from the HMOs.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). The Chair would remind Members that it is improper to address the television audience. Members should address their comments to the Chair.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I said the people watching. I did not say you, the people watching. I did not attempt to garner their attention directly.

In any case, the point is made.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oregon, and I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut, who is doing a real public service in coming out here and organizing this effort to talk about education.

As I listen to this education business about loans, I think about my own circumstance, my own family. My sister told me that she will be 54 years old when she gets through paying off her loans. These are loans that were for a PhD at the University of Chicago in the 1970s. She is going to be paying until another 6 or 7 years.

When interest rates have fallen, all of us who have a house, we go out and we refinance our loan. We drop our interest rate. I bought a house at 8 percent. I am now down at 6 percent. And I save myself all kinds of money.

A student cannot do that. You cannot refinance a student loan. If they really cared about children in the middle class, they would make it possible for you to refinance the loan. You can do it if you have a house. You go in and you get a home improvement loan and you use that home improvement money to pay off your college loan. Then you pay at 6 percent and you get tax deductibility. That is how they make people work around the law and put the students out there and let the banks squeeze them endlessly.

As I was sitting here thinking about this whole education thing, I was thinking about what is a democracy based on? A democracy is based on an educated electorate. If you do not have people who are educated and can understand and participate, you lose the democracy. And we have done some things here in this last couple weeks which are, if you think about them in that context, are very destructive.

We had a big debate out here about how many H-1B visas we are going to give. Now, most people do not what an H-1B visa is because our grandparents or our great grandparents came and they just kind of walked in here. But now if you come to the United States, you have to have some kind of a visa, and it either has to be a work visa or you are coming here because your family has been here and you are unifying the family or maybe there is so many could come in from each country.

□ 1700

But we have a special category. It is called an H-1B visa. This is a visa that we give to people who have a special skill somewhere in the world. We say, we need that skill in the United States, so we will give you one of those visas, come on in and work here. You can't stay, but we will use you, we can pay you as little as possible, give you no

benefit, but if you are willing to come here, we will take you in on that basis.

Last year we passed the bill and we said we need 60,000 of those people in the United States next year. Lo and behold, industry in this country was so desperate for trained people that we had used those 60,000 visas by the 1st of July. So in come the Republicans and say, we need 150,000 more. We have to go out into Poland and Czechoslovakia and Germany and India and Cambodia and we have got to find these 150,000 people and let them come in here.

If you think about that, what that says is we are not training enough people in this country to fill the jobs that are available. These are not \$5 an hour jobs flipping hamburgers in some fast food joint. These are in my district at Microsoft where we pay 30, 40, 50, \$60,000 to these people, and they cannot find an American who qualifies for that job, so they have to go to India, or the Ukraine, or Uganda or somewhere and find them.

So when the President says that the focus of this country and this Congress ought to be developing an educational system that prepares our kids for the jobs of the 21st century, he is talking about making Americans available for those H-1B visas. The problem in politics is that a lot of times we always think in 2-year terms or maybe 4. We do not think about the fact that we are really sewing the seeds for 20 years from now if we don't educate our kids, if in those first 3 years we do not learn to read. Then they are not going to know how to read a computer, ma'am, when they get an opportunity to work as a computer operator, or as a programmer.

If they do not learn basic math—my daughter teaches in the Seattle schools. She teaches sophomore remedial math. She said to me, dad, you can't believe how many kids don't know how to use a ruler. She has to take them out in the parking lot and say, all right, now here is what a ruler is about. How big a parking space, so they measure out the parking space. Then she says to them, why is that parking space this size. The kids finally say oh, so the car will fit in. So they measure the car. Lo and behold, a parking space is a little bit larger than an automobile, a standard automobile.

Now when you are taking 15 and 16-year-old kids who come through our system and they do not have the capacity to make the logical connections between a ruler and a parking space, you have got serious difficulties in our educational system. So when the President says we need 100,000 new teachers to get those kids in the first 3 years where they learn to add and subtract and do fractions and they learn to read and write. That is what that is all about. It is not about somehow the Federal Government taking over education. It is supplementing those school districts in this country, and Seattle has not got a bad school system. But we still have kids who are not making it, who are

not getting it, because the schools are too big or too whatever, and we need to add this kind of thing.

Now, the other thing is this whole business about school buildings. My daughter is in a school building that was built before the Second World War. When they try and wire for computers, God help you. You have to have Rube Goldberg come in to put together the wiring to work inside a building that was built 50 years ago. That is not the oldest building in Seattle. There are a lot of buildings, and all over this country, and we say to our kids, well, we want to get you ready for a job. But we do not give them the opportunity to deal with the very things that they are going to have to do when they go out into the world. To me, it is a tragedy.

There was an editorial in this morning's newspaper which I think is the one that just stops me sort of sometimes. When we look at what we have spent our time and energy in here, Bob Herbert in the New York Times said, having been handed the gift of Monica Lewinsky, the Republicans are running with her. She conceals their real agenda. If they can parlay the Monica madness into substantial increased majorities in the House and Senate, they can renew their conservative assault on government and on their subversion of the interests of ordinary working people and the poor.

You cannot say it any clearer. If the poor, if the lower classes in our country, in the middle class in our country, if we do not come up with ways to give them an education, this democracy will lead to fascism. You will have to have the government with a soldier on every corner like they do in half the countries of the world. The reason we have a democracy is because people are educated. If we do not educate them, we will have turmoil in this country that we are not prepared for. That is why what the President is saying is that this is a long-term plan in the best interests of all Americans.

I congratulate the two of you for putting this together.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I would like to have a little dialogue with the gentleman about workers and H-1B visas, because something else that is totally missing is some incentive, an encouragement for businesses to retrain their current workforce. Technology is growing so fast and beyond the workforce. Employers are hesitating or refusing to train their existing workers. That must be something we do. That is why we need H-1B visas. One, we do not teach our young people, and, two, we do not retrain our existing workforce.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Some of us are really worried that the H-1B visa is a way around taking your existing workforce and raising them up to the level that you need them, rather, go get somebody somewhere else who you can hire for \$10,000, \$20,000 less, do not have to pay for a pension, do not have to pay for health care or anything else and put them in the job rather than taking

an existing worker. There is a lot of concern among many people who look at the workforce and say that the issue of retraining is one of the most fundamental issues to labor peace in this country. You cannot go and get somebody from somewhere else and stick them in a job when there is somebody standing there that could be trained to do that.

Ms. WOOLSEY. That is right. The other connect there is that person is being laid off because they are not trained, quite often is a very senior worker, needing Social Security. And what are we saying? We are raising the age of Social Security. That is the threat. In order to save it, privatize it, raise the age, give less. But certainly do not train workers so they can stay on the job. They need that Social Security at the time they will be laid off and it will not be available to them.

Ms. DELAURO. Let me just make a comment before I recognize the gentlewoman from California. The theme that both of our colleagues were talking about, education in this country has been the great equalizer. I think it is true to talk about the fundamental part of our democracy. What I mean by education being the great equalizer is that youngsters have the opportunity to succeed despite their gender, their religion, their socioeconomic status, political party affiliation. It says that your God-given talent is what is in fact that which allows for your success in our society. That has truly been the premise of public education.

I will just take myself for example. I am the daughter of a garment worker. My mom worked in the sweatshops. My dad sold insurance. They killed themselves literally to make sure that I had a good education, so that in fact that I could have opportunities that they never had. That is the same with probably the majority of people who serve in this body.

Ms. WOOLSEY. If you will yield, I will tell you my story.

Ms. DELAURO. Which is so frightening in terms of what is at stake when we are talking about public education and what this institution and the majority party in this institution has refused to recognize.

Just one more point. I got the finest education in the same way that any corporate executive or any scientist or any academic could get and was allowed to be able to have the honor and the privilege of serving in this body. So it is a precious, precious gift, if you will, that we need to preserve this ability. It is values. It is what we prize and what we value in our society is this ability for education.

Ms. WOOLSEY. If the gentlewoman will yield on this thought, then later I have more words. Thirty years ago my children and I were abandoned by their father. My children were 1, 3 and 5 years old. I went to work immediately. I had good job skills fortunately. I was a very healthy young woman. My children were healthy. We were really for-

unate. But the most fortunate part of that horrible situation was that I had a good education. I had 2 years of college. I quit college so that I could help my children's father finish school. But I had enough education to get job opportunities and make those job opportunities work for my family and myself while I continued to finish my college education. Without that education, I do not know where we would be today, because it made all the difference in the world in my self-esteem, and in my ability to go forward.

Mr. PALLONE. If the gentlewoman will yield, I am going to join in by pointing out my background as well. My father, who probably is listening because today is Columbus Day and he told me he might listen to us.

Ms. DELAURO. We were supposed to be marching in parades today, in the heart of the Italian-American community.

Mr. PALLONE. In New Jersey. That is right. My father was a policeman for about 25, 30 years and is retired now from the police force. The same is true. We grew up, we never had to worry about anything, but we were middle class, went to public school and basically the quality of the education in the public school was, I think, as good as it gets. That is all we are saying. But if I have to go back to that same school or other schools in my district today, you will find that many of them do not have the money to keep up with the plant, as I would say.

When we talk about this money that we are looking to see for modernization of the schools, which really is sort of the main object, if you will, of what we are asking the Republicans to do before we get out of here, is that we would like to get this modernization fund available for the local communities. It is not so much that a lot of communities need additional schools or need to build additions to their schools, which is true. A lot of them are overcrowded now and they need new schools and this money that we are asking for that be appropriated could be used for that purpose. But I find that many of the school districts just cannot afford to keep up with technology anymore. In other words, they need to be rewired for computers, they need to have things done so that they can keep up with the high tech age, so to speak. It is very different today than it might have been 20, 30 years ago, or even 10 years ago, where the local community of course never had an easy time raising the funds to build the school or renovate the school but they did not have all the problems that are associated now with all the changes that occur in technology every day. I have found that when I go back and I talk to some of the school districts, they are just looking for some additional help just to make the change-over, if you will, to the high technology age. Now, of course there are others that have crumbling roofs. I have some in my own district that are

in pretty bad shape where I have been in the auditoriums and I have seen the water leak through. So there are some that are very decrepit. But you will not find a single school district in this country now, I do not think, that does not need some kind of assistance because of all the demands that exist now on the physical plant of the school building.

Again, I know I hear my Republican colleagues say, well, you know, schools should be local, everything should be done locally. We are not arguing that the curriculum should not be decided by the local school board, that the local school board should not decide who to hire or what to do on a daily basis. We are just talking about the money that they need, because local property taxes are so high, it is very difficult for them to get along. So all we are saying is give us a little down payment here. Do not rush out of this place immediately without having done your job. Address the education needs, address the need to modernize the schools. If they would just do that, I will be honest with you, all the other things that I would like to see done here, but if they would just do that, I would be happy.

Ms. WOOLSEY. The gentleman is right on target. If the school needs upgrading and wiring, that is what they need.

□ 1715

If a school needs roofs, paint, that is what they need, and, if we do not invest in those children, in their schools, what are we saying to them? We are telling those children you do not matter. We want you to get an education, but we do not want it to be the best it could be. And we are not saying, take our Federal tax dollars and wire that plug or that particular room; we are just saying, use those tax dollars to benefit our children because we know they all need a good education. And public education makes that possible, and we want to invest in them.

Ms. DELAURO. Well, interestingly enough, you know, to further talk about this a bit, is that 90 percent of our youngsters are in public schools.

Now, we do have problems with the public school system. No one is suggesting that we cannot make improvements, which is what precisely we are talking about, and in terms of the modernizing, again the piece that is, it is not just about the bricks and the mortar. It is in fact about providing that opportunity for youngsters to be able to have a learning environment which is a secure one and at the same time have a learning environment which, in fact, plugs them into an Internet to utilize advanced technology.

I did a survey, a modernization survey, in my district. I visited the Orange Avenue School for a tour. We had a round table discussion with superintendents about school modernization needs. There were 71 schools who responded, and this is what I found in my own district.

The average age of the elementary school buildings is 50 years old. More than half of the elementary schools regularly hold classes in areas not designed to be classrooms, including cafeterias, hallways, mobile or temporary rooms and storage areas, literally closets being turned into classrooms. The average class size was still 23 students, even with the makeshift facilities, which is why we have been talking about reducing classroom size to 18 in the grades from 1 to 3.

All of the schools that responded said that they had some computers for students to use. More than 50 percent of the schools have no computer lab or a room where there are computers. The majority of the schools have no computers designated for teachers' use, nor is there programming to teach teachers as to how to teach our kids to use computers, and many schools do not have computers in every classroom. I would venture to say that today computers are becoming like textbooks; where you have a text book for every child, you have to have computers for every child.

Let me just make one more point about modernization because our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will say the Federal Government wants to get involved in construction of schools. Not true. Very simply what we are talking about here is that what the President's initiative is, and what we like to have accomplished before we leave here, it is to help with Federal tax credits to pay interest on \$22 billion in bonds to build or to modernize public schools. That helps the local community float the bonds that they need to construct the school. We do not want to be building schools and have the Federal Government pay for the building of these schools, but we want to try to provide that local government with the opportunity of getting some relief on their taxes with regard to the bonds.

What does that do for the local community? You know what it does for the local community? It lowers their tax obligation. That is what we are talking about. And it is very simple, it can be done, and we truly do have the obligation to make sure that we do this. That is what we are calling for: Do this before we get out of Washington, D.C.

Ms. WOOLSEY. You know in California, our very conservative Republican Governor put into place the decrease in class sizes for grades K through 3. Well, guess what we found out? We did not have enough certified teachers, we did not have classrooms, and good that the idea was, yes, reduce the class size. We did not have the infrastructure or the trained teachers to support even what this very conservative Republican Governor wanted.

Ms. DELAURO. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PALLONE. As I said, I think that the school modernization is probably the most important aspect of this education agenda that we have been trying

to push, but I also think that this proposal, which originally came from President Clinton to hire a hundred thousand additional teachers, is equally important. And again it is modeled in many ways on the COPS grant program where the President has basically instituted a program, and we approved it in Congress, to hire a hundred thousand additional policemen. Let me say that that COPS grant program, because I heard some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle criticize it earlier, and I was shocked to hear some of the Republicans criticize that program because I know how effective it has been in my district. We have had, almost every community has been able to hire additional police because of that COPS grant, and it is a community program. In other words, the policemen have to be put on the beat in the community, in many cases tied into recreation and other programs that they work on during the evening or during off hours. It has been terribly successful. I have had so many people in my hometown, in Long Branch, where I was supposed to be at the Columbus Day parade today, tell me how it has made a difference in terms of the crime rate has gone down significantly as a result of this.

Now we are saying we want to model that in the same way. We want to give those towns money so that they can hire additional teachers and bring class size down. I think it is either 1 to 3 or K to 3 in the lower grades.

Now we know that anybody who has been involved in education, I know both of my colleagues who are here with me today have been, have talked about this in the past, know in the last few years all kinds of research has come out to point out that early childhood development is so crucial, even down to like 6 months or a few months, zero. And so what we are saying is that we want to make sure at that early level, and I mean it is not even that early because we are talking kindergarten or first grade, but whatever, that when these kids start in the public schools that they have those small class sizes.

And again, you know, you could talk to people who say, well, I went to a one-room schoolhouse and there were 30 kids in the class. Well, again, things are different today. In many ways I wish that they were like they used to be, but they are not. A lot of these kids come to school already with some major problems, and they cannot have a class that has 30 kids in it because they are not going to learn anything. So, if you combine the fact that we are trying to reach these kids at a young age, that we have a lot of problems that need to be addressed today at that young age, you have to bring classes down. I think this would actually bring it down to 18 or so, the average in the classroom and the country. And I cannot stress how important that is, and do not let anybody on the other side tell you that the COPS grant program

was a failure. If we can build on that, we will have another very successful program, and, I will say, for not a lot of money.

Ms. DELAURO. I would just say that, you know, when we talk about reduced class size, again like modernization is not bricks and mortar, lower class size says the following: I am a teacher, I can give more individual attention to each of the youngsters I have in a classroom. Better learning, better standards, more accountability. And you know what else? More discipline in the classroom. Parents today want to make sure that their youngsters are in schools that are safe, in a learning environment with a teacher who has time to devote attention to them.

And you are absolutely right about we have a very successful model on which to base this program, and it is one that universally school officials and administrators and parents and teachers are clamoring for.

I think it is important to note, because we are going to be out of time in a few minutes here, that our colleagues will talk about their accomplishments in education, but I do not think that we ought to be fooled by their commentary.

Child literacy program, America Reads, zero funding. Summer jobs, zero funding. Out of school youth, zero funding. School modernization, zero funding. Class size reduction, zero. New teachers, zero. Shortchanging Head Start programs, Goals 2000. When they talk about taking the money, Dollars to the Classroom, that eliminates Goals 2000, the Eisenhower training program that trains our teachers, several other critical programs that provide for basic skills for our young people.

We have an obligation. We serve here because the people who we represent trust us, and they trust us with their children.

Let us take the remaining days of this session and do something to improve public education in this country. We can do it. There is support for doing it. We need to do it. That is what we should be about.

I yield to either of my colleagues for any final comments.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well, I have a comment. When our colleague, Mr. PALLONE, talked about small one-room school houses, those schools were homogeneous. Everybody in that class looked the same, came from the same kind of background and environment. Now we are talking about classrooms with as many as 17 different languages in one classroom. Tell me that these young children do not need one-on-one attention from their instructor.

Mr. PALLONE. If the gentlewoman will yield, I would just say that again, one of the things that really has been bothering me about this Republican Congress is that, you know, they will pay lip service to education, but they wasted so much time trying to take money away from public education by

instituting voucher programs that basically take public dollars and give it to private schools, and we had to go on for weeks and months fighting those proposals. If they had just not wasted that time, we would not be in the situation we are in today.

You know some of our colleagues have said, well, you know, it is time to go home, we got to get out of here quickly. They wasted so much time trying to attack the public school system. We heard talk again about abolishing the Department of Education. You know, again, how can we have any kind of standards or have any kind of supervision of what goes on out there if we do not have a Department of Education?

So, you know, I honestly believe that in many ways what the Republican leadership has been trying to do here is to basically break down or even destroy in some ways public education. I mean, if they are going to spend all their time and say we are going to take these dollars from public education and give it to private schools, we are never going to get to the initiatives that we are talking about.

That is why I get very annoyed when I hear them say, well, we care about education because we know that their whole history for the last 2 years and even for the 4 years that they have been in the majority is to try to break down the system and not allow dollars to go to public education.

Ms. DELAURO. The one thing they want to do is to return education to the limited few and the rich instead of using education as that great equalizer that allowed us our success to be able to come here.

MOST OF OUR PROBLEMS CAME FROM WHEN THE DEMOCRATS CONTROLLED THE CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Arizona, sitting in the chair, for his endurance on a Sunday afternoon in listening to what has just gone on.

I listened to the discussion all this day, and I find it rather fascinating. The shrillness of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle I think reflects their sense of denial. Most of what they have said is that they are trying to continue the policies so that they can continue to support their philosophy of government that has failed. We have tried their way for well over 50 years, and most of the problems that they describe, the problems with our public school system, with our government, with health care, most of that came from when they controlled this Congress.

□ 1730

They have controlled most of the local governments, the state govern-

ments, this Congress, for the last 30 to 40 years, and the result are the problems that they have described.

The problem is that their solutions are more of the same, more money, more big government. "We know better." You heard just 15 minutes ago, the gentleman from New Jersey, talking about the fact that "I know what my local school boards need more than they do." Well, he ought to run for the school board, because that is where the decisions ought to be made, not here on this floor and not by the President of the United States.

For my colleagues and others, let me try to kind of put in perspective where we are today. I find it fascinating that the President of the United States showed up for the first time to talk to his budget people the day before the targeted date of adjournment, last Thursday. That is the first time that I have heard or read about that the President has met with his budget people about the spending and appropriations bills that we are trying to pass. That is the first time I have heard that this President has been engaged this year on anything that is going on in the Congress of the United States.

The day of adjournment, on Friday, the President announces that he is not going to accept the work of this House or the Senate unless he gets his education package. That is the first time since his State of the Union message that I have heard that he has been engaged in the process.

This President has been totally disengaged this whole year. In fact, I can contend that this year is nothing more than a reflection of what we have been going through for the last four years. This President's normal method of operation is he does not get engaged at all until the end, and then he comes in and demands more spending and bigger government and more programs. And, because he is President, he could shut down the government like he did in 1995. We have to deal with this President to get him to sign the legislation. Yet during the whole process, he is not engaged.

The American people need to really understand what is going on here. The President himself today in a meeting with Democrat leadership, I find it very strange, he has not this entire year, in fact I think if we go back two years, has not called on the Republicans, the majority leadership, to meet with him at all. But today he meets with the Democrat leadership, and he announces that he has been engaged in this educational program all along. All he could cite was he talked about it in his State of the Union message and he sent it up in his budget.

I defy anyone to bring to me one bill written that was initiated by this President this year. One bill. Just show me the bill. Show me the bill. This President has not initiated one thing.

Now, he has taken credit for the economy, but I also challenge you to show me one thing he has initiated in