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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 1, 2000.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RAY LAHOOD to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We recognize, O gracious God, that prayer is a practice that unites people as no other act can do, and we realize that by prayer we can put aside that which divides us and join with a common voice in words of praise, petition, and thanksgiving.

On this day we recall all who have any special need; those who seek healing and wholeness, those who yearn for peace and concord, those who are hungry or homeless, those who seek friendship and support. We ask for Your blessing, O God, that we will be filled with a new sense of purpose and mission so that in all things we will do justice, love mercy, and ever walk humbly with You. This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. MCNULTY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HERGER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces that he will entertain fifteen 1-minutes per side.

SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, Baron Rothschild once said, ''I do not know what the seven wonders of the world are, but I do know the eighth: Compound interest.''

Mr. Speaker, Baron Rothschild called compound interest the eighth wonder of the world for a good reason. Modest amounts of money, when invested, and then reinvested, grow over time in a spectacular fashion.

Every American deserves the right to save a portion of their FICA tax and control it in a tax-free account that can be invested in an authorized group of funds, just like a 401(k) or a pension plan.

This could save Social Security permanently without a tax increase or a benefit cut. It would ensure that the poorest worker would have a savings account within 6 months of starting work. Within a few years, that worker would be a saver and an investor, getting the benefit of investment return, earning compound interest at competitive rates, not just Treasury rates. For younger Americans this could produce retirements at three to six times the wealth they would get from the government system, and it would protect the system from collapsing when baby boomers retire.

Mr. Speaker, we need to save and strengthen Social Security, and this is a good way to do it.

INTERNATIONAL ABDUCTION

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about another of America's 10,000 children who have been abducted to foreign countries: David Richard Uhl.

In April of 1998, at age 1, David Uhl was taken from his father, Dr. George Uhl, in his home in Maryland, to Munich, Germany. The United States courts ordered that David's clear best interest was to be in his father's custody and ordered his return.

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.
Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

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However, the German courts have supported his mother's efforts to keep him from his father and have provided no visitation and have provided no timely ruling on Hague petitions. When George last traveled to Munich in February, a German judge would not order visitation or even tell him where his son was hidden. The lower German court rulings that grant David's mother German custody move through the German appeals court next week, and I am hopeful that George's son will soon be returned to him.

Dr. Uhl and parents like him need our help. Mr. Speaker, we must show respect and concern for the most sacred of bonds, the bond of a parent and a child. When we look at a globe and we see boundaries, but when it comes to uniting families, we must know no boundaries. We must bring our children home.

WORKING SENIORS DESERVE A BREAK

(Mr. HERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say that working seniors deserve a break, and it is time we gave it to them.

I think most of us in this chamber agree that our Tax Code needs to be fairer. And in order for the Tax Code to be fairer, we must first eliminate the many ways that it unfairly punishes the American people.

Our House took a first step on this front just a few weeks ago when we passed a bill that would give married couples relief from the marriage tax penalty. But just as it is unfair for couples to be penalized simply for being married, it is equally unfair for senior citizens to be penalized simply because they have jobs. Yet the Social Security earning limits is doing just that.

Because of these earnings limits, senior citizens risk losing a large portion of their Social Security benefits if they decide to keep working past the age of 65 and they make more than the law allows. In essence, our government is telling senior citizens that they should not work. Instead, our government should encourage not discourage.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting to eliminate the Social Security earnings limit.

GUN SAFETY

(Ms. DEGETTE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, another tragedy has struck. Yesterday, a little girl in Michigan was shot and killed by one of her classmates, a 6-year-old boy. A 6 year old, Mr. Speaker. And the question we are all asking ourselves today is, ''How in the heck did a little 6-year-old boy get a gun?''

If anybody watched the footage of this on the news last night, they saw a scene that has become all too familiar in this country: A school being evacuated, teachers leading frightened children to safety, sobbing parents frantically looking for their children and, at the end of the day, another dead child, another victim of gun violence.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, another tragedy has struck, but still Congress does nothing to keep guns out of the hands of kids and out of the hands of criminals. This is not the year 1900, this is the year 2000. We have a crisis in this country and Congress is going to go home again today, not to come back until next week, still having done nothing to pass common sense child gun safety.

REPEAL SOCIAL SECURITY EARNINGS LIMIT

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, if a senior citizen wishes to be a part of the work force, there is a lot to consider: The work environment, the hours, the wages. There are a lot of things for a working senior to look at. But one that should not have to occupy a senior citizen's mind is the potential impact that their new job could have on their Social Security benefits.

Yet working seniors across the country have to do that because of the Social Security earnings limit. Because of the earnings limit, senior citizens between the ages of 65 and 70 who join the work force risk losing part or all of their Social Security benefits. This is simply not fair.

Senior citizens have spent their entire lives earning these benefits and our government should not be punishing them simply because they choose to keep on working.

Today, House Republicans bring up a bill that will repeal the earnings limit. Many senior groups, including the AARP, support this bill because they recognize that it is unfair to punish working seniors. I hope that my colleagues will agree.

Let us repeal the Social Security earning limits and give our working seniors a break. They have earned it.

WHITE HOUSE IS WRONG ON CHINA AND WTO MEMBERSHIP

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, the White House wants China in the World Trade Organization. Unbelievable. China sells nuclear weapons to our enemies. China threatened to nuke Taiwan. Once, China even threatened the city of Los Angeles.

Beam me up. If the White House succeeds in getting China admitted to the World Trade Organization, I say the White House needs a lobotomy performed by a proctologist.

I yield back a $350 billion trade deficit, much of it going to China to finance an army that someday may come after us.

SANCTIONS ON IRAQ: A REGRETTABLE NECESSITY

(Mr. BEREUTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks a number of well-meaning but misguided voices have been raised to urge the lifting of economic sanctions against Saddam Hussein's government in Iraq. It has been suggested that lifting the sanctions will alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people.

Iraq does face a humanitarian disaster, but it is a disaster that has been created and perpetuated by Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi leader bemoans the lack of food and medicine, but Saddam has amassed a personal fortune of over $6 billion, much of it the result of pilfering the donations the international community has provided. While his people have gone wanting, he has built scores of palatial mansions at an estimated cost of $2 billion.

Recent studies from the Food and Agriculture Organization indicate that more than enough food is available to satisfy the minimal caloric requirements to sustain health. The problem is that Saddam is preventing adequate food and medicine from reaching those groups and regions that most actively oppose him.

Mr. Speaker, Saddam Hussein remains a lethal adversary who has repeatedly sought to circumvent international sanctions and has tried to divert humanitarian aid into military strategic programs. While it is entirely appropriate for the American people to care about the pain inflicted upon the people of Iraq, lifting the sanctions will not alleviate the suffering. We must not be naive, sanctions must remain in force.

DENIAL OF JUSTICE

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the denial of justice is one of the most egregious fronts to all of democracy, and I can tell all my colleagues that the verdict in the Amadou Diallo police case puts justice on trial.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my voice with that of countless others who are crying out for justice not just for Amadou Diallo but for justice to roll throughout America like a mighty stream. For as long as there is no justice, there can be no peace. The denial of justice for one is a threat to justice for all. No justice, no peace.

This case is troublesome, Mr. Speaker, because it reinforces for many people in this country the feeling that there is a dual system of justice which further divides the Nation. And we know that a Nation, like a house, divided cannot stand.

So I say let us stand together for justice. No justice, no peace.

ANOTHER CHILD LOST TO GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this morning I rise with a heavy heart. Yesterday, another child, another baby, lost her life to gun violence. This sad day, this great tragedy is made worse by the fact that this little girl was killed by another child.

How long will we tolerate gun violence? How long will we tolerate children killing children? Mr. Speaker, how long will it take for this House to demonstrate raw courage and pass real gun control legislation.

This morning, as we take a moment to consider our failure and to grieve this family's loss, we must not forget to take the time out to teach our children the way of peace, the way of nonviolence, to teach them the way of love.

SOCIAL SECURITY EARNINGS LIMIT PUNISHES SENIOR CITIZENS

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about Meredith T. Jones. She is one of 48,000 Georgians who has found out that being 65 is not as old as she thought it was. She has great health, she has great energy and enthusiasm, particularly with the kids out of the house. So she wants to go to work.

Miss Jones gets a job, feeling good about it, and then comes the IRS. And she has found, like so many other senior citizens, that because she is over 65 that she will lose $1 in Social Security benefits for every $3 she earns.

Yet, if she works, she is healthier, she is happier, she is more independent. But the IRS does not recognize that and wants to penalize Miss Jones and 48,000 other Georgia seniors because they are working.

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The Social Security earnings limitation is unfair. It hurts seniors. Republicans have a plan to restore fairness and provide relief for seniors so that they can earn a good living and enjoy productive retirement years without being penalized by the IRS. Mr. Speaker, we need to pass the Social Security earnings limitation.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, in just 25 years the number of seniors in California will nearly double, from 3.4 million to 6.4 million, but the limited prescription drug benefit that the Republicans have proposed would leave nearly half of those seniors behind.

Low-income drug benefit plans include seniors who are considered middle class if they earn between $15,000 and $50,000 a year. These plans ignore the fact that due to the high costs of prescription drugs, many seniors must choose between buying food and buying medicine. That is not right.

Mr. Speaker, in the case of Ivera and Roy Cobb, residents of my district, paying for medications that they both need is absolutely impossible. Roy goes without some of his prescription drugs so that Ivera can have her medications.

The Republican leadership must stop dragging its feet and must enact a meaningful prescription drug benefit that will eliminate price discrimination against our seniors.

OUTRAGE OVER THE SHOOTING AND VERDICT IN THE CASE OF AMADOU DIALLO

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my outrage over the shooting and subsequent verdict in the case of Amadou Diallo, Mr. Diallo, an innocent young African immigrant who came to the United States aspiring for a better life. Plainclothes officers who belong to an overaggressive street crime unit were supposed to be looking for an armed rapist.

Mr. Speaker, was that rapist Amadou Diallo? No. He was simply a black man going home after a long day's work. The officers approached Amadou, and what happened is not completely clear. But in the end, the unarmed young man's body lay in front of his vestibule caught in a hailstorm of 41 bullets.

The reason, the police said, they thought that a wallet was a gun; although he was left-handed, and the wallet was not anywhere near the left hand. A senseless death. But what is even more disturbing was the jury's verdict, which acquitted all the officers of all charges, ranging from second-degree murder to negligent homicide.

Mr. Speaker, let me say we must call upon the Justice Department to investigate this case so that the deepening fear between minorities and the police who are supposed to protect them will end.

CITIZENS' FREEDOM TO WORK ACT

(Mr. GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on the floor today we will be considering the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. It allows seniors to work, continue to work without affecting their Social Security.

It seems hard to believe that our tax law would actually punish people for working. I am pleased that my colleagues on the Republican side after 6 years have finally decided to help seniors who want to continue working. This is the first we have had a clean vote on this issue.

These are the very same seniors, the ones who cannot afford their medication or their prescription because our Medicare system does not cover it. I am glad that we are actually going to let them now work and earn that money so they can pay for their prescriptions, because this Congress has not passed a bill on that.

Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that approximately 45 percent of seniors have no prescription benefit. These are the seniors who choose every month between buying food, paying their bills, or buying their medication. Some have to buy their medication but skip days just to make it longer.

I am disappointed that this Congress has not moved aggressively on prescription medication for seniors. But at least by passing this bill, we will let them continue to work so they can afford their medication.

FEDERAL INTERVENTION REGARDING THE CASE OF AMADOU DIALLO

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as crime has increased, police have been given freer and freer rein. It is time to reign them in. That is the lesson of the New York City Diallo case. It is difficult to fault a racially integrated jury, but they have written only the first chapter. There are at least three more chapters to be written before we know who is at fault.

Mr. Speaker, Chapter Number 2 must be written by the Justice Department. This is a classic case for Federal intervention, a horrendous police response resulting in the death of an innocent resident.

There are, of course, no appeals in the criminal process. This case calls for a rapid response from the Justice Department. A civil rights investigation, as provided by law, is a vital check in a Federal system.

Chapter 3 in this case must be written with a civil court suit. Even if a police attack is deemed not criminal, no civil society would condone such a response.

Finally, there is a fourth chapter; and we must write that chapter. It should be entitled ''Do not send poorly

trained police into our communities to protect us. They are a menace.''

VIOLATION OF CIVIL RIGHTS OF MR. DIALLO

(Mr. MEEKS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, there is an open wound in New York this morning. That wound was caused by a decision that sends a message that the police can fire 41 bullets at an unarmed man of color as he enters his own home.

A healing of this wound could only happen if the Justice Department conducts a thorough investigation of the violation of Mr. Diallo's civil rights.

In addition, they must relentlessly evaluate and find just solutions to the patterns and practices of the New York City Police Department since, clearly, the city's leadership and its mayor and police chief find the police conduct to be okay.

If New York City is to heal, the message must be said that all human life, no matter what race, creed or color, is valuable.

Mr. Speaker, the Justice Department is the only doctor available today that can help us heal the wound in the City of New York. To the City of New York, I say, we are the second chapter to that. We must arm ourselves with the ballot and make sure that we send our message loudly and clearly in November.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES BEYOND MEANS OF MILLIONS OF AMERICANS

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, Americans already pay more for pharmaceuticals; yet prescription drug prices continue to rise that are well beyond the means of millions of Americans.

Seniors are often forced to choose between medication, food, and daily living. Should seniors have to suffer because they cannot afford overly priced drugs?

I have held four prescription drug surveys in my district which compared prices at different stores of the 12 most commonly used drugs by seniors. The surveys revealed that independent mom-and-pop pharmacies, such as Oliger's, offer lower prices than the same medicines that are charged by drugstore chains.

Many changes are needed to bring prices down. One factor should not be discussed. Large retail chains add to the problem of high drug prices because they routinely charge more than the mom-and-pop pharmacies. Meanwhile, it is time for Medicare prescription drug benefits to take the economic pressure off senior citizens.

SENIOR CITIZENS FREEDOM TO WORK ACT

(Mr. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, we should reward work, not punish work. We should honor citizens who work, not tax them. That is why I urge the House today to pass a bill to let seniors work without losing any Social Security benefits.

It is unfair under present law that 800,000 of our seniors in America lose $1 in Social Security benefits for every $3 they earn. The Seniors Citizens Freedom to Work Act deserves our support today. Then, in the days ahead, this Congress should move forward to use our surplus to protect Social Security and Medicare and we should fight to bring down the high cost of prescription drugs for our seniors.

Our seniors have made this a better country. They have earned our support. They deserve our respect and our vote.

MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE IN NEW YORK CITY

(Mr. OWENS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the polls are showing in New York State that the overwhelming majority of the citizens of New York think that there was a miscarriage of justice in the verdict on the Amadou Diallo killing trial.

Black and white together are demonstrating in the streets of New York against this outrage. Criminally negligent homicide was obvious. Forty-one bullets were fired; 19 in the body after the body was on the ground. This problem of miscarriage of justice in the criminal justice system, unfortunately, is a nationwide problem. It is not only a New York problem.

In Los Angeles, the police are continuing to confess to 20 years of planting evidence on suspects and convicting people wrongly. In New Jersey, they have admitted to systemic racial profiling. Illinois has just stopped the death penalty from moving forward because 13 of 25 inmates on Death Row were found to be innocent.

Two million people are in prison in this Nation. Most of them are minorities. Justice for minorities is a national issue. Justice for minorities is also an international human rights issue.

We are violating human rights on a massive scale. This situation deserves the attention of the Congress of the United States.

ENDING THE EARNINGS LIMIT

(Mr. KUYKENDALL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 5, which is coming up later, the Senior Citizens Freedom to Work Act. It is important legislation for our seniors.

Seniors between the ages of 65 and 69 currently will lose a dollar's worth of their Social Security benefits for every $3 they earned over $17,000. Senior citizens should not be penalized for working. It is unconscionable for this Government to take away these hard-earned benefits.

During the Great Depression, unemployment exceeded 25 percent and wages were plummeting. In 1935, it made sense to create a disincentive for older workers in order to create jobs for new workers, but this policy is no longer needed.

More than 800,000 working senior citizens lose part or all of their Social Security benefits due to this obsolete provision. Today, we will have an opportunity to remove the earnings limit.

I am glad that the President is on board and that he will be able to sign this legislation after we pass it. Ending the earnings limit is good policy for America. It is good for our seniors; it is the right thing to do.

TIME TO RESTORE LOST FAITH IN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

(Mr. RUSH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago Amadou Diallo was shot to death in the vestibule of his Bronx apartment.

Last week, the four New York City police officers who shot and killed unarmed Amadou Diallo were found not guilty of any crime related to his death and walked out of the Albany courthouse as free men.

Sadly, Diallo's death is the final consequence of a city police system where law enforcement officers are allowed to run amuck.

This dismal loss of life just highlights the need to rein in unchecked police officers and curb reckless, aggressive law enforcement activities. We need better police training, training that addresses diversity and sensitivity issues, training that includes conflict management, how to diffuse a situation without using a gun.

Maybe then we can restore some of the lost faith and trust in law enforcement officers and in the criminal justice system. We have to hold law enforcement officers accountable for their actions. There can be no more Amadou Diallo-like deaths in this Nation.

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MAKING IN ORDER AT ANY TIME CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5, SENIOR CITIZENS' FREEDOM TO WORK ACT OF 1999

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order at any time to consider in the House without intervention of any point of order the bill (H.R. 5) to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the

earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age; the bill be considered as read for amendment; the amendment recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill be considered as adopted; the bill, as amended, be debatable for 2 hours, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and the previous question be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I will not object. I strongly support repeal of the Social Security earnings limit and do not intend to unduly delay action on this bill. In fact, repeal of the earnings limit has been part of the comprehensive Social Security reform legislation that the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) and I have introduced in the last two Congresses.

However, I rise in reservation to this unanimous consent request to express my disappointment that we are considering legislation that will increase Social Security benefits without even discussing the long-term financial challenges facing Social Security. We should have spent the last year working on a comprehensive plan to strengthen Social Security that would restore solvency, reduce unfunded liabilities, give workers greater control of their retirement income, improve the safety net, and reward work; but we, both the President and Congress, have ignored our opportunity to deal with the long-term challenges facing Social Security.

If we are going to pass this legislation increasing costs outside of the context of reform, we should at least be talking about ways to bring more attention to the challenges that remain. The gentleman from Arizona and I had hoped to offer an amendment regarding the recent recommendations of the Social Security advisory board which would more directly confront Congress with the true scope of Social Security's financing challenges. Our amendment would have made a modest step in advancing the discussion about the challenges facing Social Security among policymakers and the public.

Last November, the Social Security Advisory Board Technical Panel released a report outlining a variety of recommendations about how we measure the problems facing the Social Security trust fund, how we talk about those problems and criteria for evaluating reform proposals. Our amendment would have taken the good work of the Technical Panel to encourage a more honest and accurate discussion of the challenges facing Social Security.

The Technical Panel report suggested that the challenges facing Social Security may be even greater than reported. While there has been a lot of discussion about the possibility that a stronger economy will reduce the shortfalls facing Social Security, the Technical Panel warned us that the projected shortfall could increase as life expectancy increases faster than expected.

The panel also made a variety of useful recommendations about additional information that should be included in the trustees' report regarding the size of the unfunded liability and other information illustrating the nature of the problem in greater detail. This type of information would improve the quality of the Social Security debate tremendously, because the facts of the debate would be more clearly established and stated.

Finally, the panel made several recommendations for the evaluation of Social Security reform proposals. In particular the panel suggested that we should look beyond simply determining whether or not a plan restores trust fund solvency and consider other criteria that are as important as, if not more important than restoring solvency over the 75-year period such as the effect on the rest of the budget.

Unfortunately, today we do not have time to discuss any of these issues. I would respectfully encourage the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means and the subcommittee on Social Security to conduct hearings on these recommendations so that they may receive the attention they deserve. I also hope the Social Security trustees seriously consider all of the recommendations of the technical panel.

Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) with whom I have worked closely on strengthening the future of Social Security, a Member who has been a leading advocate of comprehensive Social Security reform legislation that repeals the earnings limit and ensures that Social Security will be strong for our children and grandchildren.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Texas yielding to me under his reservation. I will be very brief. Let me just say I feel very privileged today and am proud to be associated with the remarks that the gentleman from Texas just made. The gentleman from Texas has been and continues to be a leader in the fight to have a responsible Social Security reform. The integrity and the unwavering commitment that he has shown for preserving Social Security for future generations are worthy of the respect of all of us in this body.

I am a longtime advocate of repealing the earnings limit. It is a remnant of depression-era policies that have no place in a 21st century economy. I have supported similar measures in the past and as the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) has said, it is a cornerstone of the Kolbe-Stenholm Social Security reform legislation.

However, I am disappointed that Congress is passing this important reform without at least confronting the impact the change is going to have on the trust fund. Like it or not, election year or not, sooner or later this House, this Congress, this Nation must address the financial crisis that looms over Social Security. The longer we wait, the tougher the choices are going to be.

The legislation we pursue today must become one part of a comprehensive reform package. There are no shortage of reform options. There is the one that I mentioned myself that the gentleman from Texas and I have proposed. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) have another one. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH), those are just a few of the reform proposals that have been offered in this House but have yet to come to the floor, have yet to be really debated. What we lack is will and leadership in this country and we have seen that at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue.

We should pass this bill today. But I do not think we should be content with this effort. We must recognize that we have an obligation to preserve Social Security for our children and our grandchildren. Mr. Speaker, only real reform will do that.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), the chairman of the subcommittee dealing with Social Security.

Mr. SHAW. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me under his reservation. I would like to compliment the gentleman from Texas as well as the gentleman from Arizona and many more Members of this body for having a genuine desire and actually having stepped forward with regard to some genuine steps to prolong the life of Social Security and even to bring it about as a permanent program that would no longer be concerned about the amount of funding.

The gentleman has taken some bold steps, and he is to be complimented on that. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), the chairman of the full committee, and I have also put a plan on the table that has a great deal in common with the Stenholm-Kolbe plan, and we had hoped to bring this forward.

History tells us, however, that there is no genuine Social Security reform without the inclusion of the President. Every single major change that has been made in Social Security has been made with the encouragement and the joinder of the White House. Also, it would be wrong and extremely difficult for one party to reform Social Security without being joined by the other party. We have sent out many, many feelers to the White House. I know the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) has been down and talked personally with the President. He is well aware of your plan, and he is well aware of our plan.

We have also spoken with members of the leadership on the Democrat side and we have also spoken to organized labor and various senior groups. We find now that everything seems to be getting down into presidential politics and to actually quote the President from an interview he had, I think it was a Wall Street Journal some weeks ago, he said that this reform would be left to the next President.

I regret that. But I think that that is a fact of life and it is something that we are going to be faced with. I look to next year, perhaps we could still do it this year. I would like to reach out to the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI) and to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) and to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) and all those who want to reform Social Security.

We are going to have more hearings. We are not going to waste the rest of the year. However, I will say this, and I think this is tremendously important. Part of Social Security reform has been to lock away the Social Security surplus so it cannot be spent. The House has done that. Also, an important part is a bill that we have today, and that is to get rid of this shameful earnings penalty that should have been done away with many, many years ago and was not.

This is a great day, and it is a day for us to celebrate that we are coming together, we have a piece of Social Security reform. This is a very important piece for our seniors. I compliment the gentleman from Texas, and I look forward to continuing to work with him for the rest of the year.

We are going to have hearings; we are going to have hearings on this and many issues pertaining to Social Security between now and the end of this term, and we all will come back next term and really put it away. We are not wasting time, we are going ahead with the hearing process.

However, we need a coming together, we need a joinder, we need to get the presidential election behind us. I would hope whoever the President is, the next President is, that that President, that he will be anxious, willing and reach out to the House and the Senate to reform Social Security for all time.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. STENHOLM. Further reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I will take just a moment, but I would like to commend the gentleman from Texas and the gentleman from Arizona. I looked at their proposal. It has been out there now for a year and a half. I have to say it is a very credible proposal. It is probably one of the most realistic proposals that we have before us.

The fact that you have raised this before this matter is brought to the floor is timely, and I am very pleased that you have done so. I would want to say, however, that both the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) have a proposal, the President has a proposal, and perhaps there will be a time in the next few months where we can bring a number of them, all three, four or five of them, whatever number there are, together to begin to discuss them. Obviously the solving of the Social Security deficit problem is the number one problem we are all facing. But I appreciate the fact that the two gentlemen have raised this issue.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, and I will conclude by this observation. I would very muchly associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Florida. He has been a true worker in this endeavor. He points out some of the pitfalls and the difficulties that we would have this year. But by the same token, and I will have more to say about this in the 2 hours of general debate, I would hope that everybody would recognize that there are those on this side of the aisle that are prepared to reach out in the hands of friendship and bipartisan work to deal with the tough questions and that how we handle this debate politically on both sides of the aisle can again do the kind of damage to the process of which I know the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), and the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI) do not wish to see happen. So I would hope that we could cushion and caution and soften our words as we debate today about this issue since there is unanimous agreement that this issue needs to happen.

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It is the context in which we bring this reservation up.

Mr. Speaker, with those comments, I encourage Members to unanimously support this very good piece of legislation today.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

SENIOR CITIZENS' FREEDOM TO WORK ACT OF 1999

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the unanimous consent request of earlier today, I call up the bill (H.R. 5) to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the bill is considered read for amendment.

The text of H.R. 5 is as follows:

H.R. 5

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act of 1999''.

SEC. 2. ELIMINATION OF EARNINGS TEST FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ATTAINED RETIREMENT AGE.

Section 203 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 403) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)(1), by striking ''the age of seventy'' and inserting ''retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))'';

(2) in paragraphs (1)(A) and (2) of subsection (d), by striking ''the age of seventy'' each place it appears and inserting ''retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))'';

(3) in subsection (f)(1)(B), by striking ''was age seventy or over'' and inserting ''was at or above retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))'';

(4) in subsection (f)(3)—

(A) by striking ''33⅓ percent'' and all that follows through ''any other individual,'' and inserting ''50 percent of such individual's earnings for such year in excess of the product of the exempt amount as determined under paragraph (8),''; and

(B) by striking ''age 70'' and inserting ''retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))'';

(5) in subsection (h)(1)(A), by striking ''age 70'' each place it appears and inserting ''retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))''; and

(6) in subsection (j)—

(A) in the heading, by striking ''Age Seventy'' and inserting ''Retirement Age''; and

(B) by striking ''seventy years of age'' and inserting ''having attained retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))''.

SEC. 3. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS ELIMINATING THE SPECIAL EXEMPT AMOUNT FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ATTAINED RETIREMENT AGE.

(a) UNIFORM EXEMPT AMOUNT.—Section 203(f)(8)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 403(f)(8)(A)) is amended by striking ''the new exempt amounts (separately stated for individuals described in subparagraph (D) and for other individuals) which are to be applicable'' and inserting ''a new exempt amount which shall be applicable''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 203(f)(8)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 403(f)(8)(B)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking ''Except'' and all that follows through ''whichever'' and inserting ''The exempt amount which is applicable for each month of a particular taxable year shall be whichever'';

(2) in clauses (i) and (ii), by striking ''corresponding'' each place it appears; and

(3) in the last sentence, by striking ''an exempt amount'' and inserting ''the exempt amount''.

(c) REPEAL OF BASIS FOR COMPUTATION OF SPECIAL EXEMPT AMOUNT.—Section 203(f)(8)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 403(f)(8)(D)) is repealed.

SEC. 4. ADDITIONAL CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) ELIMINATION OF REDUNDANT REFERENCES TO RETIREMENT AGE.—Section 203 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 403) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), in the last sentence, by striking ''nor shall any deduction'' and all that follows and inserting ''nor shall any deduction be made under this subsection from any widow's or widower's insurance benefit if the widow, surviving divorced wife, widower, or surviving divorced husband involved became entitled to such benefit prior to attaining age 60.''; and

(2) in subsection (f)(1), by striking clause (D) and inserting the following: ''(D) for which such individual is entitled to widow's or widower's insurance benefits if such individual became so entitled prior to attaining age 60,''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING AMOUNT OF INCREASE ON ACCOUNT OF DELAYED RETIREMENT.—Section 202(w)(2)(B)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 402(w)(2)(B)(ii)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''either''; and

(2) by striking ''or suffered deductions under section 203(b) or 203(c) in amounts equal to the amount of such benefit''.

(c) PROVISIONS RELATING TO EARNINGS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN DETERMINING SUBSTANTIAL GAINFUL ACTIVITY OF BLIND INDIVIDUALS.—The second sentence of section 223(d)(4) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 423(d)(4)) is amended by striking ''if section 102 of the Senior Citizens' Right to Work Act of 1996 had not been enacted'' and inserting the following: ''if the amendments to section 203 made by section 102 of the Senior Citizens' Right to Work Act of 1996 and by the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act of 1999 had not been enacted''.

SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments and repeals made by this Act shall apply with respect to taxable years ending after December 31, 1998.

SPEAKER pro tempore. The amendment printed in the bill is adopted.

The text of H.R. 5, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 5

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act of 2000''.

SEC. 2. ELIMINATION OF EARNINGS TEST FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ATTAINED RETIREMENT AGE.

Section 203 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 403) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)(1), by striking ''the age of seventy'' and inserting ''retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))'';

(2) in paragraphs (1)(A) and (2) of subsection (d), by striking ''the age of seventy'' each place it appears and inserting ''retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))'';

(3) in subsection (f)(1)(B), by striking ''was age seventy or over'' and inserting ''was at or above retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))'';

(4) in subsection (f)(3)—

(A) by striking ''33⅓ percent'' and all that follows through ''any other individual,'' and inserting ''50 percent of such individual's earnings for such year in excess of the product of the exempt amount as determined under paragraph (8),''; and

(B) by striking ''age 70'' and inserting ''retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))'';

(5) in subsection (h)(1)(A), by striking ''age 70'' each place it appears and inserting ''retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))''; and

(6) in subsection (j)—

(A) in the heading, by striking ''Age Seventy'' and inserting ''Retirement Age''; and

(B) by striking ''seventy years of age'' and inserting ''having attained retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))''.

SEC. 3. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS ELIMINATING THE EXEMPT AMOUNT FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ATTAINED RETIREMENT AGE.

(a) UNIFORM EXEMPT AMOUNT.—Section 203(f)(8)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 403(f)(8)(A)) is amended by striking ''the new exempt amounts (separately stated for individuals described in subparagraph (D) and for other individuals) which are to be applicable'' and inserting ''a new exempt amount which shall be applicable''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 203(f)(8)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 403(f)(8)(B)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking ''Except'' and all that follows through ''whichever'' and inserting ''The exempt amount which is applicable for each month of a particular taxable year shall be whichever'';

(2) in clause (i), by striking ''corresponding'';

(3) in clause (ii), in the matter preceding subclause (I), by striking ''corresponding'' and all that follows through ''individuals)'' and inserting ''exempt amount which is in effect with respect to months in the taxable year ending after 1993 and before 1995 with respect to individuals who have not attained retirement age (as defined in section 216(l))'';

(4) in subclause (II) of clause (ii), by striking ''2000'' and all that follows and inserting ''1992,''; and

(5) in the last sentence, by striking ''an exempt amount'' and inserting ''the exempt amount''.

(c) REPEAL OF BASIS FOR COMPUTATION OF EXEMPT AMOUNT AFFECTING INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ATTAINED RETIREMENT AGE.—Section 203(f)(8)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 403(f)(8)(D)) is repealed.

SEC. 4. ADDITIONAL CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) ELIMINATION OF REDUNDANT REFERENCES TO RETIREMENT AGE.—Section 203 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 403) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), in the last sentence, by striking ''nor shall any deduction'' and all that follows and inserting ''nor shall any deduction be made under this subsection from any widow's or widower's insurance benefit if the widow, surviving divorced wife, widower, or surviving divorced husband involved became entitled to such benefit prior to attaining age 60.''; and

(2) in subsection (f)(1), by striking clause (D) and inserting the following: ''(D) for which such individual is entitled to widow's or widower's insurance benefits if such individual became so entitled prior to attaining age 60,''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING AMOUNT OF INCREASE ON ACCOUNT OF DELAYED RETIREMENT.—Section 202(w)(2)(B)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 402(w)(2)(B)(ii)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''either''; and

(2) by striking ''or suffered deductions under section 203(b) or 203(c) in amounts equal to the amount of such benefit''.

(c) PROVISIONS RELATING TO EARNINGS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN DETERMINING SUBSTANTIAL GAINFUL ACTIVITY OF BLIND INDIVIDUALS.—The second sentence of section 223(d)(4) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 423(d)(4)) is amended by striking ''if section 102 of the Senior Citizens' Right to Work Act of 1996 had not been enacted'' and inserting the following: ''if the amendments to section 203 made by section 102 of the Senior Citizens' Right to Work Act of 1996 and by the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act of 2000 had not been enacted''.

SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The amendments and repeals made by this Act shall apply with respect to taxable years ending after December 31, 1999.

(b) SPECIAL RULE APPLICABLE TO INDIVIDUALS WHO ATTAIN NORMAL RETIREMENT AGE DURING THE FIRST TAXABLE YEAR ENDING AFTER DECEMBER 31, 1999.—Sections 202 and 203 of the Social Security Act, as in effect immediately prior to the amendments and repeals made by this Act, shall apply to any individual who attains retirement age (as defined in section 216(l) of such Act) during the first taxable year ending after December 31, 1999 (and to any person receiving benefits under title II of the Social Security Act on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of such individual), but only with respect to earnings for so much of such taxable year as precedes the month in which such individual attains retirement age (as so defined).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI) each will control 1 hour.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today is an exciting day for me personally, and it is a great day for the hundreds of thousands of working seniors across this country. It is the culmination of my personal 29-year effort to repeal the earnings penalty.

I launched this effort as one of the first bills that I introduced after being sworn in in 1971. The reason then to repeal the earnings penalty is the same as it is today: the earnings penalty is simply wrong. I also thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON); the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security; and the Speaker for their tireless efforts on this bill.

The Social Security earnings penalty, like the marriage tax penalty, like the death tax, like the capital gains tax, like the tax on savings, like the alternative minimum tax and so many other taxes, is simply unfair and wrong. It is unfair; it is backwards. The earnings penalty actually cuts Social Security benefits for many working seniors over the age of 65, and it discourages them from working. It increases their effective tax rate to the highest percentage of a lifetime for many of them, and that is wrong.

Now, why in the world would we want to discourage any American, whether they are 17 or 67, from working?

Today this Congress will once again do the right thing and repeal the earnings penalty for those hard-working and deserving Americans. I am proud to be a part of a Congress that fixes what is wrong and does what is right.

It was right to balance the budget and to pay down the debt, and we did that. It was right to strengthen Medicare, and we did that. It was right to cut taxes for families and to promote higher education and expand health care, and we did that. It was right to fix the broken welfare system so that Americans can discover the freedom of work, independence and the power of responsibility, and we did that. It was right to reform the IRS, and we did that. It was right to expand educational opportunities for school children and give more flexibility to parents, teachers and local school boards, and we did that. It was right to stop the raid on the Social Security trust fund and protect every dime of Social Security from being spent on other programs, and we did that.

Now it is right to repeal the earnings penalty for working seniors. They deserve to be treated fairly. After all these years, it is heartening that this effort is finally bipartisan and the President will sign this bill. Clearly it is the right thing to do.

The Social Security earnings penalty punishes seniors who choose to keep working. More seniors are choosing to work past their retirement for many reasons: for their own financial needs, because Social Security benefits for most are not adequate by themselves to support retirement; to help their families or their grandchildren through school; and for their own personal fulfillment. The point is, Americans are living longer now and older Americans can work, they want to work, and they should not be punished by an outdated law if they choose to work.

In addition, repealing the earnings penalty now will unleash the productivity of one of the most experienced and talented workforces in this country at a time when our growing economy needs it. This is clearly a win-win for everyone, which is why the bill now enjoys widespread bipartisan support.

In summary, repealing the earnings penalty is based on the fundamental principles of fairness and freedom. Seniors should be free to work without penalty and treated fairly by a program they paid into all of their lives. Working seniors across this country have waited long enough; and they deserve the action now, and they will get it now.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), certainly the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and members of the committee, and also the two prime sponsors of this bill, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON). They have obviously done a great job in getting cosponsors of this bill and explaining it to Members of this institution.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to reiterate some of the words of the chairman of the committee. The earnings test is obviously something that has been misunderstood over the years. It is basically a penalty on those senior citizens that have earned their Social Security benefit but want to stay in the workforce beyond the age of 65.

The fact that we have had this earnings test actually has deterred over 800,000 Americans a year from the workforce. In fact, we have had some studies done by a University of California San Diego professor that has said that this will actually, by eliminating the earnings test, increase the labor pool in America by 5 percent.

In addition, the Social Security Administration has estimated that the administration of the earnings test plus the delayed earnings credit essentially costs $100 to $150 million a year; and because of the earnings credit, we have seen errors in the range of $500,000 to $600,000 per year just in administering this program. As a result of that, it is obvious we should repeal it at this particular time.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope also as we talk about repealing this earnings test, which will be done, we not be unmindful of what the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) said in terms of some of the long-term issues of Social Security that I am sure all of us in this institution want to deal with.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) yesterday when we marked up this bill indicated he will be holding in the month of March, this month, some additional hearings dealing with poverty among women, the blind and the disabled, and I want to thank the gentleman for holding those hearings as well, because I think that will further the procession of making sure that we create incentives for work under the Social Security system for those that need to work and receive benefits at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, I urge an ''aye'' vote on this particular bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), the highly respected chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I obviously strongly support H.R. 5, legislation that would repeal the earnings penalty for hard-working seniors age 65 and over. Many seniors are shocked to learn that if they work past the age of 65 they may lose some or even all of their Social Security benefits. This is due to something called the Social Security ''earnings limit'' or ''earnings penalty.'' This rule has been in place since Social Security started in the 1930's, but that does not make it right.

Because of this rule, many older people left the workforce, making their jobs available for younger workers. That policy may have made sense during the Great Depression when those jobs were needed. However, that clearly does not apply today.

Today's economy needs the experience and ability of seniors; yet the earnings penalty has lived on. Seniors affected by this penalty lose an average of $8,000 in benefits per year. Nationwide, about 800,000 lost benefits just last year, and thousands more avoided losing benefits by cutting back on how much they worked in order to avoid this unfair penalty.

Some might recall that in 1996 we eased the earnings limit for seniors who reached the full retirement age. As a result, seniors aged 65 through 69 have been able to earn a bit more each year since then without experiencing the cut in their benefits. While that was a positive step, many of us have long felt that it was wrong to punish hard-working seniors, period, many of whom just want to work, and many of whom have to work.

Mr. Speaker, what message does the earnings penalty send? That the contributions of seniors are no longer needed? That seniors should head for the sidelines of the economy due to age alone? That seniors do not deserve the benefits that they paid for simply because they continue working? I do not think anybody in this chamber or in this Congress feels that way. That is why so many of us have expressed support for H.R. 5, this bipartisan bill before us today, that will eliminate this penalty for good.

A broad spectrum of business and senior groups, including the AARP, support this bill. They know it is good for seniors, it is good for business, and it is good for this country and its economy.

I congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON), the original sponsors of the bill. I want to congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER) for his years of tireless work in relaxing and now repealing this earnings penalty. The gentleman has been a personal testament to what hard-working seniors can do. The gentleman especially should be gratified that all of his years of hard work to repeal this unfair limit are paying off.

Mr. Speaker, eliminating the earnings penalty is the right thing for seniors who have spent a lifetime working for their Social Security benefits. They should get all the benefits they earn and that they have paid for. Today we are taking one major step closer to seeing that occur. I encourage the Senate to approve this legislation quickly so it can be signed into law as promised by the President.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. STARK).

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time and join in the accolades to those who have brought this bill to the floor today, which addresses a problem probably for 5 percent of the wealthiest beneficiaries under Social Security. It is a vestigial prohibition on getting retirement income. No other retirement plan denies that.

I was intrigued this morning as we had all of this bipartisan self-congratulation. The fact is that while we do this, there are partisan rumblings in attacking members of the Democratic Party for sometime in the past perhaps having voted against this procedure in another bill. So I would just as soon unmask for a while, in the most partisan way I can, the Republican charade, because while we are doing this, we are still denying under the Republican leadership the chance for the Patients' Bill of Rights bill to go forward.

It is a bill that was passed in a bipartisan way; yet it is being stalled by the Republicans.

Last year in October in the Committee on Ways and Means, in a bipartisan attempt to pass the Balanced Budget Act, we offered an amendment that would have given a discount on pharmaceutical drugs to every senior, a substantial discount, at no cost to the Federal Government, and every Republican voted to deny the seniors this opportunity to get a discount on their pharmaceutical drugs. So as we talk later today, I hope that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) will explain to me why that is a good bipartisan thing for the seniors in Florida to be denied a discount, and I hope the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) will come down and explain to us why he voted to deny seniors in Arizona a discount on their pharmaceutical drugs.

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Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON), a respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding time to me. I appreciate what he has been doing on this bill. I know he has been working on it for many, many years. We truly appreciate it coming up today.

Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago I introduced H.R. 5, the Freedom to Work Act. Yesterday, every member of the Committee on Ways and Means voted to send the bill to the floor to repeal the social security earnings penalty.

Under current law, our seniors age 65 to 69 can earn only $17,000 before they lose $1 in social security benefits for every $3 they earn. This limit is unfair, outdated, and bad for the economy. This obsolete social security earnings penalty must be eliminated.

As we all know, our seniors have earned social security benefits through a lifetime of contributions. They have worked for them, and they are entitled to their full benefits. It is their money, it is not Washington's money. It should not be taken away from them just because they choose to work after they reach normal retirement age.

The earnings penalty adversely affects 800,000 seniors who reach the normal retirement age. It discriminates against our senior citizens who must work in order to supplement their benefits. That is just not right. The earnings penalty is a Depression-era law whose time has long since come and gone. Today, with unemployment at record lows, seniors are needed in the work force, so the last thing we ought to do is discourage them from working.

Senior citizens who work not only lose a large percentage of their social security benefits today due to the earnings penalty, but they pay social security taxes, Medicare taxes, Federal taxes, and probably State income taxes, as well. Combined with the earnings penalty and these other taxes, our seniors may face a marginal tax rate as high as 80 percent.

The earnings penalty is complicated and difficult to understand. In addition, the earnings penalty is complex and costly to the Federal government to administer. For example, the earnings penalty is responsible for more than half of the social security overpayments.

The Social Security Administration estimates that administering the earnings penalty takes 1,200 people and costs $150 million a year. Repeal of the earnings penalty would allow our senior citizens to work more, the American economy would benefit from their experience and skills, and it does not cost anything.

According to the Social Security Administration actuaries, a repeal of the earnings penalty will not affect the social security trust fund. Two weeks ago, the President finally agreed to sign the bill. I am pleased that he has decided to help us fix this unfair penalty.

Mr. Speaker, I fought for freedom in two wars, Korea and Vietnam. I believe that freedom entitles our seniors the ability to work without penalty. America's seniors want, need, and deserve a repeal of this penalty.

Mr. MINETA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN).

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, as has been pointed out, last year almost 800,000 seniors had their social security benefits reduced because of this earnings test. Next year, over 600,000 seniors will be forced to defer their benefits because they had earnings over $17,000.

Today we are passing a commonsense change that allows seniors to be able to earn, be able to continue to work, and be able to collect their social security checks. As the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) pointed out, it will have no effect on the long-term solvency of social security.

For the first time, we allow seniors to continue to earn a paycheck without taking it out of their social security check. Seniors who want to continue working should be able to stay in the labor force without losing their hard-earned social security benefits. At a time with a tight labor market and historically low personal savings, it does not make sense to discourage our most experienced workers from staying productive. Yet, the earnings penalty amounts to a 33 percent marginal tax rate on work.

This change will particularly help women workers, who have historically had lower earnings and an uneven work history. Work for women becomes even more important, and they should not be penalized by the social security system.

Mr. Speaker, let me point out, as my friend, the gentleman from Texas, pointed out during an earlier discussion, yes, many of us would like to see comprehensive reform of our social security system. We should be doing that. But we should not stop making changes that are commonsense, that we can get done, such as removing the earnings test.

I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that the same logic should apply to Medicare. If we are unable to bring forward comprehensive Medicare reform, let us at least agree on prescription drugs. We know in a bipartisan way that we need to do that.

The example that we have used on this earnings test, a bipartisan agreement between the Democrats and the Republicans to move this bill, let us do the same on other issues that are important to all of our constituents.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding time to me, the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, who has labored so hard for this commonsense reform so greatly needed for so long.

History reminds us that Arizona's favorite son, Barry Goldwater, in the other Chamber, brought this idea forward long ago. I am so glad, in the spirit of bipartisanship now, that others in previous Congresses so reluctant to address this commonsense reform would join with us today for this landmark legislation.

Almost 20,000 seniors in Arizona, 1.1 million seniors nationwide, are being penalized because they choose to work, are being penalized because they bring to the workplace maturity and experience and energy.

Mr. Speaker, we need those experienced workers in our work force. One thing I have learned in representing the Sixth Congressional District of Arizona, with so many seniors, is that these folks have so much to contribute, so much to give, yes, as volunteers in retirement age, but also active in the work force. That is what they bring and that is what we celebrate today.

So again, we welcome the converts to this, and we are at long last addressing this issue. This is a great day for America's seniors, for all Americans, because today we throw off the yoke of unfairness: an important first step which we must follow in many other ways, but it begins here, it begins now, and we welcome the cooperation.

Mr. MINETA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, in 1996, I voted to increase the Social Security earnings limit to $30,000, effectively the year after next. In 1998, I voted to increase it even further, up to $39,000. So I am, of course, supportive when the Republican leadership finally gives us an opportunity to take the cap off entirely. This bill may help as many as 5 percent of our most successful seniors.

But amid all the self-congratulatory back-slapping that we see here today, let us be sure to understand what this bill is and what it is not. It represents well-justified relief for the top 5 percent. It represents top-down reform, but it does nothing for the 95 percent of the remaining Americans who rely on social security. It does nothing for those seniors whose health does not permit them to work, and who would benefit more from getting access to prescription drugs and an end to the discrimination they face with huge prices they are charged by the pharmaceutical companies.

This legislation is very significant to older Americans who have the capacity to keep earning more than $30,000 a year, but in terms of overall reform of the Social Security system, to preserve it for future generations, it is a very modest change.

Of all the changes that we can make in this Congress, interestingly enough, this is one of the few that is politically painless. It represents essentially an eat-dessert-first approach to reform. Congress should be grappling with the tough choices that we face on how to extend the solvency of Social Security for all Americans and for future generations of Americans, not just the politically easy step that primarily puts more benefits in the pockets of the most successful seniors, coincidentally, during an election year.

I would say this morning, better a reform for 5 percent than no reform at all. But for most Americans who are counting on Social Security, this change makes no real difference in their lives. It is long past time that this Congress got about doing something for them.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me. I thank the chairman for his hard work on this bill. Since 1986 the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), the chairman of our committee, has been working on this product, joined with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), now, and with the leadership of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON), we see victory today for senior citizens.

But even in light of victory, we have to have a little bit of a political zinger put on the floor by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT). He has to drill a little needle there into this debate, rather than celebrate the rewards of senior citizens across America.

At 65, under this policy that was maintained by 40 years of Democratic leadership, we were telling seniors, get out of the way, you are too old and you are too tired. Modern-day America recognizes, and particularly our party recognizes, that seniors 65 are in the prime of their lives.

My father at 77 years of age retired as a principal of a high school in Lake Worth, Florida. He contributed to the children of Palm Beach County schools, and he did it because, first and foremost, he loved children, and secondly, he had a lot to give to our community.

But no, for many, many years they blocked the attempt to reform this crazy notion of retirement at 65, or penalizing, should one work.

Mr. Speaker, let us face reality. Just like social security predicts that more retirees than active workers will exist in 10 or 20 years, so will be the notion of less workers available for active duty. This bill provides relief for the baby boomers who will retire to stay engaged and stay working.

So today, rather than taking political shots across the aisle, let us join hands in this bipartisan spirit. But I must insist on commending the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), because he has been working on this when he was in the minority, and finally now has had comity from the other side of the aisle to bring this measure to the floor; the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) in the same period, and again, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) from my district.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and I have probably the 6th and 7th oldest Medicare recipient districts in the Nation. So today I join my good friend, the gentleman from south Florida, in saluting our retirees who worked so hard to pay to run the government of the United States of America.

Mr. MINETA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON), the original sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be here today, along with my good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON), bringing this bill forward.

This is something that I have been for for a long time. I used to do tax returns for a living, and saw firsthand the impact this had on people. This is something that probably made sense back in the thirties, but its time has past. It is time for us to get rid of this penalty, which causes these people to pay some of the highest marginal tax rates in this country.

My district is a very rural district. We are having a lot of trouble out in the farm part of the district. In the cities, St. Cloud is a big city, and Moorhead, which is a middle-sized city, or Aurora, which is a small city, the problems we are having is getting enough workers to fill the jobs that we have out there.

In this pool of workers that are being penalized, we have a lot of people that have talent that want to work, and this is going to free up a lot of folks to do what they want to do. It makes sense.

One other thing I want to focus on. One of the things this will solve is, part of the problem our farmers are having is with their being taxed on the rent that they are charging for their farmland. The IRS, because apparently one word was left out of a statute, are forcing farmers to pay self-employment tax on their rent. These are the only businesspeople in America that are doing this. If you are in the real estate business, if you are a CPA, if you rent a building or land to your kids or to anybody else, you do not pay self-employment tax, but farmers do.

If they pay this self-employment tax, they can also be subject to the self-employment tax penalty that we are getting rid of here today, so this is going to solve part of the problem.

We appreciate the chairman's leadership on this issue, and we hope the gentleman would look at the other part of the problem, because it really is crazy, what we are doing to farmers. They have tremendous pressure on them now. In my district, none of them are making any money.

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The last thing they need is to have another tax put on them. So we would appreciate a look at that.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. SHAW. The gentleman has brought up a very sensitive point.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The time of the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) has expired.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield briefly to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW).

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) brought up a point that we are waiting for the Commissioner of Social Security to reply to, because he has raised a very good point and something that our committee intends to address. I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON) for yielding to me.

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) for yielding me this time. It is sort of too bad that certain people on the other side take a partisan view of this thing. It is not partisan; it is bipartisan. It makes sense. The timing is right. There is overwhelming support for this.

When I started to work in the early 1950s, 47 percent of the people over 65 were working. Today, only 17 percent. That is not very good.

I always think as the speed of light and communication and data processing is sort of inevitable, so is the fact that people are living longer.

I have a mother who is 99 years old, born in 1900. When she was born, the actual actuarial age of women was

about 47. That was the life span. Today, it is in the 70s. Tremendous difference.

We need able people. Warren Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway has a lady over 90 years old working in his company. When companies get somebody good, they want to hold on to them. And people who work longer, they live longer, they feel healthy and want to make a contribution. So anything standing in the way, which is this double taxation of their Social Security benefits, is wrong and is not fair and it will be scrapped, and should be scrapped, if H.R. 5 goes through.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say one other thing. There was a lady called Marijo Gorney, and she has worked around here for 35 years. She is now retired. Mr. Speaker, this was her baby. This was her concept. She pushed it. She is now retired; and I hope she is watching this, because a lot of the success of this program is due to her.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) a member of the committee.

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my voice in support of repeal of the earnings test, and I am certainly pleased that the Committee on Ways and Means acted so quickly, once President Clinton urged us to do so on February 14. I only wish that at the committee level we could be as accommodating on some other issues.

The retirement test is clearly a provision which has outlived its usefulness. With senior citizens living longer and longer, we should encourage those who want to continue to work, rather than discourage that effort. I do wish that we had the ability in committee to make some additional changes, however, such as offering the government pension offset that was sponsored by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON).

Mr. Speaker, this unfair provision affects the spousal benefits of State and local workers and was enacted in response to a Supreme Court case that dealt with an entirely different problem. It is now time for that provision to be repealed as well, or at least significantly modified.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good bipartisan bill. I hope it reaches the President's desk soon, and I hope it will serve as an example that reaching an agreement when we can is far better for the American people than producing what is oftentimes so much unnecessary conflict in this institution. I am pleased to lend my name in support of this initiative. It is long overdue, but the point is that we are acting on it today. I think that there is an opportunity here for a lot of people to take some satisfaction from this initiative.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS).

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), my friend and the distinguished chairman, for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise, obviously, in strong support of H.R. 5. As just one of many on this side of the aisle who has worked hard to eliminate the archaic and punitive Social Security earnings test since coming to Congress 12 years ago, I am delighted that today we are finally going to right this wrong.

I represent many seniors in southwest Florida who have eagerly awaited this moment and I know are going to be very happy. Last year, over 800,000 seniors across America were penalized simply because they chose or needed, needed, to remain productive members of our workforce. In an ever-expanding economy where employers increasingly lack capable and experienced employees, the Federal Government contrarily sends a message that our seniors need not apply.

I know it is true, because I hear it firsthand from working seniors in southwest Florida who choose to stay active and supplement their retirement, perhaps as a cashier at the local grocery store or perhaps as a substitute teacher at the middle school.

Proud Americans who survived the Depression and defeated Hitler's Germany are punished for displaying the same self-reliance, perseverance, and individual responsibility that defines them as our greatest generation and, frankly, has made our Nation as great as it is today. It is a national embarrassment that we will end today.

Today, finally, and I say finally, the White House and congressional Democrats will apparently join with us in ending the unfair earnings tax. But it was not always so. Just 2 years ago, only 19 Democrats voted to end the earnings limit. But in the best spirit of our representative democracy, we have made our case and we have persuaded them, or at least most of them, to join us. This has been a long and trying fight. And besides the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), my Florida colleague, and the gentleman from Texas (SAM JOHNSON), courageous souls like Jay Rhodes no longer here, JIM BUNNING in the other body, who should be here to celebrate with us today I hope are taking joy in this.

Above all, we should cheer our Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) who led the fight for incremental reform before it was fashionable and who appropriately will preside over this Congress today as we end this tax on working seniors once and for all. I urge a ''yes'' vote.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Seniors Freedom to Work Act. More than 800,000 senior citizens aged 65 to 69 in our country lose part or all of their Social Security benefits each year because of this so-called earnings test.

Currently, the Social Security earnings penalty takes $1 in Social Security benefits from Americans 65 through 69 for every $3 they earn above the $17,000 per year limit. When Americans turn 65, they ought to be able to count on the Social Security benefits they have earned, and this bill would repeal the earnings test once and for all.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bipartisan bill. But unfortunately, there has been a little partisan byplay here today; not from our side of the aisle, but from our friends on the Republican side. They are accusing us of reversing ourselves on this issue. They are referring to what in 1998 we aptly termed the Raid Social Security for an Election Eve Tax Cut Act. I would like to just read what I said at the time we debated that bill:

''The problem is not with the specific tax cuts, but with using the Social Security Trust Fund surplus to pay for them. These tax cuts are also contained in the Democratic substitute'', in fact, it included exactly identical earnings test provisions, ''but they are paid for in that substitute and they maintain the trust in the trust fund.''

So what we have before us right now, Mr. Speaker, is clean legislation that addresses the earnings test issue, unencumbered by controversial or extraneous provisions. Today, we have an opportunity for a bipartisan bill, a bipartisan result, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), Majority Leader of the House of Representatives.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) for yielding me this time. I just wanted to take a moment to add my word of appreciation for everybody's good work on this. There can be nothing I can imagine that can be more unfair to our working senior Americans than to be told that under the law of this land that they are required to pay into the Social Security program all their working years, and then at that time in their life when they are entitled to withdraw the benefits that they paid for, that the government of the United States is going to take those benefits away if they have the audacity to continue work.

Many of us have seen the injustice of this, and so many of us have worked on it over the years and had so many years of frustration.

Mr. Speaker, I always like to remind people that this is the very first bill that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) introduced in Congress in 1972. I studied it as an undergraduate. I understood at the time how important it was. I have watched the gentleman from Texas (SAM JOHNSON), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER), and the Speaker himself and others, and it is just such a heart-warming thing for me today to see us passing this legislation with such bipartisan support.

The President committed to sign it, and we will finally have a real act of justice and fairness for today's working seniors. I just wanted to share in that moment with all of our body.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) the ranking member on the Committee on the Budget.

(Mr. SPRATT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of this bill, the retirement earnings test is an old vestige of the 1930s, created when Social Security was born as a way of telling who was truly retired and, therefore, qualified for benefits. It was looked upon as good policy then because it spurred older workers to stop working and take their Social Security benefits and, therefore, freed up jobs for younger workers in what was then, the 1930s, a period of high unemployment.

Today, we do not have a labor surplus in most parts of the country; we have a labor shortage. For example, I had an owner of a trucking company call me a few months ago and tell me in desperation that this offset policy in Social Security was causing him to lose drivers. They would not work upon reaching the age of 65, and he could not replace them. He saw no reason for this policy, and I can tell from talking to other workers in my district neither do they.

We can explain all the reasons behind it, going back to 1935, but most people see this as a stiff, unfair, tax on hard-working people. I think it is time for us to repeal these offsets all together for those people who have reached retirement age. The question arises: Why did we not do this in 1998? There has been some accusation here that some of us who voted for that particular tax bill then, which was an $8.1 billion tax bill in 1998, voted against the elimination of the threshold. That bill would not have eliminated the threshold. It would have raised the threshold to $39,750 by 2008.

But in 1996, almost all of us came out here and voted for H.R. 3136, the Senior Citizens' Right to Work Act of 1996. This bill raised the limit in annual steps from $12,500 to $30,000 by 2002, and indexed the threshold after 2002 to rise with the rate of inflation. Had we simply followed the course of that law, by 2008, the threshold would have been about $38,000, just a little bit less than the bill in 1998 provided.

So this argument is really not a fair argument. I am glad to see us bring something to the floor that is bipartisan. Let us keep it bipartisan. I do not think I need to encourage anybody to vote for this. The vote is going to be overwhelming. And any time we get this kind of bipartisan consensus on an issue of this substance, it is a sign of an idea whose time has come.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is right that we repeal today, right now, as soon as possible, this old and outdated vestige of the Social Security system and say this is something on which we all agree.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER), one of our great committee members.

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, today's debate is all about fairness. This Congress has accomplished so much over the last 5 years, and I am proud that just in the past year we have accomplished our goal of stopping the raid on Social Security for the first time in 30 years and we balanced the budget without touching one dime of Social Security, paid down $350 billion of the national debt, and 3 short weeks ago this House passed with 268 votes, 48 Democrats joining with every House Republican, legislation wiping out the marriage tax penalty for 25 million married working couples who pay higher taxes just because they are married.

Like the marriage tax penalty, the earnings limit on our seniors is an issue of fairness. And I want to commend the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER), the gentleman from Florida (Chairman SHAW), and the gentleman from Texas (SAM JOHNSON) who have been tireless leaders and fighters for this effort to bring fairness to seniors.

Mr. Speaker, let us not forget that this effort to repeal the earnings test on seniors was part of the Contract with America. It is unfinished business. For far too long, seniors who work after age 65 have been punished. Since the 1930s, seniors who live longer, want to be active longer and work longer, have been punished. 800,000 seniors in America, 53,000 seniors in my home State in Illinois, are punished just because they want to work when they are age 65 or older.

I think of my own parents, farmers in their early 70s today who want to work and be active longer. Like millions, they suffer.

Mr. Speaker, the earnings limit on seniors is wrong. Let us repeal it. I appreciate the fact the President now says he will sign it into law. That makes it a bipartisan effort. I commend the chairman and commend the Speaker and commend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) my friend, for their leadership. Let us get the job done. I ask for an ''aye'' vote.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, success has many fathers; failure is an orphan. This bill is an outstanding bill and we are all fighting over paternity.

It is a bill that will help our economy by bringing experienced workers into a labor shortage work environment. It is a bill that will help 800,000 seniors and it is a bill that will actually help Social Security by bringing additional Social Security revenue and income tax revenue into the Federal Government as additional seniors enter the workforce.

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As to the fight over paternity, it is a Democratic President who stood here in his State of the Union message and urged us to pass this bill and the Democratic alternative bill in 1998 which provided an increase in this limit which we are now going to repeal, and that alternative bill would have been signed into law. We voted for a bill that would have dealt with this issue in 1998 and would have become law.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY).

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise very briefly to congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER). I rise in strong support to repeal the earnings limitation for Social Security recipients. I am particularly pleased to be an original cosponsor of this legislation. And I want to congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JOHNSON).

We have had a lot of debate and discussion over whose idea this was, but I think the record is very clear and will very clearly show that we, the majority in Congress, over the last 5 to 6 years have really begun to move forward in a meaningful way to bring steps towards comprehensive reform of Social Security. I am proud to join that effort. This is good for senior citizens, and it is good for America.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support us in this endeavor.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), a member of the committee.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5, bipartisan legislation, to repeal the Social Security retirement earnings test. I am a proud cosponsor of this legislation which has the backing of so many of us on the Committee on Ways and Means.

This legislation is supported by the Clinton administration. Indeed, the President called for repeal of the test more than a year ago.

As the Subcommittee on Social Security learned during the hearing on this bill on February 15, the retirement earnings test is both confusing to beneficiaries and difficult to administer. It discourages older people from remaining in the workforce and contributing to our country's economic growth. It is past time to eliminate this disincentive to work.

The bill repeals the test for workers who attained the normal retirement age. Its repeal will allow literally hundreds of thousands of Social Security recipients to work without a reduction in their benefits. This is an idea whose time has come.

It is important to note that the repeal does not adversely affect the long-term financial health of Social Security.

This bill shows that members of the committee can work in a bipartisan way. I hope this effort remains such.

Let me stress that passage of H.R. 5 today is not in any way a substitute for comprehensive Social Security reform. Congress must redouble its efforts to pass legislation to extend solvency of the fund.

Again, the President has proposed legislation that would defeat the interest savings earned by paying down the publicly held debt to make Social Security stronger. This would extend the solvency of the program to 2050.

There is an old proverb that says that a journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step. We are taking a good first step with the passage of H.R. 5 today. It should not, Mr. Speaker, be our last.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER), an esteemed member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, what could be more fair than allowing seniors to continue working without losing Social Security benefits?

Today we are voting on legislation to end the outdated Social Security earnings limit. Under this legislation, more than 800,000 seniors nationwide will have the opportunity to work without seeing their Social Security benefits reduced.

Consider a senior in my district in northern California who is between the ages of 65 and 70 and who earns $20,000 a year to supplement their Social Security benefits. Under current law, this senior will lose $1,000 in Social Security benefits due to the earnings limit.

At a time when our U.S. workforce needs the skills seniors have to offer, this disincentive to work makes absolutely no sense. Our seniors deserve the freedom to work without being penalized for it.

This legislation before us today is based on the principles of fairness and freedom. Seniors should be treated fairly after paying into Social Security all their lives. They should have the freedom to work without worrying about losing their benefits.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that this legislation is fiscally responsible. It does not affect the long-term solvency of the Social Security trust fund.

I commend the President for supporting our position to end the outdated earnings limit. Mr. Speaker, let us give all our seniors the freedom and the fairness they deserve. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN).

(Mr. GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank not only the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI) but also the members of the Committee on Ways and Means for allowing me to speak.

I rise in support of the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act, a legislation that I am proud to be a co-sponsor of and will vote for today.

It seems hard to believe that our tax law actually punishes people for working. Yet under the current law, 48,000-plus Texans lose all or part of their Social Security payments each month simply because they want to work. Now if one can work after one is 70 years old, one is not penalized.

Seniors who have worked hard their whole lives and paid into the Social Security system for decades should get their Social Security benefits regardless of whether they continue to work. This important legislation puts an end to the inequitable treatment of seniors.

My only concern, Mr. Speaker, is that, hopefully, this is not a step toward increasing the retirement age, Congress already did that once, instead of using 65. So hopefully this will not happen.

This is a clean bill. It is not loaded down with other provisions. So it does not bust the Federal budget caps that we have talked about.

Hopefully, this Congress can address other senior citizens issues, providing prescription medication for seniors, because allowing them to work still may not pay for it.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH), a respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. ENGLISH. Mr. Speaker, I particularly want to congratulate the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security, for his extraordinary leadership, not only on this issue, but in moving forward to make Social Security more solvent.

Mr. Speaker, today Congress says to seniors, you may choose to work, choose to remain part of the productive economy, and choose to share your talents. Right now the Social Security system places a higher tax penalty on working seniors than on billionaires. We have been sending seniors the message that when they hit retirement age that we do not want them anymore. We need to change that.

The earnings limit was created 60 years ago, and it is a relic of Depression-era economics that says seniors should make room for younger workers. We now know that seniors add more to the workforce and more to the economy than they can ever take away. They add their years of experience, their expertise, their talents.

This legislation repeals the earnings limit that unfairly punishes seniors who earn more than $17,000 a year. This arbitrary limit serves as a barrier to many low- and middle-class seniors who take on a job because they need to work in order to improve their quality of life or even just to make ends meet. They must not lose Social Security benefits that they earn simply because they choose to work.

The Social Security Administration reports that more than 800,000 working seniors between the ages of 65 and 69 lose part or all of their Social Security benefits due to this outdated limitation. That is an outrage.

In Pennsylvania, we are sixth in the number of seniors adversely affected by the earnings limit; 48,000, over 48,000 Pennsylvania seniors are penalized for working.

I urge my colleagues to join the AARP, join the Subcommittee on Social Security, and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and vote in favor of this legislation. It is important that Congress protect the dignity of retirement and unshackle the creative energies of America's seniors.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for the leadership in working to bring to the floor this very important piece of legislation.

We are focusing on reforming our existing Social Security program, correcting an unfairness that impacted 800,000 seniors last year. It provides an incentive for those skilled, dedicated committed workers to continue to work and enhance our society.

I want to bring one thing, Mr. Speaker, to the attention of the folks here today; and that is this, we have been told by Mr. Greenspan that one of the greatest threats to the growth in the economy is we do not have enough workers, skilled workers, to produce the supply for the demand that is out there.

This is a very unusual situation that we are in. Thank God for the seniors who are going to bail us out, because this will be an incentive for them. This is critical. This is something that we need, and we are working together finally. By the way, does it not feel good to work well on things that America needs?

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the Speaker of the House.

(Mr. HASTERT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, when one looks at the genesis of an idea, why a bill like this comes into being, sometimes it has not just happened overnight. This particular bill, this has been worked on for almost 20 years.

I remember the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) when he first came

to Congress talked about this. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) tried to push this concept. He brought together economists that shows there is really a positive effort when people work. The positives, when one does dynamic scoring, really has outshone what the negatives were, and that was the payment is out of the Social Security trust fund.

Then 14 years ago, the 100th Congress decided that this was a project that was something that was important for people. For 14 years, we have been trying to get the Social Security earnings limit, as we call it, changed. We did change it. Twelve years ago, one could earn $10,000; and anything over $10,000, every $2 that one earned one lost a dollar in one's Social Security. Then we kind of phased it out to $3, and it went up from $10,000 to $13,000 to $17,000 today.

But the fact is, when a senior citizen goes to work at McDonald's or starts his or her own little business or, like the lady 10 years ago when I bought Valentine flowers for my wife at the florist shop, she said, Congressman, I had just came back to work in January. I had stopped work last October because I was up against the earnings limit, at that time about $10,000. I had to leave my job. Or the seamstress at the little corner dress shop that the owner came out to me and said, I am going to lose my seamstress because she has reached that earnings limit. That was in November just at a busy time.

So the unfairness of the earnings limit for today's worker certainly has been apparent, and it has been apparent for a long time.

Slowly, but surely, we have been able to move this bill to a point where we can pass it and we can give equity to seniors, people who are over the age of 65 that do not want to relegate themselves to a rocking chair.

Now, quite frankly, some seniors at age 65 want to retire, and God bless them. They should be able if they have had that productive life. But the issue is that seniors who maybe did not have to work by the sweat of their brow their whole life, that they have unearned income, if they have pensions and they have retirement accounts, they were not penalized by the earnings test.

The people that were penalized by the earnings test were people that had to go out and earn by the sweat of their brow, people that were never to save up, never to have an IRA, never to be able to have a lot of money in pensions, people that had to go out and work every day to feed their families, to make ends meet. Now they are 65 years of age and, all of a sudden, they have a big government tell them, oh, by the way, you can get Social Security, but you cannot work anymore.

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''You cannot work to send your grandchild or child on to college; you cannot help earn that tuition for your family and, by the way, you cannot have that car that you would like to have to go on vacation because you cannot earn more than this amount of money because you are going to be penalized.''

This is wrong. It has been wrong for a long, long time. And especially in today's economy, when seniors are valued, because it is the seniors that have work ethics. It is the seniors that put in a full day's work, and they know the value of work. People like Sears Roebuck and J. C. Penney and McDonald's, and on and on, have been telling me for over a decade that they want those seniors in their ranks. Because not only are they good workers, people they can depend on, but for people entering the work force they are great people to train. It is a good ethic to pass on.

So we cannot afford to keep this resource, these people who have built this country, these people who want to contribute, even into their retirement, to what America is all about, we cannot afford to keep them out of this process.

I want to again say that I urge everybody to vote for this bill. And I am very pleased that the President has endorsed this piece of legislation. I think it is good, as the gentleman said, that we have found something that we can work on, something that lifts the American people and gives them a better future.

I want to also thank certainly the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) for bringing this legislation up, and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON), who has worked on this as a pioneer for years, and JIM BUNNING, who used to be a Member of this body worked on it for years and years. There are a lot of people and a lot of history here.

I think it is time that this bill passes, and I urge everybody to stand up and vote ''yes.'' Thank heavens this is here, a time of salvation for our seniors.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS).

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for H.R. 5, to repeal the Social Security earnings limit.

I am pleased finally to have the opportunity to bring this to a vote. After all, House Democrats have long supported repealing the earnings limit, but within the framework of comprehensive Social Security reform, to protect the Social Security Trust Fund and make sure it is there for seniors who need it.

The Republican tax cut actually held the Social Security earnings limit hostage to election year politics. Their proposals would have raided the Social Security surplus to fund huge ill-conceived tax cuts, of which repeal of the earnings limit was one small part.

Seniors will not be fooled by a political effort to tie repealing the Social Security earnings limit to a tax cut that would have been funded by raiding the Social Security surplus.

I support eliminating the earnings limit. More than that, I support being honest with our seniors.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

(Mr. HOLT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise in strong support of H.R. 5, bipartisan common sense legislation to repeal the Social Security earnings test.

I believe the Social Security earnings test should be eliminated. Simply put, this provision of the Social Security law has outlived its usefulness. It is a relic from another time. It survives only to punish older Americans for their productivity.

Today, most seniors continue to work at least part time after retiring. These men and women have some of the most dedicated and experienced skills to bring to our work force. And, as a Nation, we should be doing everything we can to encourage them to continue to contribute their time and their talents, not penalize them for doing so.

H.R. 5 would repeal this limit entirely, effective immediately. It is a bill that is worthy of our unanimous support. The President proposed it; both parties support it. It is simple, we need to pass H.R. 5.

We also need to undertake a comprehensive legislative fix that would use the projected budget surpluses to extend the life of Social Security and Medicare and pay down the debt.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise in strong support of repeal of the earnings limit for Social Security recipients between 65 and 70 years of age.

When I talk to employers in Maine, many cannot find all the employees that they need. Many seniors between 65 and 70 want to work but are discouraged from doing so by the Social Security earnings limit. This bill will help seniors who want to work and employers who want to hire them.

This bill is also an example of what Republicans and Democrats can do when we bring to the floor legislation on which we can agree. In 1998, I voted for a Democratic proposal to lift the earnings limit, but I pointed out at that time that the competing 1998 Republican plan included tax cuts that did not protect Social Security surpluses. That was the wrong approach and I opposed it. This bill is the right approach, and I am proud to support it.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5, to repeal the Social Security earnings test. It is long overdue.

It makes absolutely no sense to penalize older Americans for participating in the work force at any time. It makes particularly no sense to penalize older Americans at a time when businesses are clamoring for qualified workers. Our most experienced workers should not be left out of America's work force, out of America's future.

Many of the seniors in the district I represent in southern Nevada have asked me to champion this issue on their behalf. They have so much energy, so much talent, so much to continue to give this great country. Congress must repeal this obsolete earnings limit and give seniors the freedom to work without penalty.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE).

(Mr. COBLE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this proposal and commend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) for their efforts in this endeavor.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS), a member of the committee.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, if we are to climb the mountain of tax reform, we have to take it one step at a time; and I think the right approach is to aim first at individuals and remove the burden of excessive taxation and complicated regulations.

The very first place to start is by scrapping tax penalties. Why hit people with a heavier tax burden for being married, for working after retirement, or for building a family business or farm? The Senior Citizens Freedom to Work Act is an important step to remove one of those penalties. It will end the Social Security earnings limit which discourage seniors from continuing to work.

This legislation follows an important first step we took a couple of weeks ago with the passage of the marriage penalty tax relief. Finally, I hope that we will take a third step, and that is by helping families by eliminating the death penalty tax which hammers families, family-owned businesses and farms.

Mr. Speaker, let us keep moving forward, making progress in tax reform and support H.R. 5.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST).

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5, legislation that is long overdue for our Nation's seniors.

In 1999, an estimated 1.2 million beneficiaries had some or all of their benefits withheld for some portion of the year under the Social Security earnings test. About 800,000 beneficiaries lost some or all of their benefits under the test as a result of their work at ages 65 to 69. Additionally, the benefits of 150,000 family members were limited or withheld due to the earnings of the primary beneficiary.

Mr. Speaker, for many seniors, working after the age of 65 is not an option. Facing mounting bills for prescription drugs and the increasing cost of living, it is something they must do to continue to pay their bills. We should be doing everything we can to increase the standard of living for these valuable employees.

Older women in particular face a major hardship from the earnings test. The poverty rate for women is higher than the poverty rate overall, and women have a greater reliance on their Social Security benefits for income. Widows account for 66 percent of aged women in poverty. There are 1.2 million aged widows who receive Social Security benefits and have had incomes below the poverty line.

Because women live longer, have lower lifetime earnings and, therefore, for dependent on Social Security benefits, they are more likely to be working well past the traditional retirement age. We need to boost the Social Security earnings for this most vulnerable group of seniors rather than putting roadblocks in their path.

Mr. Speaker, repealing the earnings limit is good for seniors and good for employers too. Older workers are exactly the type of employees that businesses want. They are dependable, experienced, and have a strong work ethic. We should be encouraging these workers to remain in the work force instead of trying to force them out. As the number of older workers grows, and the need for quality employees becomes more acute, we need to take advantage of the experience and skills that older workers provide.

Eliminating the earnings test is not only the fair thing to do for working seniors but it will improve the quality and efficiency of the Social Security program as well.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this bill to get rid of the Social Security earnings limit. I have been an original cosponsor of this bill many times, and I am pleased that we have gotten to this point today.

The need for this bill was really brought home to me last Friday. In my district office in Bloomington, Minnesota, a woman named Anna Marie came to see me and said she needed to talk to me about a very personal, very important matter related to Social Security. When she came into my office she was noticeably upset and apprehensive about her situation. She sat down and explained to me that $4,000 had been taken out of her retirement benefits and she desperately needed that money today. In fact, she needed the money for dentures, and if she did not get those new dentures she would be placed on a liquid diet, unable to eat solid food. The $4,000 she had lost would help her afford these dentures and maintain the independence and life-style that she deserves.

When I told her about what Congress would hopefully do today, about the bill before us to remove the Social Security earnings limit, she started to cry. Her eyes welled up with tears, she clasped her hands together and she said, ''Praise Jesus. Thank you, God.''

Well, this is an important bill in the lives of real people, real seniors who need that $4,000, who need the money that has been taken by the Federal Government. In voting for it, my colleagues, we help Anna Marie, we help many others like her across the country. In voting for it, to remove the Social Security earnings limit, we will make a real difference in the lives of real seniors, ensuring that not only can they keep the money they earn, that they need, but also the independence that these seniors deserve.

So I hope in a bipartisan way we overwhelmingly pass this legislation before us today.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I too rise in strong support of H.R. 5 today. This bill is a win-win situation, not just for seniors but for the country as a whole as well.

Clearly, it is to the great advantage of seniors to have the opportunity to continue to work, to bring in income and not have their Social Security cut.

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It is the right thing to do. Seniors, particularly between 65 and 70, still have a lot of bills and a lot of concerns that Social Security cannot meet. Allowing them to work is a way to help them make that up. But it is also a great benefit to our economy. If there is one thing I hear from every business in my district, it is that they cannot find enough workers. It does not matter what the job is; they cannot find enough people to do the jobs they need.

Well, we have a wealth of talent out there with great experience, and that is our seniors who can fill those jobs and help our economy. This bill is fair to seniors, excellent for the economy, and I recommend that we support it strongly.

I also think it is great that it is a bipartisan piece of legislation. It shows an example of where the House can work together to solve real problems for real people in this country, and I am very proud to support it.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), an esteemed member of the Committee on Ways and Means and a member of the Subcommittee on Social Security.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding me the time; and I want to thank him and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and other members of the Committee on Ways and Mean who have put this legislation forward. I rise in very strong support of it, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act, properly named, as well.

The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD) talked earlier about a constituent who had come into his office and talked about the penalty that she now lives under, which is about 4,000 a year, and does not enable her to do things she needs to do for herself.

Let me tell my colleagues another story. And there are so many out there. Each of us knows people in our districts, maybe in our family, who are affected by this. But Marjorie Thompson is a dear friend of mine back home. She is a caregiver. She is a nurse. She takes care of elderly patients primarily. She is a compassionate, a skilled person who has a very strong work ethic and wants to work.

Marjorie is in her late sixties, and she wants to go to work every day. She has come to me and she has said, Rob, should I work? And I have to tell her that her marginal tax rate for every additional dollar she earns now is about 80 percent. She is getting advice now from everybody she knows that say, of course she should not work, not with that kind of penalty.

If we could take away the earnings penalty from her, she would work and she would work a full year and she would not stop when she has reached that cap.

People like Marjorie Thompson are needed. They are needed to care for our elderly. They are needed throughout our economy. These are people that have a lot to contribute. And it is not just economically. They have a lot to contribute to our society. They want to work. They want to have the dignity and the self-respect that comes with work.

The last thing that this Congress and this Government should be doing is discouraging them from working. We have to remove this penalty from the Tax Code. It is overdue.

Again, I commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and others, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) who put this forward. And I am really looking forward to its being enacted into law.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of repealing the earnings test for Social Security beneficiaries between the ages of 65 and 69.

There is currently a shortage of workers in the U.S. There is no good reason for Social Security to punish people who want to work. These more mature workers are some of our Nation's most skilled.

Mr. Speaker, the earnings limit is a relic of the Depression era. With Americans living longer, Social Security should not dictate their life-style choices to them. This bill is good social policy and good economic policy. It does not make sense to punish Americans for working when Congress is being lobbied to allow additional workers into the country from other countries.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that we are approaching this in a bipartisan manner; and I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle can use this year to address broader reform.

When discussions turn to handling the budget surplus, we must insist that the solvency of Social Security and Medicare are addressed first and that our older citizens have a prescription drug benefit. We should be addressing this now, not adjourning.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. KUYKENDALL).

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this legislation. It is important legislation for our seniors.

Incredibly, seniors between the ages of 65 and 70 currently lose a dollar's worth of Social Security benefits for every $3 earned over $17,000. Seniors should not be penalized for working. It is just plain unconscionable that the Government would take away these hard-earned benefits.

With our powerful economic growth continuing, the need for skilled workers in the workforce is increasing. To have any disincentive to work is bad policy. More than 800,000 working senior citizens lose part or all of their Social Security benefits due to this obsolete provision. And today we can remove the earnings limit.

I am glad to hear also the President recognizes this unfairness in this earnings limit. Ending the earnings limit is good for seniors, good for the Nation; and it is the right thing to do. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ).

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 5, legislation to repeal the earnings test for Social Security for the ages 65 through 69. It is time to get rid of this penalty, and I am glad that we are finally debating this issue.

The earnings limit originated in the 1930s, but today people remain healthy and vigorous longer than they did then; and it makes sense to repeal this obsolete and punitive limit.

It makes no sense to penalize seniors, some who still have to work in the workplace, some who want to contribute their skills to the workplace, especially in a time when businesses are finding it difficult to recruit enough qualified workers to fill the jobs that remain vacant.

The current system is a disincentive for seniors to continue to work, and it needs to be changed. And this legislation is long overdue.

But there are a lot of other things we also need to work on. We need to help retirees by using the surplus to extend Social Security and Medicare, to provide a prescription drug plan for all seniors, and to lift the limit on outside income for beneficiaries of Social Security.

I have supported raising the limit in the past, and I support repealing it today.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CRANE) a respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman for yielding to me this time.

I want to say to my colleagues that all of us understand the meaning of the phrase ''an honest day's pay for an honest day's work.''

Because of the many, many decades of hard work in all kinds of jobs, our older Americans appreciate that adage more than most. They know what it means to expend a lifetime of dealing with the uncertainties of living paycheck to paycheck. They got up early every morning, went to the assembly line, the office, the shop, and came home at night to enjoy some time with family and friends.

When they were rearing their families, they simply hoped to make life a little better for their children; and when they reached retirement age, they hoped to collect the money they contributed to Social Security and a pension. But if they continue to work after 65, they are forced to watch the Federal Government continue to try to squeeze every cent it can from their paycheck; and to add insult to injury, even their Social Security is affected until they turn 70.

So I proudly stand before my colleagues today because, after decades of trying to eliminate the Social Security earnings limit, it is finally happening on the floor of the House today. This means that the over 42,000 seniors living in my district, many of whom continue working beyond the average retirement age, will be getting a little bit of a break.

On behalf of my 8th District constituents, I want to thank and commend my colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON), for his persistence in getting H.R. 5 to the floor for a vote. I want to commend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), our chairman, who was pioneering in this effort years ago. And I want to commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), our distinguished chairman of the subcommittee, for all of his

efforts. And I commend all of our colleagues, on a bipartisan basis, for joining as cosponsors of a bill that my colleagues, I know, will want to unanimously support and eliminate this obscene tax.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT).

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today that H.R. 5 is moving.

I have been in Congress for several years now, and this is a piece of legislation that I have felt like should have been passed many years ago. And I know senior citizens that have quit work simply because the penalty was too high.

Now they will be able, after this legislation passes the House and Senate and signed by the President, and I expect it all to happen this year and very soon now, where senior citizens will have an opportunity to make some decisions and whereby they can have some structure in their lives, where they can have some peace of mind, knowing that if they want to continue to work, and many of them want to do that, they will be able to accomplish those goals and objectives for themselves and their families.

It is estimated that, under current law, about 4 percent of Social Security recipients will exceed the $17,000 earnings limit and will have the benefits reduced by an average of $8,154. That does not have to happen now with this legislation.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER) and the gentleman from Florida (Chairman SHAW) and in support of the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act.

The Members of this body have different philosophies about the role of government. Some want an expansive, activist government. Others, like myself, believe that government should have a much more limited role. But I think everyone agrees that the Government should not discourage hard work and self-sufficiency. Unfortunately, we do just that. And nowhere is this more evident than with the so-called Social Security earnings limit.

Incredibly, more than 800,000 working seniors between the ages of 65 and 69 lose part or all of their Social Security benefits simply because they choose to work in their golden years. This is wrong.

No matter what the rationale for the earnings limit was during the Great Depression, this is the year 2000. We should not stand for a Tax Code that penalizes hard work and responsibility.

I urge all my colleagues to support the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA).

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I want to say how glad I am that today we have an opportunity to vote to repeal the earnings test for Social Security beneficiaries between the ages of 65 and 69. This action is long overdue.

The earnings limit originated in the 1930s when the Social Security program was started during the Depression, and it remains despite the vast changes in the economy and the lives of senior citizens that have taken place over the last 60 years.

It makes no sense to penalize seniors for participating in the workplace, especially at a time when businesses cannot find enough qualified workers to fill jobs that remain vacant. People remain healthy and vigorous longer than they did in the 1930s. So it makes perfect sense to repeal this obsolete and punitive limit.

By passing this bill, seniors who need or want to work can now do so without the fear of being punished by an outdated law.

I am glad that today we, both sides of the aisle, can all be on the same page and finally take this action. Let us vote ''yes'' to pass H.R. 5.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE).

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from California for yielding the time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I join in the parade of Members who support this legislation. Previously, this proposal to lift the earnings limit has been used as a partisan Trojan horse. It included tax cuts that were controversial, and it would have required raiding the Social Security trust fund.

Today we have a balanced budget, we are not engaged in a raid on the Social Security trust fund, and we can approve this proposal on its merits. It is not a Trojan horse. It is not accompanied by other controversial Internal Revenue Code changes.

Strong policy considerations support this legislation. They have been amply stated by previous speakers. I would just like to say them briefly: fairness to seniors who wish to work. We should encourage a work ethics. Two, it is budget neutral. This proposal does not cost money. Three, we have a labor shortage. We need additional workers in America.

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I am pleased to join in supporting this legislation.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU).

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a cosponsor of H.R. 5, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. Under current law, seniors who earn more than $17,000 per year are penalized $1 for every $3 of additional earnings. This is wrong. We should not penalize hard work. It makes no sense to penalize seniors who are participating in our work force, especially at a time when we cannot find enough workers to fill a burgeoning economy.

I have heard from many small businesses in my district that are very excited about the possibility of hiring additional workers, workers who have solid work values, who are responsible, experienced and eager to fill the positions which are currently available.

As we vote on this important bipartisan legislation today, I want to encourage my colleagues to continue work in assisting our seniors to retire so they are not forced to work. However, I strongly believe that those who choose to work should not be penalized. And this bill solves that.

I urge my colleagues to support this long-needed legislation.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), the ranking Democrat on the Committee on Agriculture.

(Mr. STENHOLM asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation and encourage all of my colleagues to support it. I have been a strong supporter of legislation to repeal the earnings limit for several years. In fact, repeal of the earnings limit was part of the comprehensive Social Security reform package that I introduced, along with the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) in 1998.

Our legislation though contained several other provisions that rewarded individuals who continued to work after retirement age. While I am disappointed that Congress is not acting on the other parts of our proposal to strengthen Social Security, I am very pleased that this part of our legislation is going to be enacted today.

Senior citizens are some of our most valued workers, contributing a wealth of experience that can be gained only through years of dedicated service. For this reason, I agree wholeheartedly with the statement of former Senator Bentsen that discouraging seniors citizen from working is ''like keeping your best hitters on the bench.''

Our society should not overlook the contribution of our seniors. Unfortunately, press reports suggest that some in the Republican party intend to use this vote on the earnings limit for partisan political purposes. I would ask a reconsideration of those who choose to do that.

As Democrats who have worked in a bipartisan way on comprehensive Social Security reform, I am extremely disappointed by these reports and hope that the Republican leadership will repudiate these tactics. The suggestions that Democrats have opposed repeal of the Social Security earnings limit are completely false.

Democrats have supported repeal of the Social Security earnings limit as part of a comprehensive legislation that keeps Social Security strong for those currently retired or close to it, and everyone knows that.

In fact, the reported line of criticism being suggested by some actually raises questions about their commitment to the integrity of the Social Security trust fund. The votes being cited to criticize Democrats were on bills that would have raided the Social Security surplus to fund tax cuts, in which repeal of the earnings limit was one small part.

Seniors will not be fooled by a political effort to use the issue of repealing the Social Security earnings limit to advocate a tax cut that would have been funded by raiding the Social Security surplus.

The past votes that some Republicans seek to exploit for political purposes were on bills that would have threatened the integrity of the Social Security trust fund. The $80 billion tax cut considered by the House in the fall of 1998 that included repeal of the Social Security earnings limit would have been funded entirely out of the Social Security surplus.

The Republican leadership at that time did not even allow a vote on the Stenholm-Neumann amendment, which provided that the tax cuts could not be funded with a Social Security surplus. Likewise, the tax bill considered by the House last year would have dipped into the Social Security surplus by more than $70 billion and would have exploded in costs at the same time the Social Security system is projected to begin running shortfalls.

Let us use today to set aside the bipartisanship. Let us recognize that today we are reaching out in a bipartisan way in order to do what everyone has agreed. While I am critical of the fact we are not doing more, we accept this today, let us put the partisanship aside. Let us continue to reach out for a long-term solution for Social Security.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DUNN), a respected member of the committee.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the seniors and near seniors in the Congressional district that I represent, I rise today in enthusiastic support of H.R. 5, the Seniors Citizens' Freedom to Work Act.

The Social Security earnings limit is another aspect of a 60-year old Social Security system that no longer applies to modern society. These days seniors are living longer. They are healthier, and yet too many of our Nation's best workers are sitting in rocking chairs.

We need their strength. We need their experience in our communities. And young people starting new jobs need their example, their example of the value of work and the discipline of work. Unfortunately, by denying retirement benefits for those who choose to work, Social Security penalizes seniors who want to be productive and teach the values of hard work to younger generations.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is also very important to women who, 75 percent of the time, live longer than their spouses. And they ought to be able to have the peace of mind that they can supplement their retirement earnings if they wish without being penalized.

In Washington State alone, more than 13,000 seniors have been forced to choose between keeping the job they love or losing the retirement income for which they worked all their lives. This is wrong. It also keeps an intelligent and productive part of our work force at home.

Seniors who are currently retired have been called the greatest generation, for the sacrifices they made in defending freedom and building America into the world's only remaining superpower. It is time that we honor the contributions to America, their contributions, by allowing them to work, if they wish, and to give one of the most precious gifts of all, that they can offer their work ethic.

I want to congratulate the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) for persevering in this cause. I want to urge my colleagues to support this bill and the President to sign it.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the Democratic leader.

(Mr. GEPHARDT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, today we are taking the first step towards strengthening retirement security for all seniors and moving closer to putting Social Security on a firmer footing for the rest of the century. This time, we are doing it in a fiscally responsible way.

I am gratified that Republicans are joining with us to repeal the earnings test for Social Security. This is truly a bipartisan effort. Democrats have overwhelmingly voted three times in recent years to raise the limit and President Clinton has requested repealing this earnings limit in his last two budgets. The sooner we send this to his desk, the faster we will be able to deliver this relief to seniors who want to continue making a real contribution to our society and our economy.

Unlike a Republican attempt to raise the limit in 1998, the bill we debate today does not hurt the long-term solvency of Social Security to do so. This reform is long overdue. It is about time that we stand up for America's seniors.

According to Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan, we are beginning to suffer from a serious worker shortage that threatens our economic expansion. This bill will play a major role in protecting our economic gains of the last 7 years. It will not only help raise the standard of living for many of our seniors but it will also help us keep the strongest economic growth of our lifetime on track by keeping a generation of skilled workers in the economy.

I met with a number of small business owners in South County St. Louis in my district this past weekend and they talked about their need to hire workers over the age of 65 because they are having such trouble finding skilled workers for jobs that are available right now. This bill will encourage seniors to return to the workplace and enable business owners to fill vacant jobs.

This earnings limit is a relic of the great depression when we experienced double-digit unemployment among young people. The limit does not make any sense in the year 2000. It needs to be relegated to the dustbin of economic history. This is just the first step towards strengthening retirement security for all seniors. Now it is time to take the next step, using the surplus to extend the life of Social Security and Medicare.

Today, we are voting to allow working seniors to fully enjoy their Social Security benefit, but that very benefit will be in danger if Republicans do not join with Democrats to take immediate action to strengthen the Social Security trust fund with an infusion of financial support.

I hope my Republican colleagues will join us over the next several months in using the surplus to strengthen both Social Security and Medicare. This bill shows that Democrats and Republicans can work together to rebuild and build retirement security. I hope that we can build on this foundation and work together to put Social Security and Medicare on a sound financial footing well into the next century.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. This bill is simple and straightforward, removing the earnings limit for working seniors receiving Social Security. Seniors aged 65 to 69 who have chosen to continue to work have had their Social Security benefits reduced by $1 for every $3 earned when their total earnings went over $17,000 annually.

The 104th Congress made a long needed change, raising the annual earnings limit to $30,000 by the year 2002. More needed to be done on this issue. Ever since coming to Washington in the 93rd Congress, I have introduced legislation to either raise the earnings limit or eliminate it altogether. These earnings limits have discouraged seniors from working and diminished their potential productivity, conveying a message that seniors have nothing to contribute and are better off not working in the workforce. It is gratifying that the President has stated his support for the elimination of the earnings limit, and I commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) for their attention to this important issue.

Accordingly, I urge our colleagues to join in supporting this timely, important senior legislation.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. LUCAS).

(Mr. LUCAS of Kentucky asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LUCAS of Kentucky. I thank the distinguished gentleman from California for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. The elimination of the Social Security earnings limit is a reform that is long overdue.

Under the current system, senior citizens are forced to choose between the loss of their Social Security benefits and dropping out of the workforce. What a terrible message to send to our seniors that their work is not valued. With their wealth of information and experience, senior citizens are a truly vital part of the stability of our workforce and the development of the workforce of tomorrow.

The current limit takes away the benefits from those who have rightfully earned them through a lifetime of hard work. We should not be punishing our senior citizens for continuing to work but, rather, encouraging them. That is just common sense.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH).

(Mr. RUSH asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RUSH. I want to thank the gentleman from California for yielding me this time, and I want to commend him for his leadership on this very, very important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. This Social Security earnings limit is wrong and archaic. Why penalize able-bodied senior Americans who can work? At a time when our economy is in need of an experienced workforce, we should not be turning our backs on seniors who have valuable experience and skills.

The worst part of the earnings limit is that it penalizes poor senior citizens. Mr. Speaker, not every senior who retires has private pensions to supplement their Social Security benefits.

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Health costs are rising; prescription drugs are unattainable. Seniors need to work to supplement their Social Security benefits. No longer should we force seniors to choose between food and medicine. Do not deny our seniors their basic rights. We must do away with this archaic earnings limit which deprives our seniors of their earned benefits.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. OSE)

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5. I came to this Congress recently following in the great footsteps of my colleague, the gentleman from Sacramento, California (Mr. MATSUI), and I want to specifically applaud the fact that after 40 years of Democratic majority here and 6 years of Republican majority, we finally have been able to move a bill out of the House, hopefully on to the Senate, and then to the President for signature.

This particular issue, where we in effect tax the ability of our seniors to contribute to our workforce disproportionately, has needed to be changed since it was first passed in the Depression. There is no argument about that. There is no getting around that fact.

Again, we spent 40 years under the tutelage of one party, and now 6 years we have been at it here. We finally have agreement, and I am happy to be part of this. This is one of the things I campaigned on, to try and get this tax off the backs of our seniors. I welcome my friends on the other side to this. I am very, very pleased to be here with the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) in this effort.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY).

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I would echo the comments just made by my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. OSE). It is fun for a change to participate in a debate on a bill that enjoys broad bipartisan support, improving the Social Security program that we have for our seniors.

It is time we lift the earnings limit. We need to do this as part of a multifaceted approach at improving income in retirement years. This approach needs to include other activity by this Congress, activity where hopefully we would come together also in a bipartisan way to strengthen Social Security, making certain that it is going to be there for the long run, and coming together in a bipartisan way to help additional employers offer retirement savings opportunities for their workplace. Presently, only half the workers have retirement savings at work. We need to do better, and there are strategies introduced and supported by Members of both parties to get this done as well.

Finally, we need to come together to add additional savings incentives, targeted specifically at middle-income and lower-income households, so that they might save for retirement.

But back to today's bill. Today's bill really is for those that hit retirement years without enough savings already accrued. Those years, 65 to 70, represent an important last opportunity to get some additional income, even while the Social Security checks start coming, so that they might build that nest egg, to meet their needs, to keep them comfortable as they go on.

Do you know that today someone reaching the age of 65 has an additional 15 years of life expectancy if they are a male, and 19 years if they are a female? Surely there are substantial needs for a retirement nest egg in light of that kind of life-span opportunity. In addition, we know that people reaching the age of 65 today are healthier, more engaged and want to work than ever before; and we ought to give them that opportunity.

Additionally, we know that in light of our strong economy, the needs in the workforce are intense, and this potential source of labor can help employer after employer, right across the country.

In my own State, the State of North Dakota, people over the age of 60 represent 18 percent of our population. Clearly we need their participation. That is important today, but it is only going to grow more important, because this over-60 segment will swell by 60 percent in North Dakota by the year 2025. Quite frankly, I do not know how we will keep our schools going. I do not know how we will keep some of the businesses going if we do not have workers in this age span, 65 to 70, participating if they want to in the workforce without the absolutely ruinous penalty presented by the tax on earnings today.

For every reason I have mentioned, I urge a unanimous vote on this. What a pleasure it is to have this bipartisan achievement.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN).

(Mr. HORN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, today this House of Representatives will take a real step toward tax reform for America's working retirees. By repealing the so-called Social Security earnings test, we are doing away with an outdated law that affects over 800,000 seniors who have been denied the needed income to survive in their golden years.

Created in the Depression to encourage older workers to move out of the job market, the earnings limit is an antiquated solution to a problem that no longer exists. Many of today's seniors want to take part in this economic boom, but are penalized $1 in Social Security benefits for every $3 they earn beyond $17,000. My State of California is hit hardest by the earnings test, affecting over 161,000 seniors. When seniors are denied the opportunity to work and governments are denied income taxes generated by seniors working, we all lose.

Mr. Speaker, I have long believed the outright repeal of this law was the right thing to do, and I am pleased to have an opportunity today to be part of the team that will send the bill to the Senate and the President that lowers the tax burden for so many working retirees.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), the Democratic whip.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, first of all let me congratulate my two friends, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI), for their fine work in bringing this forward today.

Mr. Speaker, today we have the chance to take action to repeal the Social Security earnings limit, a law so outdated few can remember how it ever got on the books.

What is the Social Security earnings limit? Well, ask any senior and they will tell you the earning limit is a Catch-22 of the Social Security system. It is a law that actually punishes older people for working. In fact, it forces them, literally forces them, to become more dependent on Social Security than they need to be.

Now, why would anybody want a law like that? Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not know any of us who want a law like that, and it is time for a change. That is why we are repealing it today.

Our message for every American, no matter how old, ought to be that if you want a job and you are able to do a job, by God, this government is never going to try to stop you from getting a job.

We are voting to repeal the earnings limit because in this incredible economy, there is more than enough work that needs to be done, and older Americans may be just some of the people who can do it and do it well in a labor market that is struggling for good, competent, qualified people.

We are voting to repeal the earnings limit not only because we believe older people ought to have the right to earn higher incomes, but because they deserve the opportunity to live richer lives, lives made better by the opportunity to join the world of work. But, Mr. Speaker, the truth is that it is not just seniors who win if we repeal this foolish law; we all win. We all win because this Nation needs the experience, the skill and the maturity of older people that they can bring to the American workplace.

Older Americans today are one of this Nation's greatest resources. It is high time we take advantage of it. This is a win-win proposition for America.

Again, I want to congratulate my colleagues for bringing this to the floor.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, back in the 1930s the reason for starting the earnings test the Democrats said it was necessary to allow younger workers to work. Today what we have is a shortage of qualified and experienced workers, so it is very appropriate that we are getting around to enacting this legislation.

I might point out I am glad to see the minority party supports this piece of legislation. For almost 4 decades the Democratic party did not seem to want to initiate and to pass this legislation; and the chairman here, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), and others on this side, worked so hard to try and pass this. So this is a great day, to see the folks on the other side of the aisle say let's pass it by unanimous agreement.

There is no good reason, of course. There is no longer a reason for this antiquated law to be on the books. It is discriminatory.

So I support the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. I am an original cosponsor of it. It is a law we have to be very joyful this afternoon for, because it is a law that is needed.

Mr. Speaker, since the Social Security program was created in 1935, it has always included an earnings test. There have been many efforts through the years to eliminate the earnings test, but none were successful.

Back in the 1930's the reason given for starting the earnings test was to ''open up jobs'' for younger workers. What we are currently experiencing is a shortage of qualified and experienced workers. The time to act is now.

In 1996 I voted to increase the earnings limit for seniors who chose to continue working. We were able to increase the earnings limit for those aged 65–69 to $30,000 by the year 2002. At the time this legislation was passed, a working senior who reached $11,280 in earned income lost $1 in Social Security for each $3 earned thereafter. That's a marginal tax rate of 33%! That's a high price to pay for merely wanting to work.

Let's take a look at how the current law affects our nation's seniors who are receiving Social Security benefits and also working. This year beneficiaries aged 65–69 can earn up to $17,000 without being penalized. They lose one dollar for every three of earnings that exceed this limit.

Beneficiaries aged 62–64, those individuals who retire early, are allowed to earn up to $10,080 this year without a penalty. They lose one dollar of Social Security benefits for every two dollars they earn above the imposed limit. While the measure we passed in 1996 made vast improvements to the earnings test, our real goal at that time was to repeal the law outright. I believe that we will be successful this time around.

What's wrong with giving elderly workers who either want to work or must work in order to maintain a decent lifestyle the ability to do so. I am proud to be a cosponsor of H.R. 5 that would repeal the Social Security earnings test entirely. I have long been a proponent of repealing this outdated provision and shall continue to support such proposals until we succeed in changing this law.

The earnings test limit is unjust. It treats Social Security benefits less like a pension and more like welfare. It represents a Social Security bias in favor of unearned income over earned income.

It is effectively a mandatory retirement mechanism our country no longer accepts or needs. It precludes greater flexibility for the elderly worker and also prevents America's full use of eager, experienced and educated elderly workers. Finally, it deprives the U.S. Economy of the additional income tax which would be generated by the elderly workers.

There is no good reason to keep this antiquated and discriminatory law in existence any longer. I support swift passage of the Senior Citizen's Freedom to Work Act and call upon my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote for this very important and long overdue change in the law.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and join my colleagues in strong support of this legislation, and I commend the leadership of this House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI). It is a good day when we can be so united in a bipartisan way to end an unfair tax on our working seniors.

Mr. Speaker, many seniors work because they need to. They should not be penalized for trying to put food on their table. They should be supported. Seniors in my district have been telling me this is something that they need. Some seniors work because they want to. They should not be penalized for remaining active and involved. These seniors should be supported as well. Our country is the richer for it.

It is time to act in this way. Today we will have, I hope, unanimous support to remove this onerous burden on working seniors and end the earnings limit. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY).

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago this House voted to right a wrong. Most of us agree it is unfair for a married couple to be penalized by the Federal Government just simply because they are married, so we passed legislation to fix that unfairness. Today it is time to fix another long-standing unfairness, the Social Security earnings limit.

Mr. Speaker, it is about time. For too long we have penalized our most experienced workers, created disincentives for them to work, oftentimes when their employers need their expertise the most. No American should be penalized for their desire to work and contribute to the economy and strength of our country, least of all our seniors.

In 1987, my class in Congress, the Republican members of my class, voted to take this on as a project, to try to eliminate the earnings limit. We met with Dan Rostenkowski. I think it was the only time he ever spoke to me, but we met with Dan Rostenkowski, and he said, ''No, we won't do it.'' So over the years we have picked away at it with the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and various ones, and with their

help picked away at it and made it better. But today is a chance to get rid of it.

For the sake of simple fairness, it is time for this body to eliminate the earnings limit. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT).

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, Dan Rostenkowski would not do it. He is a Democrat. I am embarrassed by it.

I want to commend the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER) and the gentleman from Florida (Chairman SHAW). I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI).

But, Mr. Speaker, this is not enough. Everybody is reaching into that Social Security trust fund and they are raiding it. I have a bill and it calls for a constitutional amendment, and it says you cannot touch the Social Security trust fund. It can only be used for Social Security and Medicare. If we pass that, we would have enough money to provide health insurance for every American.

But I want to pay tribute to the Republican Party today. Rostenkowski did not do it, Rostenkowski would not do it, and the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER) and the gentleman from Florida (Chairman SHAW) did it. But the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) deserve a lot of credit for making it happen as well.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

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Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

I would like to add my applause and appreciation to the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER) and the ranking member, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), to the gentleman from Florida (Chairman SHAW), and the ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI), for their vision.

This bill spells relief. I have spent some time with seniors, most of us do as we visit our senior citizen centers, as we work with seniors in our respective religious communities, as we work with seniors as our neighbors.

I can actually say that the retirement earnings test keeps good talent away from the job market. This legislation will allow thousands of social security recipients to work without a reduction in their benefits, to work in child care, to work in volunteer programs, after-school programs.

In fact, as I visited the Latino Learning Center and their Senior Citizen Center, they were making crafts. Although that is not employment per se, it still might have impacted their income by way of the income being attributable to each individual from the crafts that they made.

The repealing of this will in fact increase work incentives; will put good, strong, valued seniors in the workplace, and will add to the value of what they have already given to the workplace and this Nation. Repealing the RET will not affect social security's finances over the long run, and in particular, repealing the RET will make the social security program easier and less expensive to administer.

This is long overdue. As I have said when I have come to the floor before, this spells relief. It is relief for seniors, for the social security program, for the community where these valuable seniors can be out and about in the work force contributing to this Nation as they have done in the past.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as I may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY).

(Mr. GALLEGLY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of this legislation. It is a bill we have worked on for many years.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. I just again would like to thank Members for the bipartisan atmosphere that occurs on the floor of the House, as it did in subcommittee and in the full committee. The fact that we have moved this bill in an expedited fashion certainly means that we should get it to the President in a timely fashion so that it will become law in the year 2000. Again, this is a much needed change in the social security system.

I might just add, just so there is no misunderstanding, that this will have a $23 billion revenue loss out of the social security system over the next 10 years. But over the life of the social security system itself, because of the delayed credit, it will have no impact on the solvency of the social security system, so this has no impact on the social security system nor on the Medicare system.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), the distinguished ranking Democrat on the Committee on Ways and Means.

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI) for the way he has handled this, not only on the floor, but certainly, as the ranking member of the subcommittee on social security.

It gives me an opportunity to once again congratulate my long and dear friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), who showed an interest in social security generally, and this type of cooperation between our parties still gives me some ray of hope, no matter how small that glimmer may be, as we move forward on our political calendar, that there are many other things that we can accomplish in working together.

For those people who believe that it is in our best interest to have confrontation and do nothing, I suggest that at the polling places, both Democrats and Republicans may suffer. It seems to me that there have been enough suggestions made by the President that Republicans can pick and choose those that they feel comfortable with, those that they think are in the best interests of the people of this great country, and to be able to work with us to do it.

This is a classic example of the leadership of the chairman and the subcommittee chairman, in working with us so that we can get things done. I laud the Members for this effort, and I look forward to working with them on other issues that remain within the budget, as this has, that do not invite and encourage a veto, but those things that we know that we can work out our differences on, not only on both sides of the aisle but also on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make an observation which I think is something that all of us have sort of made reference to, but not particularly in this regard. Some who are looking on today, tuning in on C–Span, probably think they have the wrong channel.

This has been, I think, a real landmark in what we can accomplish in this Congress by working together.

My good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), and we use that phrase a little flip around here, because when we refer to someone as our good friend, that is about the time we are about to drop a hammer on them, but we are good friends. We are very good friends. We have been for many years, as I am with the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI).

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) I think has been an incredible chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, and we have brought things together that have made a real difference, and we do come together on things that we can politically agree upon.

There should be no disagreement in this country, no disagreement, that people who work their entire working lives, when they reach retirement age, just simply because they have to work beyond that or just simply want to work beyond that, that they should not be penalized. We agree on that. We ought to constantly look out and reach out for things that we agree upon, because it is so important to such an important segment of our population. It is so important.

So this bill is going to pass. I am going to ask for a recorded vote, because I want all the Members to have the opportunity to step forward on the Democrat and the Republican side and cast their vote, a recorded vote, to say they are in favor of American seniors. They are working with us, and we are working together to make a better life for the senior citizens of the country.

This bill takes effect on January 1 of the year 2000. That means exactly 2 months ago this bill comes into effect. The senior citizens of this country will enjoy the fruits and labor of what we have started here today.

I am pleased to say that the President is with us. Yesterday, while we were marking this bill up in the Committee on Ways and Means, the President was in Miami Beach doing a fundraiser for my opponent at a cocktail party. In fact, I thought it was rather ironic, because it was taking place at the exact time we were voting on this bill.

That is the way the system works. There is nothing wrong with that. There is nothing wrong with Democrat presidents supporting Democrat candidates and Republican presidents supporting Republican candidates.

I will tell the Members that I would certainly guess, and as tradition has it, just as we did in welfare reform and other pieces of meaningful legislation that has come out of this Congress, that the President will invite the Republicans down to take part in the bill's signing. That is the way it should be.

So many people here can take credit for what is going on here today. I am very pleased and proud that it happens during the Republican majority, but we have come together. We have locked away the social security surplus so we are no longer spending it. This makes America's great pension program available for the seniors without penalty.

This is a wonderful thing that has happened. This country has gone through a great transition, and when it comes to working together to make things happen, the best of us comes out when we work together.

I want to publicly thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI), and of course, my chairman, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) for the work that they did in bringing this thing together. This is truly a bipartisan effort. It is truly in the best tradition of the American democracy.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to offer my support to the Senior Citizens Freedom to Work Act (H.R. 5), which repeals the Social Security ''earnings limitations.'' During a time when an increasing number of senior citizens are able to enjoy productive lives well past retirement age and businesses are in desperate need of experienced workers, it makes no sense to punish seniors for working. Yet the federal government does just that by deducting a portion of seniors' monthly Social Security check should they continue to work and earn income above an arbitrary government-set level.

When the government takes money every month from people's paychecks for the Social Security Trust Fund, it promises retirees that the money will be there for them when they retire. The government should keep that promise and not reduce benefits simply because a senior chooses to work.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, by providing a disincentive to remaining in the workforce, the earnings limitation deprives the American economy of the benefits of senior citizens who wish to continue working but are discouraged from doing so by fear of losing part of their Social Security benefits. The federal government should not discourage any citizen from seeking or holding productive employment.

The underlying issue of the earnings limitation goes back to the fact that money from the trust fund is routinely spent for things other than paying pensions to beneficiaries. This is why the first bill I introduced in the 106th Congress was the Social Security Preservation Act (H.R. 219), which forbids Congress from spending Social Security funds on anything other than paying Social Security pensions.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to reiterate my strong support for the Senior Citizens Freedom to Work Act. Repealing the ''earnings limitation'' will help ensure that America's seniors can continue to enjoy fulfilling and productive lives in their ''golden years.'' I also urge my colleagues to protect the integrity of the Social Security Trust Fund by cosponsoring the Social Security Preservation Act (H.R. 219).

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my strong support for H.R. 5, The Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act of 1999. This long overdue measure would allow persons aged 65 through 69 to continue working without losing some of their Social Security benefits.

Today, our seniors are more healthy and vigorous than ever. Many seniors who choose to continue to work find that working greatly enhances their retirement years. They are living longer and often finding that they either need or want to work well beyond traditional retirement age. Further, the time has come to stop penalizing seniors who need to keep working to supplement their Social Security incomes.

This legislation, which I cosponsored, would do away with this antiquated and obsolete punitive limit to Social Security payments. Under current law, senior citizens in this age group lose $1 in Social Security benefits for every $3 they earn each year above a certain level, which is $17,000 this year. The earnings test was designed during the Great Depression to encourage older workers to leave the workforce to create more jobs for younger workers. Today, we are experiencing a labor shortage, not a surplus. With our economy's emphasis on increased productivity, older workers have the years of experience and work ethic that are in great demand.

It is estimated that initially about 600,000 seniors would be affected by the elimination of the earnings test. According to the Social Security Administration, H.R. 5 will increase Social Security outlays by $17 billion over 5 years and $26 billion over 10 years. However, in the long term, the measure's cost would be negligible because of offsetting effects because retirees would no longer receive delayed retirement credits, which under current law compensate for the benefits lost to the earnings test applied to workers above the full retirement age, and the savings from this would offset the cost from eliminating the earnings test.

Lifting the limit on outside income for beneficiaries of retirement security is a key component of my initiatives to extend the life of Social Security and Medicare. H.R. 5 is crucial as part of a broader plan that uses the opportunity of a surplus to extend the life of Social Security and Medicare and pay down the debt.

In 1998, the Republican leadership brought an increase in the earnings limit to the floor attached to a tax bill that would have been financed by borrowing directly from the Social Security Trust Fund. I opposed this bill funded by the Social Security surplus, and supported an alternative that provided for an increase in the Social Security earnings limit identical to the one in the Republican bill, but not from the Social Security surplus. Unfortunately, the bill failed to be enacted.

H.R. 5 builds upon a bipartisan measure enacted in 1996 which I supported, the Senior Citizens' Right to Work Act (H.R. 3136), which provided for increases in the amounts of allowable earnings under the Social Security earnings limit for individuals who have attained retirement age. Now we are going a step further and eliminating the cap altogether. This is the right policy at the right time.

The earnings test is a relic of the Great Depression and the time has come to terminate it. The test is a severe disincentive for older people to work. Not only do older workers suffer a reduction in their standard of living because of the test, the nation's economy loses valuable experience and skills as well.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act.

This important legislation is long overdue. The earnings limit is a relic of an era when America was in a state of extreme economic despair. Mr. Speaker, today we are experiencing unprecedented prosperity. Our economy is booming. Our unemployment rate is lower than it has been in 30 years. It just doesn't make sense to discourage our nation's seniors from continuing to contribute to our economy by reducing their Social Security benefits.

Many of the seniors in my home state of Illinois continue to contribute to their communities through hard work. Repealing the earnings limit will have a very real impact on these seniors. Instead of being punished for their participation in the workforce, seniors should be encouraged to remain working. Eliminating the earnings test makes sense. It will be good for our seniors and good for our economy. And most importantly, we can do it without jeopardizing the future of Social Security. It is something that all of us, on both sides of the aisle, should be able to agree on.

But, once again, Republicans are playing politics with the issues that affect our nation's seniors the most. They are clamoring to point fingers at Democrats who have long been in support of amending the archaic earnings limit. But our nation's seniors cannot be fooled. Democrats support repealing the earnings limit while protecting the integrity of Social Security.

In the 105th Congress, the Republicans brought an increase of the earning limits to the floor but attached it to a risky tax cut package that would have put Social Security in severe jeopardy. Democrats strongly opposed that bill and offered a measure to raise the earnings limit and make the remaining tax cuts contingent on protecting the solvency of Social Security. This Democratic alternative was a responsible tax cut package that did not raid the Social Security Trust Fund. Not one Republican voted for this measure. This is just one of many cases that demonstrates who is on the side of seniors in this fight.

We must stop the finger pointing and come together to protect Social Security for generations to come. This is not the time for politics as usual. The livelihood of our nation's senior citizens is at stake.

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act of 2000.

Under current law, over 8,000 Kansas seniors lose some or all of their Social Security benefits due to the Social Security earnings limit because they choose to continue to work. Seniors aged 65 to 69 have $1 of their benefits reduced for every $3 they earn over the current earnings limit of $17,000. Simply, current law penalizes seniors for working. I do not believe it is fair to punish those seniors who want or need to participate in the workforce by having this disincentive to work.

Eliminating the earnings limit is not only fair for working seniors, it will improve the quality and efficiency of Social Security since the program will be easier and less expensive to administer. Furthermore, repealing the Social Security earnings limit is fiscally responsible. While the bill would increase Social Security spending by $22.7 billion over the next 10 years, the resulting lower long-term benefit payments will more than offset the costs.

Mr. Speaker, by allowing seniors who want to work to retain their benefits, Congress will take an important step towards strengthening retirement security for all seniors. This step, however, should not be our last. I urge my colleagues to begin working with me, in the same bipartisan manner that we worked on today's bill, to put Social Security on a firm financial footing for future generations. We need to build on today's success by dedicating a substantial portion of the budget surplus to pay down debt and strengthen Social Security and Medicare.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5 and to join me in the larger challenge of strengthening Social Security and Medicare for our seniors and for generations of future retirees.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, today, we take an important step forward in addressing a Social Security inequity that is an injustice to working seniors. Under the Social Security Earnings Limit, beneficiaries aged 65–69 can earn up to $17,000 a year—but for every $3 earned over this amount $1 of benefits is lost.

The cap has always been one of the most unpopular parts of the Social Security program—and for good reason. It penalizes older people for working—and deprives the nation of the talent of working seniors. It's time to get rid of it, once and for all.

The earnings cap is a relic of the Great Depression, when concern over massive joblessness led to a perception that retirees should be discouraged from rejoining the workforce. Today, people are living longer and working longer—and are as entitled as the rest of us to fair wages for their labor.

At a time when unemployment is at a 30-year low and we face acute labor shortages, this Depression-era work disincentive for seniors no longer makes sense.

Older Americans possess enormous talent and experience. It boggles the mind why we'd want to maintain disincentives for them to work. The earnings test not only erodes seniors' standards of living, but also costs the nation valuable skills in the workforce, as well as tax revenue generated by this income.

Retirees who receive income from other sources such as pensions or capital gains do not have any benefits reduced. Why should income from pensions or investments be treated more favorably than earned income?

I received a letter last summer from a retiree from my home town—Quincy, Massachusetts. He wrote: ''I would like to retire with dignity and only want what I deserve. I feel that with your support of this bill, it would enable me to live without worries of finances and diminish the concerns of my family.''

That is what this legislation is all about—simply giving seniors what they deserve.

While this is a step in the right direction, seniors deserve more—and we could and should be doing more—much more.

During Committee deliberations on this legislation last night, an amendment was offered to restore some of the benefits that are reduced due to the Government Pension Offset. This provision would have made widow's benefits more fair, and helped reduce the high rates of poverty that especially face elderly women.

Unfortunately, the Chairman passed on this opportunity—even though the Social Security Administration stated that the costs of adding this provision would be negligible.

Mr. Speaker, removing the earnings limit is progress—but is this all that we are going to do for seniors this year?

Are we going to address other inequities in the Social Security system—like the government pension offset, windfall reductions, duel entitlement provisions—or even the long-term solvency of the program?

Will we finally reauthorize the Older American Act?

Will we enact a Medicare prescription drug benefit?

Our senior citizens deserve more—much more. Passing this bill is the very least we can do. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation—and invite you to join me in efforts to ensure retirement security for all older Americans.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H.R. 5, the ''Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act.''

For years my constituents have raised concerns about unfair Social Security earnings limit. Finally, the House is going to eliminate this unfair penalty.

Whenever a working retiree earns more than $17,000 per year, they lose $1 of Social Security benefits for every $3 they earn above the limit. We penalize senior citizens who want to continue to participate in the work force.

There are 800,000 senior citizens who lose part or all of the Social Security benefits they've worked hard for because they earn ''too much'' money in retirement.

The Social Security earnings limit was created during the Great Depression and it punishes senior citizens for their work ethic and desire to be self-reliant in their ''golden years.''

Today unemployment is at an all-time low. The experience and skills developed by older workers during a lifetime in the workplace are being recognized and are in demand.

Social Security recipients are entitled to their benefits because they earned them during a lifetime of hard work. The government should not take those benefits away because individuals want to work. That's why I strongly support the passage of H.R. 5 today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act (H.R. 5). The Social Security earnings limit discourages those on retirement from remaining in the work force and contributing to the country's economic growth. Due to the longer life-spans and the improved quality of health among retirees, the advent of an aging society, and decreasing work force growth numbers, it is imperative that we explore better ways to tap the vauable and often underutilized resources of older Americans.

Due to the retirement earnings test, Social Security beneficiaries who have attained the normal retirement age (presently age 65) have their benefits reduced by $1 for every $3 that they earn in excess of $17,000. Similarly, Social Security beneficiaries between age 62 and the normal retirement age have their benefits reduced by $1 for every $2 that they earn in excess of $10,800. Although both groups of beneficiaries receive benefit increases once they stop working in order to compensate for reductions while they were working, there are a number of good reasons to support repealing the earnings test for beneficiaries who have reached the normal retirement age.

Repealing the retirement earnings test will allow thousands of Social Security recipients to work without a reduction in their benefits. The Social Security Administration estimates that, in 1999, 793,000 beneficiaries aged 65 through 69 had some or all of their benefits withheld because of the retirement earnings test.

Repealing the retirement earnings test may create positive work incentives. Because many Social Security beneficiaries are unaware that the benefit reductions they experience when they are working are offset by benefit increases once they stop working, they may perceive the retirement earnings test as a tax. In response, they may reduce the number of hours they work or they may decide to leave the labor force altogether.

The most recent economic research indicates that repealing the retirement earnings test for beneficiaries between the normal retirement age and age 69 may encourage work. In a 1998 study, Leora Friedberg, an economist at the University of California, San Diego, found that repealing the retirement earnings test for those beneficiaries would increase their labor supply by about five percent.

Repealing the retirement earnings test will not affect Social Security's finances over the long run. Repealing the RET for beneficiaries who have reached the normal retirement age would not change (for better or for worse) Social Security's currently projected long-range financing shortfall. Repealing the retirement earnings test for beneficiaries above the normal retirement age has a significant short-run cost ($22.7 billion over the next 10 years), but, over the long run, that cost is offset by lower benefit payments.

Again, under current law, workers who have their benefits reduced due to the retirement earnings test receive an actuarial adjustment that increases their benefits once they stop working. Repealing the retirement earnings test would mean that such workers would no longer receive that actuarial adjustment and that benefit payments would be lower.

Repealing the retirement earnings test will make the Social Security program easier and less expensive to administer. The Social Security Administration estimates that the cost of administering the earnings test in 1999 ranged from $100 to $150 million.

Since those costs include administering the earnings test for workers between age 62 and the normal retirement age, repealing the retirement earnings test for workers above the normal retirement age would save less than that amount.)

In addition, Social Security Administration estimates that it overpaid $787 million in benefits due to the retirement earnings test in 1997. Payments to beneficiaries aged 65 through 69 accounted for 63 percent of retirement earnings test related overpayments in 1998.

If older Americans have the capacity to earn more money without penalty, there will be a greater incentive for them to work. Working older Americans contribute additional money to the economy and provide more revenue for the treasury. Furthermore, with advances in medical technology older Americans will remain healthy longer and live longer productive lives.

I join with my Democratic colleagues and strongly support eliminating the retirement earnings test that penalizes and discourages workers age 65 through 69 from remaining in the workforce and contributing to our prosperous economy.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, later today, the House of Representatives will pass H.R. 5, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. This Act will eliminate the current tax law which penalizes senior citizens between 65–69 who continue to work. The Senior Citizens Earnings Test taxes senior citizens up to 33 percent of a senior's Social Security benefits.

One of the most egregious elements of our tax code is the continued over-taxing of American senior citizens who want to continue working. Repealing this tax on working seniors was the first bill I cosponsored when I was sworn into office in 1995, and, finally, I think we see light at the end of this tunnel. I would like to thank Speaker HASTERT for his leadership on this issue for more than a decade.

This Social Security Earnings Test has two adverse effects: it discourages seniors from working and for those who do work, it takes away a portion of the Social Security benefits they have earned. With today's labor shortage, this policy is greatly outdated and needs changing.

The Senior Citizens earnings tax penalty takes $1 of working seniors' Social Security benefits for every $3 they earn over a federal imposed income limit. Seniors earning more than $17,000 are subject to the earnings tax. In 1999 there were over 4 million working senior citizens, at least 800,000 of them lost some of their Social Security benefits because of the earnings test. By repealing this tax penalty, the ten year benefit to senior citizens would be about $23 billion. Seniors can use this extra money for helping with their grandchildren's education, a trip to visit their family or other loved ones, a car, medical expenses, and prescription drugs.

Republicans have ended 40 years of raiding the Social Security Trust Fund to fund pet projects by tax and spend politicians. Repealing this seniors' tax builds on that commitment to senior citizens by making sure they get the benefits they have worked for, even if they choose to continue working. In Florida, over 80,000 seniors could be able to take advantage of this tax fairness package. This bill ensure that they get the money they have earned as well as the Social Security benefits they deserve.

A similar bill introduced in 1998 as part of the plan to abolish the Social Security earnings limit only received support from 19 House Democrats. This year the President has indicated his willingness to sign such a bill, but he did not include it in his recently submitted FY 2001 budget. The measure enjoys support from such groups as AARP, United Seniors Association, and the 60 Plus Association. Let's do the right thing and pass this bill.

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, millions of older Americans are penalized every year simply because they set their alarm clocks to get up early in the morning, get dressed and head off to work. But unlike the rest of us who pull into rush hour traffic in the morning, that 65 year old in the car next to yours is paying the government a fee to go to work that day. That fee is called the Social Security Earnings Limitation.

My colleagues, today we can eliminate that fee and undo that injustice. Today we can begin to give America's senior citizens equal treatment under the nation's tax laws. Today we can guarantee that those senior Americans who want to continue to work—and can continue to work—today we can guarantee that they won't be penalized for making that contribution to their families, to their communities and to society in general.

By allowing older Americans the opportunity to stay in the workforce without penalty, we are allowing them to supplement their incomes, we are helping them to stay healthier, and we are giving them the opportunity to add to their later retirement. This is especially important as we see more and more Americans living into the eighties, their nineties and even into their hundreds.

So I encourage my colleagues today to give their older neighbors a fair break. Vote for the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that another popular tax relief proposal, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act, is coming up for a vote today. First, let me point out that the debate over H.R. 5 should contain no rhetoric that this repeal of the Social Security earnings limit will break the bank. The Social Security actuaries have confirmed that repeal of the earnings limit maintains the current projected solvency of the Social Security Trust Fund.

The repeal of the Social Security earnings limit for individuals who have attained the full retirement age has been a very high priority of mine and for my Republican colleagues elected to the House in 1986. Although we were able a few years ago to secure a gradual increase in the earnings limit for seniors who were 65 to 69 years old, the complete repeal of the earnings limit for this group is a big victory. I am pleased that so many senior citizens' groups have joined us in this fight, and I welcome President Clinton's announced support for this repeal as well.

The Social Security earnings limit is a relic of the Great Depression when it was necessary to entice older workers to leave the work force, making more jobs available to younger workers. Today, many businesses and communities face a serious worker shortage. My congressional district has an especially low rate of unemployment now: a meager 1.6 percent. This means that opportunities for older workers abound, providing earning potential and related benefits to the seniors willing and physically able to meet the challenge. Further, I am pleased that H.R. 5 provides immediate relief by covering income earned after December 31, 1999.

For those in the 10th Congressional District and elsewhere who do not know me well, I am proud to report that I am a working senior. Too old now to benefit from this change in the tax code, I nevertheless enjoy a higher quality of life—and perhaps better health—which comes with being more active. In addition, I feel that my many years of experience add to my job performance as a long work history does for so many seniors.

Again, let me say that I appreciate the support of our colleagues in getting this repeal bill before the House today. Our Nation's seniors deserve this extra incentive to remain productive in their later years and our work force needs them.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5, the Senior Citizens Freedom to Work Act. I have long supported repeal of this onerous, burdensome rule on this nation's working seniors.

The earnings limit penalty requires seniors age 65 to 69 who earn over $17,000 to forfeit 33% of their Social Security benefits. Seniors with golden parachutes or extensive investments do not face such a penalty . . . only those who get up every morning, head off to work, and make valuable contributions to our labor force. This is unfair.

As a relic of the Great Depression, Congress is overdue to reform this antiquated law. The earnings limit is a great disincentive to seniors to remain in the workforce if they so choose. In reality, it is the imposition of a high marginal tax rate on productive seniors in the workforce, who are also paying federal and state income taxes, and Social Security payroll taxes.

I'm pleased to see this legislation come to the floor in a bipartisan fashion. I'm pleased the President has indicated he will sign it. I look forward to lifting this burden from working seniors.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, today we are considering very important legislation which will eliminate one of the most unfair tax burdens even placed on Americans and give our senior citizens the freedom to work.

The high tax rate on the earnings of older Americans has created a significant roadblock at a time when workforce participation by these individuals is extremely important to the continuing growth of the U.S. economy. Economists and Federal Reserve Board officials, including Chairman Alan Greenspan, have expressed concern that the shrinking pool of available workers cannot satisfy the surging quantity of goods and services demanded by the American people and people around the world.

I have heard a number of stories, some during a hearing I held as Chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee for the Education & Workforce Committee, and others more recently during town hall meetings I held last week in West Michigan. In each case the message was the same: the current system discourages older Americans from re-entering or continuing in the workforce. We need to keep these individuals in the workforce and the repeal of the earnings limit will be an essential step in encouraging their participation.

Mr. Speaker, I should also note that as seniors and others enter the workforce, there is one thing they do not know—the true costs of Social Security and Medicare. Currently, an employee's W–2 lists his or hers withholdings for Social Security and Medicare. What the employees don't know, is how much their employer also pays for these programs. This is another unfairness we need to correct by passing the Right To Know National Payroll Act, which would require the employers share of Social Security and Medicare taxes to be disclosed on each employee's annual W–2. American workers have a right to know the true costs of Social Security and Medicare.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, today, we are witnessing the best of Congress as Members of different ideologies and political parties come together for the benefit of the American people.

Today, the House of Representatives will pass the Senior Citizens Freedom to Work Act (H.R. 5) which will repeal the Depression-era earnings limit imposed on Social Security recipients between the ages of 65 and 69 who decide to supplement their retirement income by working. Under current law, seniors who work lose $1 of their Social Security benefits for every $3 they earn outside earned income beyond $17,000 a year.

In the real world, this outdated law has adversely affected several thousand of my constituents in Queens and the Bronx. A number of seniors in my district have gotten part-time jobs to supplement their income so as to improve their quality of life, offset some of their expenses such as the high costs of their prescription drugs and remain active.

Unfortunately, once many of these seniors recognize how much they are losing in their Social Security benefits by working, they quit their jobs.

I believe it is both foolish and counterproductive to punish working people.

This legislation will assist people like Mr. Christopher Christie, a constituent of mine from the Bronx, New York. He was punished by the earning limit. After he retired, he spent several weeks working in a small business she operated and as a doorman on Park Avenue. He saw his Social Security check garnished monthly because of his outside jobs.

Therefore, I am pleased that the House is debating this legislation to repeal the earnings limit and allow our seniors the freedom to work and attain some financial independence.

This bill represents a solid first step in improving the quality of life of America's seniors. I hope that Congress will now address the other issues of importance to seniors, such as the inclusion of prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the bill H.R. 5, The Senior Citizens Freedom to Work act.

Under current law, seniors who claim Social Security benefits before they reach 69 are subject to a reduction in benefits if they continue to work. For seniors 65 to 69, benefits are reduced by $1 for every $3 that their earnings exceed the limit, which was $17,000 in 2000, and which rises to $30,000 in 2002 and is indexed after that. This bill would repeal these limits entirely, effective immediately.

The earnings limit originated in the 1930's and has remained in effect because Congress never changed it, despite the vast changes in the economy and the lives of senior citizens that have taken place in the last 60 years.

Nearly 50,000 senior citizens in Texas are currently being penalized for working, a prospect that does not bode well for the economic circumstances for those in the twilight of their lives. We should not punish senior citizens for participating in the workforce; we should reward that. People remain healthy and vigorous much longer than they did in the 1930's.

It makes sense to repeal this obsolete and punitive limit. I have supported raising the limit in past years and support repealing it now. Today's legislation is important to consider as part of a broader plan to use the surplus to extend the life of Social Security and Medicare and pay down the debt.

Today, we can take the first step towards strengthening retirement security for all seniors. But this step was just the very beginning of what we must do in order to put Social Security on a firm financial footing well into the 21st century. I hope the House of Representatives, which showed such passion today when talking about removing the earnings limit will show the same kind of passion over the next few months as we debate the proper use of the surplus. We must use the budget surplus to strengthen Social Security and Medicare.

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong and stringent support of H.R. 5, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. Current law limits the income of retirees ages 65 to 69 to $17,000. Social Security benefits are reduced one dollar for every three dollars earned above $17,000. Social Security Administration statistics show that nearly ''690,000 beneficiaries between 65 and 69 lose some or all of their benefits because of excess earnings resulting from their work.'' This bill, which repeals the earnings limits imposed under Social Security on our nation's working senior citizens, is a welcomed measure which will allow our seniors to continue to contribute to our growing economy.

The earnings limit is an outdated relic of the depression era social security program. It was instituted based on a policy that addressed a problem of that time; however, times have changed. Then, our nation was worried about moving seniors out of the work force to make room for the growing number of younger workers. Now, labor statistics indicate that as our nation's population ages, there will be a shortage of workers available to meet our future labor needs. H.R. 5 is needed to provide incentive to seniors to help supplement the nation's future need for workers.

Past Social Security policy overlooked the valuable assets that senior citizens bring to our nation's workforce. Seniors have a wealth of wisdom and experience to offer the workforce. Most enjoy bestowing the benefit of their experience and wisdom on younger workers and generally offer their knowledge for reasons other than the sheer pursuit of wealth. Seniors tend to exemplify the attributes of hard-work, punctuality and patience. In this time of instant gratification, I can think of no better teachers of the value of a work ethic which developed over time can be passed on to future generations. Seniors have much to offer and this bill will make it easier for the workforce to receive the benefit of their wisdom and experience.

Seniors have worked long and hard to earn and they should not be deprived of the fruits of their labor. Today, seniors are living longer and healthier lives and they are more fit and willing than ever to contribute to our nation's workforce. Many view working as a necessary part of their well-being and quality of life. As a society we should not handicap the lifestyle of those who choose to work into their silver years. H.R. 5 reconciles past policy that punished seniors by forcing them to sit on the sidelines of the workforce.

There are also many seniors who have no choice but to work. Skyrocketing, pharmaceutical prices have left seniors struggling to meet the financial burden of much needed medicine. Every year we listen to the stories of seniors who die in their home due to their inability to meet the heating or air-conditioning costs. How can we continue to penalize them for their necessary efforts to meet those costs?

Unfortunately, many of the seniors who need to work most are our nation's women, who outlive their male spouse 75% of the time. Indeed, ''103,000 dependent and spousal beneficiaries are affected by the limit.'' Widowed women often are forced to reenter the work force in order to meet their basic needs. They should not be forced to lose some or all of their retirement benefits, while striving to secure the simple necessities of living.

While I support and applaud this effort on behalf of our nation's seniors, I would be remiss not to mention the continued problem facing Social Security. Ensuring the future solvency of the Social Security Trust Fund is a problem this Congress still must address. It is my hope that H.R. 5, is simply a stepping stone along the path of addressing a problem that is not going to go away. I urge the leadership of this House to bring forth legislation that seeks to make the tough decisions necessary to address the solvency of the Social Security Trust Fund before we are faced with even tougher more painful decisions.

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), for his long commitment to repealing the punitive tax on seniors. One of the first bills I sponsored way back in 1989, during my first year in Congress, was DENNY HASTERT's ''Older Americans' Freedom to Work Act.'' I'm delighted that we are finally moving forward with this historic legislation. It is long overdue.

I recently pointed out, while arguing for repeal of the marriage penalty tax, that in America you should not be discriminated against by our tax code solely because of your status. We have civil rights laws in America to make sure that each of us is protected against unfair treatment by our government. Yet, just as the marriage penalty discriminates against people who are married, the earnings test discriminates against people over 65 who choose to stay productive.

This costly and regressive tax forces many seniors from the job market. Whereas 50 years ago 47% of men over 65 were employed in the labor force, today it is only 16.5%.

A senior who chooses to work after the retirement age of 65 faces a tax burden that amounts to government confiscation. A senior who chooses to work loses $1 in Social Security benefits for every $3 in wages and salaries he or she earns over $17,000. Yet $17,000 is close to the official U.S. government poverty level for working families. When one adds the burdens of income and payroll taxes, this amounts to a marginal tax rate on working seniors as high as 80%—higher than the rate for billionaires.

The government should not penalize working seniors by canceling their Social Security benefits. These benefits are not welfare; they have been earned over a lifetime of hard work.

Repeal of the earnings test is also another important step toward ensuring that Social Security is always there for seniors. I am hopeful we can bring the same bipartisan support we have today to the upcoming debate on supplementing Social Security benefits through personal retirement accounts.

The Clinton-Gore administration has had eight years to repeal this discriminatory burden on seniors. The Democratic Congress has 40 years to do it. Not only did they fail to do so, they raised taxes on working seniors. The 1993 Clinton tax increase included a 70% increase in income taxes on Social Security benefits, for seniors earning as little as $34,000.

In 1996, for the first time ever, the new Republican majority in Congress provided relief to seniors by reducing the Social Security earnings penalty. The new law more than doubled the amount a senior citizen could earn without losing his or her Social Security benefits, from $11,280 to $30,000 in 2002. This change has already had a positive effect: the number of senior citizens choosing to remain in the labor force has increased by 7%. Today's long-overdue step—passage of H.R. 5 to completely repeal the unfair earnings test—finally finishes the job Congress started in 1996, and that Speaker HASTERT started more than a decade ago.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand with members of Congress who have introduced bills that advocate comprehensive reform of Social Security. We understand the immensity of the challenge facing the country as baby boomers retire, how demographics result in a huge responsibility for future generations, and the importance of preparing Social Security for the future. You will find repeal in the Social Security Solvency Act for 2000, which I introduced in November. Bills that I introduced this year and last year, including the Social Security Solvency Act for 2000, included elimination of the earnings limit, plus another provision that I consider to be the counterbalance to the earnings test—accelerating the increase in the ''delayed retirement credit'' or DRC.

If a worker decides to continue working after 65 and defer his monthly benefit, the DRC increases the size of his monthly check he will ultimately receive from Social Security. A worker who turns 65 this year will see his benefits increase 6 percent for every year he defers his benefit. Current law allows a worker to delay retirement for up to five years, working until he reaches 70. If that retiree's monthly benefit was $1,000 when he turned 65, it will be $1,300 if he puts off receiving a Social Security check until he's 70—that's an extra $3,600 a year. However, if that worker enjoys an average length of retirement, this delay puts him at a disadvantage. He should be receiving an extra $4,800 a year, not $3,600.

Under current law, the DRC is set to rise to 8 percent in 2008. This is the amount that Social Security considers to be ''actuarially sound.'' That means that a retiree who delays receiving his benefit is getting proper compensation in the future for the money he does not get today. As we eliminate the earnings limit, it is reasonable to include an increase in the DRC. Retirees deserve a fair deal today—not in 2008. Now that we are taking away the earnings limit that discourages senior citizens from working, we should accelerate the DRC and encourage them to ''save'' so they have a higher benefit during the years they no longer have outside earnings. The accelerated DRC will encourage people to work as long as they choose. The Social Security actuaries have examined my proposal to accelerate the DRC, and they say it is actuarially sound. It doesn't cost taxpayers or weaken the Social Security trust fund.

There are three reasons to accelerate the DRC:

1. Fairness—Give workers who choose to delay receiving their Social Security benefit an increase that is consistent with actuarial assumptions.

2. Choice—Give senior citizens more options to manage their retirement—they choose when they retire and when they should apply for benefits.

3. To Fight Poverty—Give a higher survivor benefit to widows whose spouses took benefits based on the DRC.

When I learned of the Ways and Means markup of H.R. 5, I approached Representative SHAW and Representative ARCHER, and presented my amendment to accelerate the DRC. After careful consideration by the Social Security subcommittee, I received agreement to add this amendment. Gene Sperling called me on the evening of Feb. 28 to tell me that the President had agreed to support it, and the minority gave their consent on Tuesday.

This amendment is to too important to be stalled by politics. I will continue to fight for its inclusion, and I remain optimistic that I will see the DRC acceleration language in the bill that President Clinton finally signs into law.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of bringing relief to thousands of seniors who are unfairly punished by the Social Security earnings penalty. For too many seniors, working after they turn 65 isn't an option—it is a necessity. They can ill afford a smaller Social Security check each month. We should fix this inequity and do what is fair and right for our seniors. They deserve nothing less.

Last week, I met with a group of working seniors in West Haven, Connecticut. One was Mary Grabowski. Mary recently retired, but she quickly realized she had to continue to work after she turned 65 because she simply couldn't afford not to. It wasn't a choice. It wasn't so she could make a little extra money on the side. It was about being able to pay her bills.

I also listened to the story of Estelle Stuart. Estelle is also a recent retiree who came to realize that Social Security simply isn't going to be enough for her to get by. In particular, Estelle is forced to work in order to pay for the prescription drugs she desperate needs.

Mary Grabowski, Estelle Stuart, and the thousands of other seniors like them who must continue to work after 65, are perfect examples of why the earnings penalty is wrong and why we need to end it. I want to thank both of them for sharing their story with me.

Ending the earnings penalty today is a good start. It's important to thousands of seniors. But tomorrow, let's get to work and pass a responsible plan that will strengthen Social Security and Medicare, and provide our seniors with a prescription drug benefit. It is a plan that honors our seniors and protects our values. We've taken a positive first step today. Let's get to work and finish the job.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, the second session of the 106th Congress has been off to a quick start passing landmark legislation that directly impacts millions of Americans and improves our quality of life.

First, we repealed the Marriage Penalty Tax, and today, we will ensure that older men and women still in the workforce will be able to keep more of their hard-earned money without losing important Social Security benefits.

Mr. Speaker, as you are well aware, the golden years for many older men and women in America involve all types of activities. More and more, older Americans are sharing their lifelong experience in business and industry with a new generation of Americans in the workplace. Benefiting from tremendous advances in health care and increasing life expectancy rates, our older people—the generation of men and women who carried our nation through World War II, and beyond—continue to contribute to the economic well being of our state and nation.

While some older men and women are working because they need the paycheck to put food on the table, others keep working simply because they like what they do and see no reason to stop doing it just because they have reached their sixty-fifth birthday.

Right now, the tax code penalizes older Americans who choose to keep working. Over 800,000 seniors today lose part or all of their Social Security benefits because of the Social Security ''earnings limit.'' Almost 37,000 older men and women in New Jersey alone are hit by this unfair penalty.

The present limit cuts or entirely eliminates Social Security benefits for working older men and women whose yearly incomes exceed a certain amount. In 2000, working Americans between the ages of 65–69 will lose $1 in Social Security benefits for every $3 in earnings over the limit.

The Social Security earnings limit was created during the Great Depression when jobs were scarce. It was designed to encourage older workers to leave the workforce to free up jobs for younger workers. What may have been good policy during the worst economic downturn in American history is bad policy today during one of the best economic cycles with more challenges and opportunities for everyone.

Our economy is booming and unemployment is at a record low. These working older men and women are an important part of that success. They should be encouraged to remain a vital part of the work force rather than be penalized for their labors. In addition, people today are living longer and healthier lives. Soon, millions of baby boomers will reach retirement age. If these people wish to remain productive members of the workforce long past their sixty-fifth birthday, their experiences, industry, and productiveness should be rewarded.

The Social Security earnings limit penalty is wrong, unfair, and should be scrapped. With the President in agreement, and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in full support, let's pass "The Senior Citizens Freedom to Work Act" (H.R. 5), after so many years of inaction.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). All time for debate having expired, pursuant to the order of the House of today, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The Chair announces that the vote on the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered, will immediately follow this vote, and will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 422, nays 0, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 27]

YEAS—422

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Allen
Andrews
Archer
Armey
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldacci
Baldwin
Ballenger
Barcia
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Becerra
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Canady
Cannon
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth-Hage
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Conyers
Cooksey
Costello
Cox
Coyne
Cramer
Crane
Crowley
Cubin
Cummings
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
DeMint
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
Engel
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fletcher
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Fowler
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gekas
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (TX)
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill (IN)
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoeffel
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inslee
Isakson
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy
Kildee
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kleczka
Klink
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuykendall
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
Largent
Larson
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Metcalf
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moore
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Morella
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Ose
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pease
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Phelps
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reyes
Reynolds
Riley
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Rothman
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Salmon
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaffer
Schakowsky
Scott
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shows
Shuster
Simpson
Sisisky
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Spence
Stabenow
Stark
Stearns
Stenholm
Strickland
Stump
Stupak
Sununu
Sweeney
Talent
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman
Tiahrt
Tierney
Toomey
Towns
Traficant
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Velazquez
Visclosky
Vitter
Walden
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Weygand
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wise
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—13

Bliley
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Campbell
Cook
Horn
Kilpatrick
Mica
Millender-McDonald
Norwood
Spratt
Vento
Waters

1316

Mr. DIXON changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I did not hear the bells on rollcall 27. I spoke in support of the bill, H.R. 5, and I would have voted in favor of the bill had I been present.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 27, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 27, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act, on which I addressed the House, I was regretfully delayed on official business with a visiting delegation from the German Bundestag. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 27, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 27, I was inadvertently detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 27, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, the pending business is the question of the Chair's approval of the Journal of the last day's proceedings.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

IRAN NONPROLIFERATION ACT OF 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order at any time today to take from the Speaker's table H.R. 1883, with Senate amendments thereto, and to consider in the House a motion offered by the Chairman of the Committee on International Relations or his designee that the House concur in the Senate amendments; that the Senate amendments and the motion be considered as read; that the motion be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on International Relations, or their designees; and that the previous question be considered as ordered on the motion to final adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the motion offered by the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the unanimous consent request just agreed to, I call up the bill (H.R. 1883) to provide for the application of measures to foreign persons who transfer to Iran certain goods, services, or technology, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

MOTION OFFERED BY MR. GILMAN

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion.

The SPEAKER. The Clerk will designate the motion.

The text of the motion is as follows:

Mr. GILMAN moves to concur in the Senate amendments to H.R. 1883.

The text of the Senate amendments is as follows:

Senate Amendments: Page 2, line 3, strike out ''1999'' and insert ''2000''.

Page 5, line 7, strike out all after ''Order'' down to and including ''person.'' in line 8 and insert ''No. 12938.''.

Page 5, Line 9, strike out all after ''prohibition.—'' down to and including ''terminate'' in line 12 and insert ''Prohibition on United States Government sales to that foreign person of any item on the United States Munitions List as in effect on August 8, 1995, and termination of''.

Page 5, Lines 16 and 17, strike out ''The President shall deny licenses and suspend'' and insert ''Denial of licenses and suspension of''.

Page 8, after line 23, insert:

''(b) Opportunity To Provide Information.—Congress urges the President—

''(1) in every appropriate case, to contact ion a timely fashion each foreign person identified in each report submitted pursuant to section 2(a), or the government with primary jurisdiction over such person, in order to afford such person, or governments, the opportunity to provide explanatory, exculpatory, or other additional information with respect to the transfer that caused such person to be identified in a report submitted pursuant to section 2(a); and

''(2) to exercise the authority in subsection (a) in all cases where information obtained from a foreign person identified in a report submitted pursuant to section 2(a), or from the government with primary jurisdiction over such person, establishes that the exercise of such authority is warranted.''.

Page 8, line 24, strike out ''(b)'' and insert ''(c)''.

Page 9, line 11, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 9, lines 12 and 13, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 10, Lines 11 and 12, strike out ''through the implementation of concrete steps''.

Page 10, Line 16, strike out all after ''systems'' down to and including ''transfers'' in line 18.

Page 10, Line 19, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 10, Line 21, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 11, Line 25, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 12, Line 2, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 13, Line 6, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 13, Line 8, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 13, Line 10, after ''Module'' insert '', and for the purchase (at a total cost not to exceed $14,000,000) of the pressure dome for the Interim Control Module and the Androgynous Peripheral Docking Adapter and related hardware for the United States propulsion module,''.

Page 13, line 15, after ''no'' insert ''credible''.

Page 17, lines 15 and 16, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 17, lines 17 and 18, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 18, lines 1 and 2, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency or Russian Space Agency''.

Page 18, line 6, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency or Russian Space Agency''.

Page 18, line 10, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency''.

Page 18, lines 13 and 14, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency or Russian Space Agency''.

Page 18, line 15, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency or Russian Space Agency''.

Page 18, Line 16, strike out ''Russian Space Agency'' and insert ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency or Russian Space Agency''.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House today, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1883.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, we have before us H.R. 1883, the Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000. This measure was introduced by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON), the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN), and myself on May 20 of last year. There are almost 230 cosponsors on this measure.

When it came to a vote in the House last September, it was approved by a vote of 419 to 0. This vote was even more remarkable when one considers that the administration sent us a letter just before the House voted stating that the President's senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill. Obviously, the administration's plea that we not approve the bill, that we instead allow more time for diplomacy, was rejected unanimously by the House.

Just last week, the measure came up in the Senate, and the Senate brushed aside the administration's objection and approved the bill by a significant vote of 98 to 0.

The unanimity of both chambers of Congress and the strong bipartisan support for this measure should send a powerful signal to would-be proliferators to Iran. Our Nation will not accept the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles to Iran.

Mr. Speaker, this situation is true today, and it will remain true even if the encouraging political developments we are beginning to observe in Iran lead eventually to major improvements in Iranian foreign policy. The fact is a democratic Iran at peace with itself and with the rest of the world will not need or want weapons of mass destruction, nor will they need any missiles capable of delivering such weapons.

Political change in Iran may ultimately eliminate the need for this kind of legislation. But such change will never make us regret enacting it. Indeed, we fully expect that the leaders of a democratic and a peaceful Iran would have no complaints about this legislation because it would be wholly consistent with the policies that they would pursue.

For now, however, Iran is continuing its programs to develop weapons of mass destruction, and this poses a great threat to our Nation, to our military personnel in the Persian Gulf, and to our friends and allies throughout the region. This legislation states to those nations and entities that are helping Iran's weapons programs that they must stop or face severe consequences.

I am confident that the unanimous vote in both houses of Congress will compel the President to reconsider the administration's threat to veto this legislation.

I want to clarify for the record that no major substantive changes in the legislation were made by the Senate amendment that was adopted last week. Due to the courtesy of the chief sponsors of the Senate companion measure to H.R. 1838, most notably Senators LOTT and LIEBERMAN, I was fully involved in developing the Senate amendment. Indeed, two of the most significant changes it made was suggested by me to the sponsors of the Senate amendment. I can assure our colleagues the changes suggested were intended to strengthen, not weaken, this measure.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, the Senate amendment did not convert the bill from a mandatory sanctions bill into a bill merely authorizing the imposition of sanctions, as has been reported by the press. This bill always afforded the President discretion, discretion with regard to the imposition of sanctions, except in the case of the proliferation by entities under the jurisdiction or control of the Russian Aviation and Space Agency. The Senate amendment preserved that structure.

In order to underscore that the Senate amendment was almost entirely cosmetic in nature, I prepared a summary of the changes made by that amendment. This summary makes clear that the bill was not weakened in any way by the Senate amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I include the summary for the RECORD as follows:

SUMMARY OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 1883, IRAN NONPROLIFERATION ACT OF 2000

During the Senate's consideration of the Iran Nonproliferation Act on February 24, 2000, a manager's amendment was adopted making a number of minor changes in the bill. These changes were largely technical or cosmetic in nature. They include.

The name of the bill was changed from the ''Iran Nonproliferation Act of 1999'' to the ''Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000''.

The word ''shall'' was deleted at several places in the bill dealing with the possible imposition of sanctions on entities that transfer weapons technology to Iran. This was done to emphasize the fact (which is explicit elsewhere in the House-passed bill) that the imposition of such sanctions is discretionary rather than mandatory.

Language was inserted to emphasize that the president may contact entities suspected of transferring weapons technology to Iran in order to afford them an opportunity to demonstrate that they did not make such transfers. Again, this concept was already contained in the House-passed bill.

The name ''Russian Space Agency'' was changed to ''Russian Aviation and Space Agency'' most places that it appears in the bill in order to reflect the fact that the name of the agency has been officially changed by the Russian Government.

One element of the certification that the President would have to make in order to provide Russian ''extraordinary payments in connection with the International Space Station'' was revised to eliminate a requirement that Russia demonstrate its commitment to stop proliferation to Iran by implementing ''concrete steps''. The key element of this certification was not changed, however. The President would still have to certify that there is no credible information that any entity under the jurisdiction or control of the Russian Aviation and Space Agency has proliferated to Iran during the previous year in order to provide such extraordinary payments to Russia.

The Senate amendment expanded the exception to the bill's restriction on providing Russia ''extraordinary payments in connection with the International Space Station''. In addition to extraordinary payments related to the Russian Service Module (which were permitted under the House bill), the amendment permits a total of no more than $14 million in extraordinary payments by the United States in order to buy from Russia two docking adaptors that will facilitate the attachment of two U.S. modules to the International Space Station. The conditions on making extraordinary payments pursuant to the exception (e.g., no credible information that a recipient of such payments has proliferated to Iran) remain unchanged.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I want to elaborate on one point that came up in the Senate debate on the measure. Senators LEVIN, LOTT, and LIEBERMAN agreed that, in deciding whether information is ''credible,'' and I put that in quotes, for purposes of the reporting requirement of this bill, the President is entitled to judge the credibility of information on the basis of all information available to him.

This observation is unassailable so far as it goes. Obviously, one piece of information can be out of sync with all of the other available information that it is not believable. But this does not mean that incriminating information that is novel or surprising must be corroborated before it can be deemed credible.

The Senators certainly did not mean to suggest that the President is entitled to judge one piece of specific information against the absence of other information, and on that basis conclude that one piece of information is not credible. Such will, in my estimation, be the typical case arising under this legislation, a piece of specific incriminating information will be found about a possible transfer, and there will be no other specific information pointing one way or another about that particular transfer. In this context, there really is no other available information against which the incriminating information can be judged. If the incriminating information is, on its face, believable, then the President will be required to report that situation to us pursuant to section 2(a) of the bill.

The real point in here, Mr. Speaker, is the one emphasized in the report of the Committee on International Relations on the bill. The purpose of the credible information standard is to get away from the preponderance of the evidence standard the administration has applied under previous nonproliferation laws.

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We do not want there to be any weighing of evidence or any burden of proof under the credible information standard. The test is whether the information is believable, not whether the President thinks it is likely true.

I want to thank my colleagues for the support they provided to H.R. 1883. And I urge them to once, again, cast a favorable vote on this measure.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support for this motion. While I have somewhat different interpretations than the chairman of the full committee, on some of the intent, the basic legislation does the job that we all sought to achieve in this nonproliferation act.

What is clear is that the timing is somewhat unfortunate, as I think the chairman referenced so aptly in his remarks, because for the first time in many years, we are seeing within Iran the development of an opposition that seems to want to moderate the policies of that country.

I certainly hope that no one would take that as a signal in this legislation that we have not recognized this great step forward, which is really a function, not of everything we have done or anything else, but a function of what the Iranians want for their country.

No matter what happens around the globe, it is an important goal of this administration, and I think in the interests of the entire world, to restrict access to nuclear weapons, chemical, biological and missile technology. This is clearly a case where the world is not safer by more people having access to this technology.

I think it is critically important for the Congress and the administration to work together to make sure that we do everything in our power, using Nunn-Lugar resources to reduce the availability of fissionable material and the technology expertise in the Soviet Union to further develop nuclear weapons and to proliferate.

There are tremendous pressures in the Soviet Union, former Soviet Union, Russia, both from their own kind of old pride of having once been a major superpower; and I think, additionally, the pressures for economic advancement to sell some of these technologies. But it is not in the Russian's best interests. It is clearly not in the world's best interests. It is not in our best interests.

I want to commend the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and others who have participated in this legislation. It is an important piece of legislation. I am very excited to have it here on the floor, only somewhat distressed that it comes by accident of the Senate schedule today so close to what was a positive development in Iran.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time and I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of my time be controlled by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE.) Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000 and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this important message.

In 1993, the administration invited Russia to join the International Space Station project. At the time the White House made it clear to Congress that Russian participation in the International Space Station was a key component of the administration's efforts to encourage Russia to adhere to a variety of nonproliferation norms and agreements.

Many Members, myself included, expressed concerns about transforming the space station into a foreign policy program, but accepted the administration's argument that Russian involvement was important to halting the spread of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction.

Since then, we have seen repeated reports in the Western and Russian media that a variety of Russian aerospace enterprises are assisting Iran's efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles. The CIA's 721 report of February 2, 2000 confirms these reports.

Russia's aerospace enterprises are not private firms in the way U.S. companies are. In fact, most Russian aerospace enterprises are owned and operated by the Russian government.

In 1998 and 1999, the Russian government clarified its control of its aerospace industry by putting many of these Russian enterprises under the legal and economic jurisdiction of the Russian Aviation and Space Agency.

Having paid the Russians some $800 million between 1994 and 1998, the administration announced in late 1999 its intention to make additional payments to the Russian Aviation and Space Agency.

The administration's reliance on Russia has put the American taxpayer in the unacceptable position of possibly subsidizing the very Russian aerospace enterprises that are helping Iran develop weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles. The administration's current policy creates an unhealthy situation for both our space program and our nonproliferation efforts. H.R. 1883 addresses these concerns by requiring the President to make a determination about the extent of Russian assistance to Iran before NASA can make additional payments to the Russian aviation and space agency.

Moreover, the bill holds the Russian government accountable by preventing payments to the Russian Aviation and Space Agency if it or any of the entities for which it is legally responsible are involved in inappropriate technical assistance to Iran. Certainly nobody in this body wants to see U.S. tax dollars inadvertently subsidizing the proliferation of ballistic missiles. H.R. 1883 helps prevent just such a prospect.

While helping curb proliferation, the bill does not jeopardize the safety of our astronauts about the ISS or delay the delivery of the Russian hardware that NASA claims it requires in order to reduce U.S. dependence upon Russia in the space station program. Both of these issues are addressed in narrow and specific exceptions to the bill.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1883 is a sound step to prevent the spread of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction. It passed the House by a vote of 419 to 0 and the Senate by a vote of 98 to 0. I am proud to have joined the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), the ranking minority member, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON), and the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) as an original cosponsor of this bill and look forward to the day when the President signs it into law.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN).

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I want to associate myself with the remarks of the previous speakers on this legislation.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 1883. It gives the President authority to impose sanctions on foreign entities that supply Iran with technologies related to nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and ballistic missiles.

Two weeks ago we saw dramatic evidence of the yearning for change among the Iranian people. Despite efforts by the Council of Guardians to limit the pool of eligible candidates, reformers won an overwhelming majority in the Iranian parliament.

Regrettably, this election landslide will not automatically translate into moderate Iranian policies. Supreme Leader Khameini and other conservative elements retain control over many institutions, including the securities services. And the intentions of President Khatemi and his reformist allies still are not completely clear.

I would welcome an improvement in U.S.-Iranian relations, but a constructive and peaceful bilateral relationship must be based on Iran's willingness to abandon its quest for weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, to drop its efforts to disrupt the Middle East peace process, and to improve its dismal human rights record. This legislation focuses on the first of these areas of concern. It goes without saying that an Iran armed with these fearsome weapons would be a serious threat to our allies in the Middle East and eventually the United States itself.

Placing additional sanctions on Iran would have little if any effect, given that the U.S. has maintained a trade embargo on the Islamic Republic since the 1979 revolution. This legislation attempts to get at the problem by authorizing sanctions against foreign entities that continue to supply Iran with advanced technologies.

According to a recent unclassified CIA report covering the first half of 1999, Iran remains, ''One of the most active countries seeking to acquire WMD technology from abroad. In doing so, Tehran is attempting to develop an indigenous capability to produce various types of weapons, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems. Iran focused its efforts to acquire WMD-related equipment, materials and technology primarily on entities in Russia, China, North Korea, and Western Europe.''

The report goes on to say that ''entities in Russia and China continue to supply a considerable amount and a wide variety of ballistic missile-related goods and technology to Iran. Tehran is using these goods and technologies to support current production programs and to achieve its goal of becoming self-sufficient in the production of ballistic missiles.''

It has additional comments on Iran's program with respect to nuclear weapons, which I will assert in my full statement. But, Mr. Speaker, these facts paint a very troubling picture. They reinforced my view that this legislation and other measures are absolutely necessary to prevent or at a minimum slow down Iranian acquisition of WMD and ballistic missiles.

As the CIA report indicates, Russian entities have been among the worst proliferators to Iran. Some steps have been taken to prevent this technology transfer. Last year Russia passed a new export control law and placed monitors in key aerospace entities. Unfortunately, these modest efforts have not stopped the proliferation.

I find it somewhat ironic that Russia objects so strenuously to U.S. deployment of a limited national missile defense system designed specifically to knock down missiles fired by countries like Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, given that the Russian entities are some of the primary suppliers of missile and WMD technology to those very governments and given that Russia may also be a target of those regimes.

I am not under any illusions that this legislation will solve once and for all the problem of proliferation to Iran, but it is a step in the right direction, and more needs to be done. For example, we should initiate an intensive effort with our allies to develop a more effective multilateral export control regime to keep dangerous technologies out of the hands of anti-western regimes. The current Wassenaar arrangement simply is not up to doing the job.

Last year we passed the Iran Nuclear Nonproliferation Act by a vote of 419 to 0, the Senate passed it by 98 to 0. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Senate amendments today and sending the legislation on to the President.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY), a senior member of our committee.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I thank him for his leadership on this important issue.

There is no question the Senate has weakened in effect the strengths of this bill, but it is still very important that we go forward with it. It is still an important piece of legislation.

Here is why. In this legislation we are giving Russia a clear choice. Russia can choose to continue to sell and arm America's deadliest enemies and to sell and arm Israel's deadliest enemies, or they can choose to be a partner in peace and prosperity and democracy with the United States. That is a fair choice for Russia to make.

It is important to make the right decision because we all have a stake in their transition to democracy and to free enterprise as a nation. But it has been disappointing, and I think their conduct has been dangerous for America.

Each year, in effect, Russia erects a tent, and to all within listening distance they proclaim, ''Come see the show on improving democracy and freedom in our nation.'' And each year America is the first in line with billions of dollars to help them make that transition. But each year when we walk inside the tent, it is empty, while out back, behind that tent, Russia is actively and aggressively selling technology and equipment to nations that simply are hateful to the United States and will disrupt the peace process in the Middle East.

I think it is important that no American taxpayer have to finance our deadliest enemies. No veteran ought to be

paying tax dollars so that Russia can arm our enemies. No single mom struggling to make ends meet ought to have her tax dollars going to damage our security. No service members, or members of our military, ought to ever have their dollars be used against them. But, in effect, today they are.

I support this legislation. I support Russia making the right choice, and this choice is long overdue. As a member of the Committee on Science, I appreciate the leadership of the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) in adopting an amendment that I offered preserving the existing relationship with Russia on the space station. That was a very key part of this legislation, and overall this bill deserves our support.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) for his supportive remarks, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the Chair of the Committee on International Relations for his leadership on this important issue. I want to thank the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON), the ranking member, as well, and compliment both gentlemen for working together in a bipartisan fashion on this and so many other issues that bipartisanship serves our committee and this Congress well.

The legislation before us, Mr. Speaker, is an attempt to stem the flow of weapons technology into Iran by authorizing the President to impose sanctions on nations and individuals that provide this weapons technology to Iran.

The sanctions would include the denial of munitions, licenses, arms export, and dual-use licenses, and a halt to any United States foreign assistance.

The bill requires the President to report to Congress when credible information exists of a transfer of dangerous weapons technology to Iran. The President must also report to Congress about whether he has imposed certain penalties on foreign persons as a result of such transfers.

If the penalties are not imposed, the President must expose why those steps were not taken. The bill will also encourage the Russian Space Agency to cooperate with the United States in efforts to halt the proliferation of weapons technology to Iran by cutting off payments to that agency and to the International Space Station if those under its jurisdiction and control engage in such activities.

We are all pleased by the initial reforms that are being made within Iran. Their recent elections give the world some hope that changes are coming. Unfortunately, while there are some encouraging signs, Iran's current policies continue to be a threat to the security of the world.

There are four areas where Iran continues to threaten world peace. In the area of ballistic missiles, with their development of the Shahab missiles, at least one expert has testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee that the Iranians are working on a missile now with a range of 2,600 miles. We know that they have missiles with a range of 1,200 miles and they are pushing ahead with this development.

With nuclear issues, Iran is proceeding with plans to complete the 1,000 megawatt nuclear reactor at Bushehr. While these nuclear plants probably are not able to be used for nuclear weapons purposes, the fear is that Iran will continue to obtain valuable expertise while building these plants that could be transferable to a nuclear weapons program.

In the area of chemical and biological programs, while Iran signed and ratified the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention, the CIA reports that Iran continues to pursue purchasing dual-use biotechnical equipment from Russia and other countries ostensibly for civilian uses. Press reports indicate that they are also hiring Russian scientists.

United States officials have publicly stated that Iran has a large chemical weapons program that has been made possible with the help of China; and Iran and North Korea reportedly have a relationship of exchanging missile technology.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile delivery systems continues to be one of the most significant threats to American national security.

Rogue states like North Korea and Iran are actively pursuing ambitious ballistic missile programs and the technology needed to threaten our country and our allies. Iran's progress in this effort is being helped by the relationships with North Korea, with China, and with Russia.

This legislation is a good first step that will send a signal to those who are aiding Iran that this aid will not be tolerated.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to emphasize again why we are sending this bill on to the President.

Proliferation to Iran is a very serious threat to our Nation. It is one of the biggest threats we face today. Regrettably, entities in Russia and elsewhere have been actively engaged in this kind of proliferation. The bill sends a message, loud and clear, that our Nation cannot and will not do business as usual with such entities.

We hope this legislation will inspire the governments of Russia, of China, and of other countries to do more to stop proliferation to Iran.

North Korea is also a major concern when it comes to proliferation to the Middle East, and we need to take a good close look at that situation, as well.

I want to assure my colleagues that our committee is going to remain vigilant.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1883, the Iran Nonproliferation Act. Any transfer of technology to Iran that would allow that country to develop weapons of mass destruction would represent a threat to Israel and other allies in the region.

Passage of this measure sends a strong message to the international community. The United States will not be silent or inactive if any nation decides to aid Iran in production of weapons of mass destruction. By making it clear that we will impose sanctions on any authority that fuels Iran's dangerous motives, I hope we will be more successful in our efforts to prevent Iran's development of nuclear weapons.

While the recent strong showing for reformers in Iran's parliamentary elections is encouraging, we still need to be extremely cautious and firm in our dealings with Iran. We must never allow any nation to develop weapons of mass destruction if we believe they may be targeted on our allies or on Americans. It is important to remember that Iran has been the world's largest exporter of terror for some time now and is an ardent opponent of the Middle East peace process. I am pleased to join my colleagues in supporting H.R. 1883 and sending the right message on behalf of all Americans, that we will not allow back-door maneuvers that aid Iran's dangerous plans for terror and destruction.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I speak today in strong support for the amended version of H.R. 1883, the Iran Nonproliferation Act of 1999.

Everyone in Congress is aware that Iran has continually threatened the peace and security of the Middle East. Iran is still committed to the destruction of Israel, opposes the Middle East peace process and supports terrorist groups such as Hamas. In fact, Iran remains the world's leading sponsor of international terrorism.

Despite these very real security concerns, cash strapped Russia has supported the $800 million Bushehr project, a 1000-megawatt light-water reactor, in southern Iran. Why Iran needs such a reactor remains an open question because Iran has one of the world's largest oil and natural gas reserves. However, many security experts believe that such projects provide good cover to a nuclear weapons program and provide Iranian technicians with expertise in the development of nuclear weapons.

Iran has successfully tested the Shabah-3 missile, which has a range of 800 miles, and has supplied Fajr rockets to Lebanon. These rockets are capable of hitting Haifa, and other parts of Israel. In fact, Iranian weapons supplied to Hamas are used against the Southern Lebanese Army, the Israeli Defense Forces and severely jeopardize the security of communities in Northern Israel.

Iran's support of international terrorism poses a great risk to the Middle East and shows very clearly that Iran remains a threat to U.S. interests in the region. The results of an Iran armed with nuclear weapons are almost too horrifying to imagine. But, if current trends continue, it may become an all too real

nightmare for the United States and our Middle Eastern allies.

While I welcome the results of the recent parliamentary elections in Iran, I believe that we must wait and see if the victory of the reformists will translate into any real change. Before we start to re-evaluate our policy, Iran needs to drastically change theirs, especially in areas of major concern to the U.S., such as non-conventional weaponry and the support of terrorism. H.R. 1883 reinforces those Congressional concerns and sends a clear message to countries that assist Iran's weapons program.

I was proud to be an original cosponsor of the Iran Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act of 1999, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Iran Nonproliferation Act.

Mr. Speaker, the Senate passed the amended Iran Nonproliferation Act, 98–0, last week and I urge my fellow Members to give this legislation the same overwhelming support on the floor today.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my strong support for passage of the Senate amendments to the Iran Nonproliferation Act. Last week, this important legislation was approved by the Senate by 98 to 0. H.R. 1883 was originally approved by the House in September 1999.

This important legislation gives the President the authority to impose sanctions against Russia or any other nation for supplying Iran with the technology to build missiles and chemical and biological weapons. The Iran Nonproliferation Act also provides for biannual reports on who around the world is transferring prohibited technology or information to Iran, and allows the President to take action against persons or entities found to be engaged in such activity.

This bill also includes new steps to ensure the Russian Space Agency, which is a partner with NASA in the International Space Station project, is complying with Russia's official Iran anti-proliferation policy. If needed, the President is granted the authority to cut-off funds for the remaining payment of $590 million to the Russian Space Agency for helping the U.S. build the International Space Station. As much as we want to continue to work with Russia on joint efforts in space, we will not do so if they are contributing to this grave threat to our security. That said, the language as amended is much more workable in ensuring that the ISS moves forward.

The threat is a very real and serious security concern for the United States and Israel, our nation's most-trusted ally in the Middle East. The CIA has reported Iran has the capability to launch a missile that will reach Israel, and it is well known that Iran is pursuing development of nuclear, chemical and biological weaponry. This legislation provides the Administration with useful tools to combat the spread of dangerous weapons technology and to discourage nuclear proliferation. H.R. 1883 also demonstrates our commitment to prevent the proliferation of dangerous nuclear weapons to countries that threaten our national security as well as the security of allies—such as Israel and Europe.

The U.S. support for Israel must go beyond economic and military aid to Israel—it must meet the very real challenges that will face Israel and the United States in this new century, such as limiting the threats of weapons of mass destruction. It is well documented that technology provided to Iran increases its ability to develop its own intermediate range ballistic missile that is capable of reaching Israel as well as our European allies. By limiting Iran's access to such technology we can better protect these countries as well as our own troops in the Middle East and Europe.

The people of Iran demonstrated in their recent elections an overriding desire to move toward reform and moderation in the future—but it is too early to tell what this change will mean in practice. I hope that it is a sign that Iran will end its missile program and its support for international terrorism. This legislation also sends a strong message to Russia that U.S. aid and scientific collaboration will be limited if Russia doesn't stop missile proliferation to Iran. U.S. funding will be substantially limited unless the President certifies that the Russian Space Agency is not transferring technology to Iran. Acting Russian President Vladmir Putin has been receptive to restricting companies that sell missile technology and equipment to Iran. I hope his intentions are translated into action. Otherwise, our cooperation with Russia—both in space and elsewhere—may end.

We live in a dangerous world—where terrorists and rogue nations are developing deadly weapons of mass destruction. Our action today will send a clear message to our allies and to our adversaries. By supporting this bipartisan legislation, we will demonstrate our commitment to limit nuclear proliferation and to create a safer, more stable world.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Pursuant to the order of the House today, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 420, nays 0, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 28]

YEAS—420

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Allen
Andrews
Archer
Armey
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldacci
Baldwin
Ballenger
Barcia
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Becerra
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Blagojevich
Bliley
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (FL)
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Canady
Cannon
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth-Hage
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Conyers
Cooksey
Costello
Cox
Coyne
Cramer
Crane
Crowley
Cubin
Cummings
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
DeMint
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dicks
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
Engel
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fletcher
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gekas
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (TX)
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hansen
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill (IN)
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoeffel
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inslee
Isakson
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, E.B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy
Kildee
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
Klink
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuykendall
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moore
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Morella
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Ose
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pease
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Phelps
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reyes
Reynolds
Riley
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Rothman
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Salmon
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaffer
Schakowsky
Scott
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shows
Shuster
Simpson

Sisisky	Tauscher	Walsh
Skeen	Tauzin	Wamp
Skelton	Taylor (MS)	Watkins
Slaughter	Taylor (NC)	Watt (NC)
Smith (MI)	Terry	Watts (OK)
Smith (NJ)	Thomas	Waxman
Smith (TX)	Thompson (CA)	Weiner
Smith (WA)	Thompson (MS)	Weldon (FL)
Snyder	Thornberry	Weldon (PA)
Souder	Thune	Weller
Spence	Thurman	Wexler
Spratt	Tiahrt	Weygand
Stabenow	Tierney	Whitfield
Stark	Toomey	Wicker
Stearns	Towns	Wilson
Stenholm	Traficant	Wise
Strickland	Turner	Wolf
Stump	Udall (CO)	Woolsey
Stupak	Udall (NM)	Wu
Sununu	Upton	Wynn
Sweeney	Velazquez	Young (AK)
Talent	Visclosky	Young (FL)
Tancredo	Vitter	
Tanner	Walden	

NOT VOTING—14

Brown (OH)	Kilpatrick	Paul
Campbell	Kleczka	Vento
Cook	Larson	Waters
Dingell	Millender-McDonald	
Fowler		
Hall (TX)	Norwood	

1413

So the motion was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 28, I was unavoidably detained and, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I was not present for rollcall votes No. 27 and No. 28 because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on both counts.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1304

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1304.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

1415

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. MOAKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I take this time in order to inquire about the next week's schedule.

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I am pleased to announce that we have completed legislative business for the week. There will be no recorded votes on Thursday or Friday of this week.

The House will next meet for legislative business on Wednesday, March 8, at 10 a.m. We will consider a number of bills under suspension of the rules, a list of which will be distributed to Members' offices later this week.

The House will also consider H.R. 1827, the Government Waste Corrections Act, under an open rule. On Wednesday we do not expect recorded votes until 2 o'clock p.m.

On Thursday, March 9, and Friday, March 10, the House will consider the following measures, all of which will be subject to a rule: The Small Business Tax Fairness and Minimum Wage Legislation; and H.R. 1695, the Ivanpah Valley Airport Public Lands Transfer Act.

Mr. Speaker, conferees report they are making progress on the conference report accompanying S. 376, the Communications Satellite Competition and Privatization Act. I am hopeful that it will be ready for consideration in the House at some point next week.

Mr. Speaker, I wish all of my colleagues safe travel back to their districts.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, does the gentleman expect the minimum wage legislation to be completed on Thursday next?

Mr. COX. We do expect it, certainly, to come up; and we hope to be completed on Thursday.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Also, I thank the gentleman for saying there will not be any votes until 2 o'clock on Wednesday, but Members in your part of the country would really appreciate it if you could hold back those votes until at least 5 or 6 o'clock on Wednesday next.

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield further, Tuesday is the only day we have not had votes on a primary day, and that is an important accommodation that as a California Member I am pleased is being made. We, of course, have our primary on Tuesday. I am in a position of traveling back that day myself, on Wednesday. So I know that every accommodation that can be made will be made for Members on the West Coast. Two o'clock is currently the schedule; but of course I understand the pressures that puts on travel, because I myself will not be able to be back here until 5 o'clock.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Further, Mr. Speaker, that minimum wage legislation, is that going to be contained within one piece of legislation, or will it be two bills?

Mr. COX. There will be two separate bills, which it is my understanding will be enrolled together if both are successful.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Will the Democrats have a substitute on both of these bills?

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules has yet to meet on that point.

Mr. MOAKLEY. I understand that. Is the gentleman's leadership allowing the substitute on each of these bills?

Mr. COX. The Committee on Rules is going to be meeting on Wednesday for that purpose, and I am sure that is the very topic they will consider.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 425 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 425

Resolved, That it shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of Wednesday, March 8, 2000, for the Speaker to entertain motions to suspend the rules. The Speaker or his designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or his designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. REYNOLDS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, this rule makes in order at any time on Wednesday, March 8, 2000, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend rules. The rule further requires the Speaker or his designee to consult with the minority leader or his designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to the rule.

As my colleagues are aware, clause 1 of House rule XXVII allows the Speaker to entertain motions to suspend the rules on Mondays and Tuesdays. Since the House will not conduct legislative business on either of those days, this will allow us to begin the legislative workweek in normal fashion.

This is a non-controversial rule. There are no surprises, and it requires consultation with the minority, so I hope we can move expeditiously to pass this rule.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my dear friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS), for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I do not object to this rule making next Wednesday a suspension day. Normally, the House takes up suspension bills on Mondays and Tuesdays; but next Tuesday is Super Tuesday, which pushes the House schedule back. So, Mr. Speaker, as my colleague from New York has explained, this rule will make next Wednesday a suspension day as well. That way we can quickly debate and vote out relatively non-controversial bills.

As long as my Republican colleagues hold the proper consultations on the

suspension bills and no last minute surprises are added, I support this rule; and I encourage my colleagues to do so as well.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, assuring the gentleman that there are no surprises, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous questions was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ADJOURNMENT FROM THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2000, TO MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2000

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Thursday, March 2, 2000, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday, March 6, 2000.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT FROM MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2000, TO WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2000

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Monday, March 6, 2000, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 8, 2000.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday Rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

WELCOMING THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS TO INDIANAPOLIS

(Ms. CARSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome the National Federation of State High School Associations to their new home in Indianapolis.

The federation was started in 1920 by educators dedicated to the development of young people, and it promotes participation in sportsmanship with the goal of developing good citizens through interscholastic activities.

Through participation in these activities, young people gain the skills necessary to succeed in life. Skills like teamwork, respect for themselves and others, dedication to their communities, and pride in a job well done.

I am very privileged to have the National Federation of State High School Associations in their new home in my Congressional District in Indianapolis.

The Federation writes playing rules and coordinates the administration of high school sports and activities in the United States. Their mission is to provide the necessary leadership to enhance the educational experiences of high school students and reduce the risks of their participation.

The Federation was started in 1920 by educators dedicated to the development of young people as productive citizens in our nation through the medium of activities. It provides essential services to the nation's 18,000 high schools.

Each year, more than 6,500,000 young people participate in high school sports, and another 4,000,000 participate in the fine arts programs of speech, debate and music. The Federation publishes playing rules in 16 sports for boys and girls competition and provides programs and services that its member state associations can and do utilize in all 50 states.

The Federation seeks to provide equitable opportunities, positive recognition and learning experiences to students while maximizing the achievement of educational goals. After school programs also go a long way in the physical and emotional development of our nation's youth.

Through their annual sponsorship of National Student-Athlete Day, the Federation has helped to recognize more than 500,000 students nationwide not only for excellence in athletic achievement but academic achievement excellence and community service as well.

The Department of Health and Human Services has documented that participation in extracurricular activities reduces dropout rates, diminishes the rates of drug abuse and teen pregnancy, and enhances academic performance. Time and time again we hear about the increase in teenage crime between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. I strongly support the goals of the Federation in their attempts to provide an alternative for our nation's youth to work at something productive rather than something destructive.

Interscholastic activities are a part of the educational curriculum and experience in our schools and must always remain as such. The responsibility of retaining their place as an integral part of the educational process of young people rests with the Federation. I am proud that the National High School Federation, like the NCAA before it, has chosen Indianapolis as its new home. I look forward to working closely with them to increase the extra-curricular opportunities for our nations high school students.

Indianapolis is a great city for amateur and professional sports, and we will help the Federation continue its fine work on behalf of our nation's young people.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to move up on the list and insert my name in the place of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

DEALING WITH DRUG PROBLEMS

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

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I read with concern this week that we have had another incident on our southern border in Tijuana with Mexico and their inability to get control of the drug problem. The attorney general of Mexico was quoted, who has been a crusader in trying to establish law and order in Mexico on the drug issue, that one of our primary needs is to get control of consumption in this country.

I want to suggest two different things: in addition, Mexico needs to continue to work to control the borders, because in San Diego, I will be at a hearing next week that the gentleman from California (Mr. MICA) is chairing in the district of the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY). There is only so much they can do in San Diego, across from Tijuana if we do not get some control of our borders.

There is also only so much we can do in northeast Indiana, as I have talked with Sheriff Dukes in Noble County and Sheriff Jackson in Huntington County and Sheriff Herman in Allen County. There is only so much they can do in my district if the drugs keep coming across in California and Arizona and New Mexico and Texas that pour then into Indiana.

So we need Mexico's continued help, and we need even more aggressive efforts to try to crack down on the drug problem.

But I would suggest there are two other things that we will be addressing in this House before too long: one is the Colombia Plan, or better referred to as the Andes Region Plan. Clearly Colombia is in deep trouble. Clearly the cocaine and heroin that is pouring into our country through Mexico and corrupting Mexico is coming originally out of Colombia for the most part.

We need to do whatever we can to help the brave people on the ground in Colombia who are fighting the narcotraffic thugs, whether they be FARC or whether they be others, in Colombia;

and we need to be able to pass that passage through this House and through this Senate and get it signed by the President as soon as possible, because we cannot get control in the demand reduction side if the price keeps going down, if the purity goes up, and the supply is coming in the way it is.

Secondly, as we address the Safe and Drugfree Schools Act and as we look at other acts in Congress, we need to make sure that we do not so water down our prevention programs in this country that they no longer have the antidrug bite in them. If we water these things down so much it becomes kind of a feel-good type of program rather than an accountability program, such as making sure we push drug testing and other methods of accountability. Rather than just talk, countries like Mexico and Colombia have a somewhat legitimate gripe, that we are always pointing the finger at them while we are consuming all this and not doing anything domestically.

Another problem that I will be soon meeting with the Department of Education about is an amendment that former Congressman Solomon and I passed on the student loans that said if you are convicted of a drug offense, you lose your loan for 1 year. If you are convicted a second time after you come back in, you lose it for 2 years, and a third time and you are out.

The Department of Education has put out a form that over 100,000, probably 150,000 students, did not even check.

We need to take aggressive action to make sure that those students who did not check that cannot get their loan if they do not check that box. Furthermore, we need a random sampling procedure to make sure that they are actually telling the truth, that the Department of Education partly in my opinion as a gutting process said this applied to everybody in all their years prior to going to college.

This was an accountability provision, not before you went to college. But once you take a student loan, we expect you to be clean, because you cannot be learning if you are on drugs. You cannot be exercising your responsibility if we give you a subsidized loan and then you are on drugs.

I also had an amendment that said if you test clean twice during that process of your first suspension, you can get your loan back. I believe education is critical. But if we are really committed in this country, forget about just talking about Mexico or Colombia or Panama or Peru or Bolivia, if we are committed in this country and we really care about our kids and we care about the violence in the streets and violence in the families, we need to take some serious steps in this Congress to put some accountability at the high school level, at the elementary school level, at the college level and at the adult level, and put some dollars as well as some restrictions behind it.

TRAGEDY IN MOUNT MORRIS TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I speak today about the devastating tragedy in Mount Morris Township, Michigan, at Buell Elementary School, where a 6-year-old girl was shot and killed by a 6-year-old schoolmate. My thoughts and prayers go out to the families and to the schools and to the communities in this very devastating period of their lives.

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Gun violence is an invasive problem within our society, with children often becoming the victims, perpetuated, unfortunately, by children. Unfortunately, the tragedy in Michigan is not the first. We have all too often witnessed horrific school violence throughout the Nation, tragic stories of children being killed in schools in West Paducah, Kentucky; Jonesboro, Arkansas; Littleton, Colorado; and now in Mount Morris township, Michigan.

We have been shown that Americans are devastated by the impact that gun violence has on our children. Nearly 12 children die each day from gunfire in America, approximately one every two hours. That is equivalent to a classroom of children every 2 days. Gun violence is an equal opportunity disaster. Of the nearly 80,000 children killed by gunfire since 1979, 61 percent were white and 36 percent were black.

The National School Boards Association estimates that more than 135 guns are brought into the U.S. schools each day. Ten percent of all public schools experienced one or more serious crimes such as murder, rape, suicide, physical attack with a weapon, or robbery during the 1996–1997 school year that were reported to law enforcement.

Within my district, Indianapolis, Indiana's Tenth Congressional District, guns were confiscated on the Indianapolis public school property in 14 separate incidents. In December in Indianapolis, a 7th grader shot an eighth grader while riding a bus home from school.

I am outraged and saddened by the school violence that invades our schools, our communities, and our homes. Schools should be a safe haven for children to learn and to thrive and grow, where violence is not a fear for our children.

The bill that I introduced, H.R. 515, the Child Handgun Injury Prevention Act, which is a bill to prevent children from injuring themselves with handguns, requires child safety devices on handguns, and establishes standards and testing procedures for those devices. It does not describe specifically what kind of safety device, but it does, indeed, ask for a safety device.

At present it has only 66 cosponsors, not nearly enough. I would encourage my colleagues to rise to the challenge, avoid the resistance from anti-gun control lobbying advocates, take a strong stance against violence in our schools, and stand up for our children.

Promoting strong child handgun prevention legislation is not only the right thing to do; indeed, it is the moral thing to do.

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

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina 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 Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

GUN SAFETY AND THE CONSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the gentlewoman from Indiana.

Mr. Speaker, I rise on the floor of the House today to offer my sympathies for those who are now in danger in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, held hostage, at least as of the last notice that we received, by someone holding innocent individuals hostage with a gun. Several of these individuals have been shot, and that area is in crisis.

Additionally, of course, yesterday I think America got either a wake-up call or one of the most shocking exposures to gun violence that we have had I would say in the last 20 years, even as we watched the little, small children run to safety in California with a crazed gunman at the Jewish Community Center, a hateful act with a gun.

But here we find in Michigan that it was not an adult, it was not a 15-year-old, it was not a teenager, an adolescent, but it was a 6-year-old little boy that shot a little girl in the neck with a gun that apparently he secured from his home, a home that, as news reports have indicated, was not the best and most supportive situation for a child.

Without commenting on the support system that that family needs and the crisis and the ultimate criminal procedures that will follow, or whether or not there will be indictments of those parents, and what will happen in this situation in Pittsburgh, the question has to come, what now, America? What will this Congress do? What have we delayed in doing?

I can tell the Members that as a member of the Committee on the Judiciary and a member of the conference

committee set up last year, 1999, to deal with gun safety and juvenile justice, we have yet to have another meeting. The first meeting ended with disagreement and opening statements, but no action.

I would commend to my colleagues, for those who argue vigorously about the privileges of the Constitution in the second amendment, I would argue for them to understand the Constitution as a living document.

The Second Amendment was drafted and promoted at a time that this was an embryonic country. It was a beginning Nation. It was a Nation that feared to be taken over by those who had once been its colonizer, if you will. The Second Amendment related to a well-armed militia. I have no problem with people legally retaining their guns in their homes, but I do have a problem with criminals getting guns.

It is tragic that the House conference committee has not seen fit to meet and to deal with what America wants us to do: one, reasonable, safe gun safety laws; two, to close the loopholes so criminals do not get guns, so a little baby 6 years old does not have the opportunity, in a home that may not be the best, that may have a criminal element, to access a gun.

Mr. Speaker, it is extremely tragic that we would have a situation where a child accessed a gun. What can we say about that, other than that we have not done our job? We must do our job. We must pass safety legislation that deals with trigger locks, that deals with smart guns, and we must find a way to convene and do what America desires us to do.

How many more killings will we see? How many more of those who are either deranged, needing mental assistance? How many more persons will we have suffering and losing their lives because we have not done our job?

Mr. Speaker, I think that in this instance all we can do is pray, but I think that what we can do in the future is to meet, and to be assured that as we meet, we have this committee that will find itself in its heart and in its mind to pass real gun safety legislation so that a 6-year-old does not have access to guns.

Mr. Speaker, to conclude my remarks, let me say that I hope that the conference committee will find its way to meet. If it meets, I hope we will find our way to vote for real gun safety legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MINK of Hawaii addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks)

INTRODUCING LEGISLATION CALLING FOR THE UNITED STATES TO WITHDRAW FROM THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce my introduction of and request cosponsors for a privileged resolution to withdraw the United States from the World Trade Organization.

Last week, the Wall Street Journal reported that the United States was dealt a defeat in a tax dispute with the European Union by an unelected board of international bureaucrats. It seems that, according to the WTO, $2.2 billion of United States tax reductions for American businesses violates WTO's rules and must be eliminated by October 1 of this year.

Much could be said about the WTO's mistaken Orwellian notion that allowing citizens to retain the fruits of their own labor constitutes subsidies and corporate welfare. However, we need not even reach the substance of this particular dispute prior to asking, by what authority does the World Trade Organization assume jurisdiction over the United States Federal tax policy? That is the question.

At last reading, the Constitution required that all appropriation bills originate in the House, and specified that only Congress has the power to lay and collect taxes. Taxation without representation was a predominant reason for America's fight for independence during the American Revolution. Yet, now we face an unconstitutional delegation of taxing authority to an unelected body of international bureaucrats.

Let me assure Members that this Nation does not need yet another bureaucratic hurdle to tax reduction. Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution reserves to Congress alone the authority for regulating foreign commerce. According to Article II, section 2, it reserves to the Senate the sole power to ratify agreements, namely, treaties, between the United States government and other governments.

We all saw the recent demonstrations at the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle. Although many of those folks who were protesting were indeed rallying against what they see as evils of free trade and capitalist markets, the real problem when it comes to the World Trade Organization is not free trade. The World Trade Organization is the furthest thing from free trade.

Instead, it is an egregious attack upon our national sovereignty, and this is the reason why we must vigorously oppose it. No Nation can maintain its sovereignty if it surrenders its authority to an international collective. Since sovereignty is linked so closely to freedom, our very notion of American liberty is at stake in this issue.

Let us face it, free trade means trade without interference from governmental or quasi-governmental agencies. The World Trade Organization is a quasi-governmental agency, and hence, it is not accurate to describe it as a vehicle of free trade. Let us call a spade a spade: the World Trade Organization is nothing other than a vehicle for managed trade whereby the politically connected get the benefits of exercising their position as a preferred group; preferred, that is, by the Washington and international political and bureaucratic establishments.

As a representative of the people of the 14th District of Texas and a Member of the United States Congress sworn to uphold the Constitution of this country, it is not my business to tell other countries whether or not they should be in the World Trade Organization. They can toss their own sovereignty out the window if they choose. I cannot tell China or Britain or anybody else that they should or should not join the World Trade Organization. That is not my constitutional role.

I can, however, say that the United States of America ought to withdraw its membership and funding from the WTO immediately.

We need to better explain that the Founding Fathers believed that tariffs were meant to raise revenues, not to erect trade barriers. American colonists even before the war for independence understood the difference.

When our Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution, they placed the treaty-making authority with the President and the Senate, but the authority to regulate commerce with the House. The effects of this are obvious. The Founders left us with a system that made no room for agreements regarding international trade; hence, our Nation was to be governed not by protection, but rather, by market principles. Trade barriers were not to be erected, period.

A revenue tariff was to be a major contributor to the U.S. Treasury, but only to fund the limited and constitutionally authorized responsibilities of the Federal government. Thus, the tariff would be low.

The colonists and Founders clearly recognized that these are tariffs or taxes on American consumers, they are not truly taxes on foreign corporations. This realization was made obvious by the British government's regulation of trade with the colonies, but it is a realization that has apparently been lost by today's protectionists.

Simply, protectionists seem to fail even to realize that raising the tariff is a tax hike on the American people.

OIL PIPELINE SAFETY

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

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, oil and gas pipeline accidents happen more often than we might think. Just within

the past few weeks, two major pipeline spills have occurred.

On February 5, an oil pipeline spilled approximately 70,000 gallons of crude oil into a lake in the John Heinz Wildlife Refuge near Philadelphia. The refuge incorporates the largest freshwater tidal marsh in the State and is habitat to two endangered species.

On January 27, approximately 500,000 gallons of oil leaked from a pipeline near Winchester, Kentucky. Officials are unsure how much of the oil will make its way into the Kentucky River, the main drinking water source for Lexington and other towns.

Thankfully, neither of these spills were ignited, like the spill which occurred in my district last June. The accident in my district resulted in three deaths, millions of dollars in property damage. How many more spills do we need to have before we act to improve our system of pipeline safety?

Recently, I introduced H.R. 3558, the Safe Pipelines Act of 2000. My bipartisan bill, which has been cosponsored by the entire Washington State House delegation, will enact much needed reforms to our Federal pipeline regulations, and will give the States a role in pipeline regulation, which they currently lack.

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Under my bill, pipelines will be required to be inspected both internally and with hydrostatic tests. Pipelines with a history of leaks will be specially targeted for more strenuous testing. All pipeline operators will be tested for qualifications and certified by the Department of Transportation.

The results of pipeline tests and inspections will be made available to the public and a nationwide map of all pipeline locations will be placed on the Internet where every citizen can easily access it. All pipeline ruptures and spills of more than 40 gallons will be reported to the Federal Office of Pipeline Safety and States will be able to set up their own pipeline safety programs for interstate pipelines, provided that the States have the resources and expertise necessary to carry out the programs and that State standards are at least as stringent as Federal standards.

In addition, the bill requires studies on a variety of technologies that may improve safety such as external leak detection systems and double-walled pipelines. I urge my colleagues to join with me in support of this bipartisan legislation.

CONGRATULATIONS TO WALTER CRYAN UPON HIS RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. WEYGAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stress my congratulations and sincere thanks to a good friend, Walter Cryan, who is retiring from a 35-year career in broadcast journalism. Walter will be deeply missed. This great man, whom we have watched as anchor on Channel 12 for the last 35 years, will be missed because we know that the kind of journalism that he represents is not the norm today.

Walter Cryan heard the call of the media at a very early age. As a child growing up in Cambridge and Lowell, Massachusetts, a young Walter was enraptured by the world of radio and displayed a particular love for the Lone Ranger. At this time he was also exposed to journalistic greats such as Walter Winchell and Edward R. Murrow, who would undoubtedly influence his later career, though at the time he actually preferred the world of sportscasting.

With dreams of becoming a baseball announcer, Walter enrolled in the Leland Powers School of Radio and Television in Boston and later transferred to Boston University. After being drafted in the Army in 1952, Walter was stationed in Germany where he served as a broadcaster for the Armed Services Network.

Upon his return to the United States, Walter completed his communications degree and embarked upon a career that would eventually make him one of the most respected journalists in our State. After spending several years with a Massachusetts radio station, Walter made a decision that would shape the remainder of his life. With his wife's encouragement, he took a chance, and a pay cut, to move to Rhode Island in 1965 to pursue a position at WPRO Radio, which also happened to own Channel 12, a television station.

One year later, he was tapped as station anchor on the 11 p.m. news; and in 1967, he was tapped to be the 6 p.m. anchor, where he would remain for the next 33 years. With his straightforward reporting style and his dignified presence, he quickly developed into a Rhode Island favorite amongst all viewers.

Mr. Speaker, Rhode Island is not a large State; with a population of only a million people within about 1,200 square miles, the entire State has only one local affiliate for each of the network stations. And for this reason, though, our local nightly news anchors are particularly well known and recognized just as Peter Jennings, Tom Brokaw, and Dan Rather.

From his anchor desk, Walter Cryan has succeeded admirably in becoming a reliable and respected source of news in our State. His sincere demeanor and his warm personality contribute to his ability to relate to the viewers at home, which inspires a great deal of trust in all who watch this wonderful anchorman.

In times of prosperity and turmoil, of joy and despair, Walter has remained a steady presence at the anchor desk of Channel 12 news.

In 1996, the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences recognized Walter's service to the southeastern New England area by inducting him into the Silver Circle, a prestigious award given only to those who have served more than 25 years in the broadcasting industry.

One of Walter's greatest assets that he brings to his work is his great sense of perspective. The arrival of cable television and the Internet have caused the network ratings, especially in news broadcasts, to decline over recent years. In an attempt to attract more viewers, many network news programs have added more sensational reporting and entertainment type of news, a style very different from the days of Edward R. Murrow or Walter's youth.

Walter held a place for himself in the news media wonderland by maintaining his professional demeanor and his nononsense style of reporting. He carved a unique niche in Rhode Island media by displaying a remarkable understanding of why certain events occur and how they impact the public.

As a person, he has witnessed riots and war, deaths of public figures, economic booms and busts, countless elections and moments essential to our State's history. He has been always able to explain not only the news, but truly their significance to the people.

But there is also another side of Walter Cryan, a side that is certainly more sincere and dedicated and really shows the warm side of Walter Cryan. Walter has highlighted the cause of a facility, an institution known as Meeting Street Center, a Providence organization that assists special needs handicapped children. For the last 22 years, Walter has been an active advocate and a vocal advocate of this organization and he annually hosts their fund-raising telethon which has raised over $4 million during his time.

During his telethons, he highlights extraordinary advances of the children at Meeting Street Center, how they have moved forward, the things they have done. Rhode Islanders have witnessed, live on TV sometimes, the first steps and the lives of these remarkable children.

Mr. Speaker, I end by saying that Walter Cryan has not only been a tremendous journalist for our State, a person who represents sensitivity and determination to his profession, but he has been a great family man dedicated to our community, to public service in the finest of ways. He is a great guy, and we are going to miss him dearly.

THE KEEP OUR PROMISES TO AMERICA'S MILITARY RETIREES ACT

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

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that is of great importance to me and I hope to my colleagues: The health and well-being of the brave men and women who

dedicated their lives to the military service of our country.

I am extremely proud of the overwhelming bipartisan support of H.R. 3573, the Promises Act, that I had the honor of introducing with my friend from the other side of the aisle, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS). I am confident that we will soon have over 300 cosponsors, because most of my colleagues realize that this is the right thing to do.

However, Mr. Speaker, one thing that disturbs me greatly is the red herring that opponents of this bill keep throwing up with costs. How much will it cost? Where will the money come from? Will it break the caps? Well, that is not the point. The point is that we made a promise to these men and women and we have a moral obligation to keep that promise.

We have our priorities backwards in this country sometimes. We should not be scrounging leftovers to find the money to fund health care for the men and women who dedicated their lives in the defense of this country. We should fund that first, then decide what to do with whatever is left over. That is the right and the honorable thing to do.

That is what we should be doing as a Congress. However, Mr. Speaker, if my colleagues want offsets, I will give them offsets. Our own Committee on the Budget released a report saying that we waste $19 billion annually on major government programs. Mr. Speaker, cut that in half and we could pay for all the health care we need for our military retirees, and then some.

Furthermore, the projected surplus over the next 10 years may be $10 trillion. This bill would cost less than 5 percent of that amount. Mr. Speaker, the money is out there; we just have to make a commitment to make it happen. Do not tell me it cannot be done. Of course it can be done. These men and women are dying at the rate of 1,000 per day, and it must be done and done soon.

I urge the House and Senate leadership, the Committee on the Budget, the Committee on Ways and Means, Committee on Appropriations, Committee on Government Reform, and the Armed Services Committee to put their heads together and pass this bill this year.

Mr. Speaker, during World War II the famous Big Red One had a motto: ''The difficult we do immediately, the impossible takes just a little longer.''

We need some of that can-do attitude here and now in this Congress. We need to buckle down and do the right thing and keep our promises to the patriots of this country. We ask a lot from our veterans and our retirees. The least we can do is do for them what we told them we would do.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor of the House this evening to salute the women of this country on the first day of National Women's History Month. This year is particularly special because it marks the 20th anniversary of the National Women's History Project.

In my heart and in my mind this occasion is unique because Sonoma County, in my district, is the birthplace of the National Women's History Project, the organization responsible for the establishment of Women's History Month. This year's theme is ''An Extraordinary Century for Women—Now Imagine the Future.''

The Project, as it is known, is a nonprofit educational organization founded in 1980 and committed to providing education and resources to recognize and celebrate women's diverse lives and historic contributions to society.

The Project is repeatedly cited by educators, publishers, and journalists as the national resource for information on United States women's history. Thanks to the Project's efforts, every March, boys and girls across the country recognize and learn about women's struggles and contributions in science, in literature, business, politics, and in every other endeavor.

As recently as the 1970s, however, Mr. Speaker, women's history was virtually unknown, left out of school books, left out of classroom curriculum.

In 1978, I was the Chair of the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women. At that time all of us involved in the commission were astounded by the lack of focus on women. Because of that, we worked together with local women to push for awareness. Under the leadership of the chair of the commission that followed right after me, Mary Ruthsdotter, a group of hard-working women in Sonoma County put together a celebration of International Women's Day. That has since expanded through the Congress to National Women's History Week and now National Women's History Month.

Together, the women in my district and the Project succeeded in nationalizing awareness of women's history. As word of the celebration's success spread across the country, State Departments of Education honored women's history week, and within a few years, thousands of schools and communities nationwide celebrated National Women's History Week during the month of March.

In 1987, the Project first petitioned Congress to expand the national celebration to the entire month of March. Due to their efforts, Congress issued a resolution declaring the month of March to be Women's History Month. Today is the first day of March, the first day of the Women's History Month for the year 2000.

Each year since, nationwide programs and activities in schools, workplaces, and communities have been developed to commemorate women's history in the national and international arena.

In honor of Women's History Month, I want to praise Mary Ruthsdotter, Molly MacGregor, and Bonnie Eisenberg who are the birth mothers for this very notion. And I want to acknowledge Cindy Burnham, Donna Kuhn, Sunny Bristol, Denise Dawe, Lisa McLean, Molly Henrikson and Kathryn Rankin, the women now at the Women's History Project Office. All of these women serve as leaders to educate Americans of all ages about the contributions of women in our society.

Mr. Speaker, to pay tribute to these women's achievements, I have reserved Statuary Hall on Wednesday, March 22. Proud mothers and daughters, educators, activists, historians, and other women across the country are invited to come to the Capitol to celebrate the 20th anniversary of women's history.

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Further, the project has been recognized for outstanding contributions to women's and girls' education by the National Education Association for Diversity and Education, by the National Association for Multicultural Education, and for scholarship service and advocacy by the Center for Women's Policy Studies.

I am truly grateful to all the devoted women at the Women's History Project for their continued commitment and for making an indelible mark on our country. However, Mr. Speaker, we still have a long way to go on women's issues. Sadly, America is also poised to cede its position as a world leader in the international fight against discrimination against women. We need to pass CEDAW, the Convention to End Discrimination Against All Women.

DRUG SMUGGLING ALONG THE BORDER

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

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak of Alfredo De La Torre. Alfredo has served as the police chief of Tijuana-Baja California for the last few years. But this Sunday, after leaving church services with his family, Alfredo decided to do what he always does, to drive down to the police station to see how the operation was working. On the way to the police station, Mr. Speaker, Alfredo was attacked and was killed by professional hit people that fired almost 100 rounds into his car and inflicted 57 bullet wounds into his body.

Now, Alfredo is just one of many in Tijuana that have died over the last few years. This brutal murder, which occurred just a few miles from where I live in South San Diego in the Pearl Beach area is a reminder to all Americans of the sacrifices that are going on right now in the drug war.

In January, there was an attorney named Mr. Hernandez who was not as lucky as the police chief. This attorney, Mr. Hernandez, who was a former judge, had the misfortune of having his wife and his son with him when they were sprayed with gunfire by the same drug and alien-smuggling cartel that killed the police chief.

On April 28 of 1994, another police chief in Tijuana was assassinated after the cartel publicized that he had turned down a bribe from them. This is just how blatant it is getting in northern Mexico.

Not to think, Mr. Speaker, that we are insulated from the realities of this violence, in 1996, a few miles north of where my family lives, a man in my district was gunned down while he was driving up a road called Silver Strand by two hitmen who had the gall to stop and finish him off at point-blank range and then throw the gun into the car and proceed to turn around and drive back into Mexico.

This is a drug war that Americans have to wake up to. This month the President will consider about certifying Mexico and seeing if Mexico is doing enough. Mexico, Mr. Speaker, has sent troops to the border. They have armed military personnel at the border to fight the drug lords. They have disbanded their old police force and replaced them with a whole new system, because they are serious about drug interdiction. Mexico is intercepting guns and drugs every 50 to 100 miles in Mexico.

What are we doing? The administration has only hired half of the authorized border patrol agents that this Congress has asked them to hire. The administration refuses to talk about doing on the American side what Mexico has done on their side, and that is to bring the troops into the works. We who have talked so much that we are serious about the drug traffic have not done as much as Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, today there are 10,000 troops, American troops, in Kosovo and Bosnia for peacekeeping. What my family would like to know and my neighbors would like to know is when are we going to get some peacekeeping troops? When is our neighborhood going to be given the priority to fight the drug lords and the alien smugglers?

It is time that we need to emphasize that American resources have the first obligation to defend Americans on American soil and also to protect them from, not only the violence of the drug smugglers, but also the drugs themselves. This is a war that we cannot stand alone on, and we cannot point fingers south of the border.

I hope that the President certifies Mexico, not because they are doing as good as they should. They should do more. But I think we should certify it at the same time we point to ourselves that we need to do more. I hope the President joins with us.

The gentleman from Florida (Chairman MICA) is going to have a hearing in San Diego, California, on March 7. I hope that a lot of my colleagues will consider coming to that hearing so they get firsthand experience of what is really happening on the frontline of the drug war.

The gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MCCOLLUM) have been very, very supportive on this. But, Mr. Speaker, let us remember Alfredo; and let us remember the people who are dying on both sides of the border, and let us not talk about we are willing to fight the drug war, but we are not willing to do half as much as our colleagues in the south.

I ask us to make the commitment of using our military, using our resources, using whatever it takes to win this war so nobody else will have to be killed, no one else will be slaughtered, and America can look up and look at our neighbors to the south and to the north and say we are doing everything we humanly can to stop this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say sincerely my condolences to the De La Torre family. There is nothing that can cover up the pain and the suffering that they are seeing on their streets. Hopefully, we can keep it off our streets.

REFORM OF OUR NATION'S SCHOOLS

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Congress and past member of the Maryland State legislature, I have witnessed and been engaged in numerous debates on how to reform our Nation's classrooms. I certainly believe we do everything we can to ensure that we provide adequate funding and employ effective teaching techniques that will raise the academic output of our students.

However, even the most funding and the best teachers will not produce successful students if there are significant discipline problems that distract students from their studies.

So I come to the floor of this House to pay special tribute to a group of men and women that play a crucial role in keeping students in my district on track, the Baltimore City Police School Force.

Under the leadership of Chief Leonard Hamm, this public school police force is charged with providing protection and safety services to 108,000 students, 12,500 personnel, 187 schools, and 1,300 acres of land around Baltimore City, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. As a result of their efforts, there has been a dramatic drop in the amount of assaults and arrests in the Baltimore City school system.

During Chief Hamm's first year on the force in 1997, the number of arrests in Baltimore City schools dropped 45 percent from the first half to the second half of the school year. Assaults are down 34 percent and arrests are down a remarkable 57 percent.

During the last 2 school years, there have only been six incidents involving a gun. This is a remarkable turnaround from 1994 when there were 77 incidents involving firearms. Looking at individual schools, the change is even more dramatic. We have seen the number of disruptive incidents and violence drop by as much as 70 percent in some of the City's most troubled schools.

As we look back on the past year, filled with school violence, this turnaround gives me hope that our Nation's schools can be safe havens and productive learning environments that our parents expect.

Moreover, our youth should be stimulated by more than just reading, writing, and arithmetic. I cannot imagine any school experience without various afterschool activities, clubs and special events. Sadly, our school halls have become increasingly void of such activities, but an amazing thing has happened in Baltimore as a result in the drop in crime and fear of crime: school social activities have made a comeback.

School pep rallies and dances have been banned for several years because of safety concerns. But this past November, Southern High School had its first pep rally and dance in 6 years.

Dances, pep rallies, and sporting events foster pride in the school. If students have a sense of pride in their school, they will be less likely to want to disrupt it. These activities also enrich our students' overall experience.

So what is the secret to Chief Hamm's success? You might think success has something to do with high-tech surveillance cameras and metal detectors, but you will not find any metal detectors or cameras in Baltimore City public schools. Instead, Chief Hamm has installed a policy fostering mutual respect between police, students, and faculty.

He believes that when police earn the respect of students, students will respect the police and the school. Chief Hamm has also made it his mission to nuture a sense of ownership of the school by students. He believes that crime in school can be reduced when students respect their school in the same way they respect their own home. This strategy has lead to the safest school environment in Baltimore City schools in many years.

In light of these successful efforts and hard work, I will be presenting the Baltimore City School Police Department with an Elijah E. Cummings U-TURN award. This acronym, U-TURN, has the obvious meaning of changing direction. However, each letter in this award describes what has taken place on the police force; U, unique; T, techniques; U, used; R, restore; and N, nonviolence.

The Baltimore City School Police have certainly responded to a problem

in a manner deserving of recognition and praise. I applaud Chief Hamm and his force and look forward to a further reduction in crime and disruption in our schools.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I stand ready and pledge to do everything I can as a Member of this body to help the Baltimore City School Police force and other forces throughout the Nation to ensure that our children can safely prepare for their promising futures. As someone once said, our children are the living messages we send to a future we will never see. Congratulations, Chief Hamm, and congratulations to the Baltimore City School Police Force.

CONCERN REGARDING RELIGIOUS DEBATE IN OUR COUNTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHERWOOD). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my very deep concern about the character of the debate in our country today with regards to religion.

For the past 5 years, I have been very involved in the Irish peace process, and at the root of the hatred and the mistrust in northern Ireland is the differences in religion. We can see what damage and the trouble that it has caused to that country. Indeed, our own troops have been involved in Kosovo separating warring religious and national groups.

We are witnessing a war in Russia that has a great deal also to do with religion between Christians and Muslims. To continue this debate in our country with elected leaders criticizing religious leaders and religious leaders criticizing political leaders and political leaders criticizing other political leaders for taking sides with other religious leaders, I thought we had put that behind us. I thought that that sort of debate in this country was over, but obviously it is not.

Hubert Humphrey said a long time ago, the great happy warrior Democrat, he who throws mud loses ground. Unfortunately, there is a lot of mud being thrown around today, and a lot of it regarding this issue of religion.

I would like to address my comments to the choice by Speaker HASTERT of our chaplain. I do not understand why anyone, anyone would be critical of the Speaker's choice. It is a very personal decision. He made a choice and now he is being accused of being anti-Catholic.

I cannot fathom why anyone would raise that issue. He is an honorable man. He is a decent and honest man, and he made an honest decision. And we should respect that decision.

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But it seems that people will reach at anything to get political gain, and it is a downward spiral. If this debate continues, we are headed nowhere but down with a very difficult situation ahead of us and no way to get out of it.

Let me just give my colleagues a little history regarding the choice of chaplain in the Congress. For the first 100 years of this country, we had 50 chaplains. Basically, one chaplain for each Congress. For the last 105 years, since around 1895, we have had five chaplains. Five. So the duration of their term in this position has become much, much longer. It is a different position than it was. And I am not so sure that the original Congresses did not have it right, one chaplain per Congress, one Congress per chaplain.

But to make the political points here, the Democratic party, the modern Democratic party, which began in the middle of the 18th century, has appointed 20 chaplains in its time. Republicans, the modern Republican Party, beginning around the same time, has appointed eight chaplains. In none of those cases, those 28 chaplains that were appointed, was there a Catholic priest appointed. There has never been an outcry before. Never been an outcry.

There are Members of this Congress currently criticizing Speaker HASTERT for his choice of a Protestant minister, a Presbyterian, criticizing him for that choice when they were seated in this House when other speakers appointed Protestant chaplains. Where was the outcry then? Where was the Democratic party, the criticism then? Why is it coming now to Speaker HASTERT? I think he made a wise decision. I think he made a wise choice, and I think we owe him the respect and the honor of making that decision.

The Speaker tried to open this process up. He appointed a committee to help him to make the choice. The committee came back, it was a bipartisan committee, with three names. Three individuals. No rank, no unanimous support for one, but they gave the Speaker three choices. He made a choice among those three, and he picked Reverend Wright. Maybe it was a mistake to open it up to a so-called democratic process.

Obviously, I could talk a lot longer about this, but suffice to say that we owe the Speaker the respect that he is due. We owe the choice that he has made the respect that that is due. And I would urge people to stop throwing mud and to stop this downward spiral of anti-religious talk in our country.

ALLEGATIONS OF RELIGIOUS BIAS AMONG REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP IS PURE BUNK

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow along with the words echoed by my colleague from New York.

I am a Roman Catholic as well, and I do not understand this all of a sudden finger pointing over choices of chaplains or questioning people's beliefs. I personally work very closely with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) as Speaker of this House. In fact, he was the one that nominated me to be on the Committee on Ways and Means, considerably one of the most important committees of this Congress. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), another fine gentleman who I work with every single day as majority leader, and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), and others who occupy the office of majority whip. I am a deputy whip. So I can assure every American that is interested in listening that none of these leaders indicates any bias towards anybody of any faith.

Now, I have a disagreement on at least the position of chaplain, and I long ago advocated we not have a chaplain; that we allow visiting chaplains from around the country so we would have the opportunity to have a Rabbi and have a Protestant minister or a Baptist minister and a Catholic priest. I personally go to my own church for salvation, and I do not choose to use the services of the chaplain.

At times I question having one, inasmuch as we do not allow kids to pray in school yet we start every day with a prayer. So I find it a little complicated. But at the same time I do not doubt for one minute that the choice made by the Speaker was a valid, genuine choice on that gentleman's part to serve this entire body, not to single out and not to ratchet up the debate.

It is amazing. I hear the other side of the aisle all of a sudden acting as if they are for all Catholics. If we look at the voting records of most of the Members, we would probably have to question considerably whether they maintain the very principles and edicts that the Catholic churches espouses. There is a complete virtual disagreement on virtually every issue the Catholic church uses and would be measured on a scorecard if you had to have one on that basis.

I ask the Members to please stop this finger pointing. Stop the finger pointing and questioning people's values and beliefs. When Spike Lee made the comment about going to shoot Charleton Heston, I did not see any long-standing parade of speakers urging the rejection of this kind of thought. They sat quietly by and allowed that to be part of the mainstream dialogue.

When I hear Louis Farakhan on the mall marching against people and calling people names, I do not hear this outrage from Members on the other side of the body screaming about how intolerant people are. No, they are silent. But they can use something like this as a wedge issue.

George W. Bush goes to Bob Jones University certainly not to espouse or advocate positions held by one man that leads that church. There were thousands and thousands of students that wanted to hear the nominee, potentially, of the Republican Party address the issues that are important to

them, as if any of us are invited. Daily we are invited to places. I was invited to a synagogue. Of course, I went to speak to my constituents about issues important to them at a synagogue. I am a Catholic. Should I have not gone simply because it was not a house of worship in my own faith?

So I denounce this and ask people to be a little more civil and a little bit more respectful of the differences that we have as Americans on fundamental beliefs and principles. We should all agree that the nice thing about the United States of America is that we can worship in the way we so choose. We can go to the places of worship we recognize as those that lead our faith. But we do not cast aspersion nor do we criticize people.

So this commentary that somehow the Speaker is biased and the majority leader is biased is pure bunk. And, again, I say to my colleagues that if they are compassionate, if they are one of faith, if they are one that deeply believes Catholicism is an important religion, those who seem to be defending it today and saying that Republicans are anti-Catholic, I can clearly assure them, clearly assure them from the bottom of my heart, that that is not the premise of the Republican Party and it is certainly not that of our leadership.

SENIOR CITIZENS' FREEDOM TO WORK ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand here with my fellow Republican, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), who was instrumental in helping us get the Social Security earnings limit off today.

I introduced this bill 1 year ago, after hearing from many folks around the Dallas area and surrounding cities who are over 65 who want to continue to work. One of them is named Tony Santos. That is his picture right there. Tony is a part-time operator of a television camera now at Channel 4 in Dallas. He started there in 1951, when he was just 18 years old, and he retired in 1992. I first met him when I got back from being a POW in Vietnam; and he helped cover that return back to Dallas, which was really emotional for me.

Not just anyone can operate a television camera. It is a technical job and it requires specialized skills. So when folks take a vacation or get sick, Channel 4 finds itself in a bind and they call on Tony. Tony is over 65 and, after all, has a lot of experience, and he is happy to fill in. But the station needs him more than he is able to work due to the Social Security earnings penalty, which says that if he works more and earns more than $17,000 in this year he starts losing his Social Security benefits. He worked for and paid for those benefits, and it is not Washington's money. It is his money.

Tony's beautiful grandchildren, over here, are also shown: Daniel, Emily, Jacob, Jason, and Stephanie. She is just 8. Tony wants to be able to help them buy school books and get the best education possible, but he is penalized by the government just for working to support his grandchildren. Mr. Speaker, that is un-American. It is not right that Tony should not be able to work all he wants to, he is in great health, and still receive his Social Security benefits which he worked so hard for.

I wonder sometimes why we try to punish other Americans with the laws we pass. I want America to know that Tony Santos, here in this picture, heeds the words of Thomas Edison: ''There is no substitute for hard work.'' And I think the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and I both have heard workers in America say that to us; that when they get to be 65, they are not necessarily ready to retire. But they have worked and put into the Social Security fund and they would like that little extra benefit that it provides.

This morning, believe it or not, the Democrats, some of them, said this bill only helps the rich. Well, I am sure it will come as news to Tony Santos that he is rich, because he is not. And why we always hear this class warfare created is beyond me. This bill provides relief for all hard-working seniors. And today we took the first step in making sure that Tony Santos and the other close to a million seniors just like him can work and be rewarded and not be penalized.

I was pleasantly surprised President Clinton has decided to endorse the bill, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act, to eliminate the Social Security earnings penalty. One day earlier the President's chief spokesman spoke out against it. The gentleman from Florida may remember that. But today at least I am thankful the President has changed his mind and decided to support the repeal of the Social Security earnings limit without any strings attached. And that is exactly what happened today on the floor of this House. We passed a clean bill with no strings attached. Just a bill to eliminate the Social Security earnings limit.

Our Republican leadership has always understood the importance of this issue, and they made it a top-10 item for this Congress. For the past three sessions I have introduced repealing the Social Security earnings penalty, but by no means was I the first sponsor of this legislation. My colleagues will remember Barry Goldwater and his efforts in 1964. Repealing the penalty on seniors was his initiative way back then, and I am elated to finally be standing here so close to the repeal of the penalty that we can finally give every American the freedom to work.

I must confess, though, that I have a feeling that the close to 65,000 seniors affected by this penalty in Texas, and the close to a million seniors affected nationwide will be more thrilled than I am to see it passed.

Would the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) care to comment on that? I know the gentleman has been the chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security in the Committee on Ways and Means, and he has been an interested person in this issue. And not only this issue but, as my colleagues know, he has been a supporter of the Shaw-Archer Social Security reform bill, which I consider this step one toward addressing that problem.

Mr. SHAW. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) first of all, for being so persistent. The fact that that bill is named H.R. 5 shows that that was one of the first filed here, and those first numbers are usually set aside by the leadership to show that these are bills that we really plan to move. The gentleman's having filed that over a year ago to have gotten that number I think really speaks very well of his foresight and his faith in this Congress, and his persistence, in that he filed several of these bills in the past.

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We had hoped that this H.R. 5 was going to be folded into the Archer-Shaw bill, which was going to be a much larger bill that would have saved Social Security for all time. But when you get into presidential election years, sometimes it is hard to really bring people together and pass good, common sense legislation, as the Archer-Shaw bill is; and it is one that would save Social Security for all time without privatizing Social Security.

This is one of the things that really concerns me more than anything else. And I was very concerned to hear the President's last proposal in which he was going to take the money coming into Social Security and play the stock market with it.

I think Americans do not want that. That is something that we on the Republican side are going to oppose. And my guess is that the majority of the Democrats will also oppose it.

But we do have to change the way that we view Social Security, but we can do it without increasing the FICA tax, no more burden upon the American worker; and we can do it, too, without in any way, any way, changing the benefits so that the cost-of-living increases stay in the Social Security system.

The example that my colleague has pointed out with his constituent reminds me of a call that came into our office. A young lady who works in the office, Elizabeth Richardson, who received the call just in the last day or two. It was someone calling from California. It was not from a constituent. I think it was San Diego or somewhere out on the West Coast. The person wanted an explanation of what it was

that we were doing. And she explained to him that we were removing that onerous tax from seniors that takes a dollar out of every $3 of benefits that they receive should they go over the earnings limit.

And he paused for a moment, and she heard a little silence; and after she explained it all to him, he said, Would you go give the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) a big hug.

Well, we have a policy in my office against young ladies giving the boss a big hug. However, I can say that this shows the gratitude that I think so many of those seniors out there are going to really feel when they really understand what we have done.

This is not something that we are delaying until next year. This earnings penalty will be done away with as of January 1, 2000. That is 2 months ago. So the monies that these people have already lost will be given back to them. And it is the right thing to do.

That is why we had every Member of this House step up and put their card in the electronic device that we vote on and put their vote up on the scoreboard, which is right here above the press gallery, and I think it shows the widespread support that this has.

A lot of people have wondered, how did this possibly get into the Social Security law in the first place. Well, very simply put, the Social Security bill was written during the Great Depression back in the 1930s; and at that time it was the feeling of the Congress, and I believe probably of Franklin Delano Roosevelt at the time, that the older workers should move aside to make room for the younger workers. But remember, we had huge unemployment of 25 percent.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me add if I might what Roosevelt did in that first bill. He created a Social Security program; and if they worked, they could not have any Social Security. And then it kind of reformed throughout the years, and we finally got the penalty up.

I see the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) here, too, who is also on the Committee on Ways and Means, that maybe can help us.

But, in 1935, seniors could not receive any benefits if they worked. And then, believe it or not, it was modified 4 years later, in 1939, so that if they earned up to $14.99 a month, they did not have to pay a penalty. Can you believe that?

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I do believe it. But, you know, back then it might have made a little bit of sense when you had unemployment of about 25 percent, people desperately needed jobs.

Now we have the other problem. We need more workers in this country. The economy is doing good, and we need more workers. And we particularly need the skills of our seniors. We are losing so much talent.

The gentleman from the State of Florida (Mr. FOLEY) and I have I think it is 81,000 seniors that are going to be directly affected by this. Nationwide it is, as my colleague said, just under a million. It is a little over 800,000 of the seniors that are going to be affected.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is close to 1.1 million they are saying now according to the 1999 Census Bureau.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, this is just the right thing to do. Now, people have wondered why in the world Congress did not do it earlier. Well, it simply means that that money was being spent by the Congress to run the Government, so they were taking it away from our seniors, taking their pension away, so they could spend the money on other things. That was wrong. It was wrong then. It is wrong now.

That is why we have had this great support and the support from the White House that I am pleased to see that we are getting at this point. The President said he did not want to reform Social Security on a piecemeal basis. But I think when he took a good look at this, he said, this is one that I have got to support. It is a great initiative, and I am so pleased the result we have had here in the House.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask the gentleman, what is this going to cost?

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, over the long-run, it does not cost us anything.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, and that is great. Absolutely no cost, according to the actuaries, to the Social Security Trust Fund. So we are not invading the Social Security Trust fund at all.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, let me explain that for a moment. Because that sounds impossible, but it is.

What happens when that money is taken away from the seniors in the form of an earnings penalty, it is given back to them very slowly after their 70th birthday, so that their benefits actually increase a little bit in order for them to get some of that money back. And if they live long enough, they get it all back.

But the problem with that is that the Government is using their money which they earned, which they are entitled to at the retirement age, which the Congress said is 65 and that is what they are entitled to. So it is wrong, even though they get it back over a long period of time.

In the long run, it does not cost anything. In the short run, it does cost something and it is going to cost something. The money is there now. We have walled it off to save Social Security. We have walled it off in the lockbox, which I think most of the Members support. And it certainly passed the House of Representatives with good support from the Democrats as well, but a Republican idea in which we walled it off.

We do not spend the Social Security surplus on governmental expense. It is wrong, wrong, wrong.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thought it was amazing that one of the ladies that testified before our committee, and I do not think the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) heard it, or maybe he did, it was the full committee, because she said, they are stealing that from me. That is my Social Security earnings that I am supposed to be receiving, and you are taking it away from me. You are stealing it from me. And guess what, you get it back later, but not with interest.

So the Government is kind of putting it to you when you have a penalty like that.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleague, what does he think?

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) and, of course, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) for their comments.

I was delighted to see on this House floor today a unanimous vote for the measure that he introduced in our committee. It is a beautiful thing that people are finally recognized. At least in America, seniors are recognized for the value that they bring to our communities.

It is interesting to think about back in Social Security's origination, of course, the longevity tables were much different; and I can understand maybe why initially they thought there may be a penalty because people were not expected to live past 68 or 72 years of age. And now they are longer, and they are more productive and healthier.

One of the most important things I want to strongly note is that the seniors are the most important life link not only to the past but to the future. We can learn so much. Many people in my generation and below my generation, particularly all these new Internet people and Internet-challenged children, if you will, they are looking to the 21st century as the new unique and opportunistic place in time; and they are forgetting the wonderful gains made by those who are now over 65 and those who have brought so much insight and wisdom to our communities.

I mentioned today on the House floor that my father retired at the age of 77 from the Palm Beach County school system. He continued to work. And, of course, he had a penalty back when he worked between 65 and 70. And I think that was patently unfair. He worked from his early youth, served in the Marines, served in World War II, came home to raise a family, became a proud member of the community, and chose a profession that he deeply loved. He could have made money in the private sector and done some things, I am certain. He is very talented and smart. But he chose to instill the knowledge he had with our children in the school system.

He was a coach, much like the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the Speaker of the House, back in his days of high school. He then decided after 65 that he wanted to stay vigorous and involved in helping change children's lives. So he did. And lo and

behold, our Government slapped a penalty on his Social Security income.

As the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) said clearly at one of our conferences, he said, under any other circumstances, this would be discriminatory; there would be an age discrimination suit filed.

And so I applaud the leadership. I applaud certainly both the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT). I know they have worked on it for years and years. But I particularly applaud the two of my colleagues, because they really spearheaded the initiative. They brought it to fruition.

More importantly for the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and I, who represent Florida, I am the seventh oldest, if you will, Medicare-eligible district in America. And I know that this is fabulous news for our citizens. We have adjoining districts, so we have so many similar, if you will, constituents who want to be a part of the great economy, who want to be part of the dynamics that are now evolving; and they want to be feeling like they are appreciated.

But somehow that light goes out in the Federal Government at the age of 65. No, no. Why do they not go sit down, go rest, go lounge around somewhere, because they are no longer valuable, they are no longer needed.

What the Archer-Shaw bill does today is say to senior citizens 65 to 70, not only are you needed, you are wanted. We want you as part of our country. We want you as part of our economy. And we want you to not only have your Social Security money that you paid for and that you earned, but we want to give you the chance to make more money in your pockets to safeguard your financial security.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, and guess what? They pay taxes on that money, too.

This is a letter from AARP, which has given their support to this project, which says, ''Older workers have the skills, expertise, and enthusiasm that employers value.'' They support reducing or eliminating this penalty totally, and that is what we have done.

As the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) said, it is a good first step toward getting Social Security reform totally. At least we are looking at it. As chairman of the committee, my colleague is going to have hearings to talk to this issue and others that have come up during the debate.

I see we are joined by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA).

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, can I ask one question if the gentleman would continue to yield.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) has been in Congress since 1980. And I am not certain of the start of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON).

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 1991.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask the gentleman, why was this not considered before? Why was this issue not brought to the forefront?

It seems like, with 422 votes, this is a child looking for adoption and it found it today. But what was wrong in all those years?

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is the Democrats controlled the Congress for such a long time over 40 years, and they did not brother to introduce this bill or make it go. And now they realize that this is an important issue, and they are with us on it for a change. That is good. I think it is time for a little bit of partisanship.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman, I think it is also important to note that we have walled off Social Security with the lockbox. That money is out there and held sacred. It goes to pay down the debt if it is not being used to reform Social Security or Medicare. It is money that has been paid in by workers for their retirement years. We quit spending it.

The direct answer to the question of why was it not done before: in the old days, the Congress spent that money. They spent it as if it were unencumbered tax dollars. They spent it on all kind of problems. In fact, they spent even more than that, and that is what ran up the national debt. That is why we owe so much money.

But things are changed around here. We are living within our means. We are paying done the national debt. We are reforming Social Security. We are not taking Americans' pensions away. We are allowing the older American workers to keep what they have earned.

Social security is an earned right of the American people. It is that simple. That is black letter law. And it is not for any Congress to take away any of that or compromise any of those benefits. It is a contract, a sacred contract, between the Government and the people of this country, the American workers. And this is what has to be preserved.

You know what I was thinking when I was sitting here managing a portion of this bill today, I sort of felt the spirit of Claude Pepper coming into this area. A portion of my district down in Miami-Dade County was in Claude Pepper's. He would have been very proud of this Congress today and what we have been able to accomplish. Because he was Mr. Social Security when he was there, and I think we are taking his place as Mr. Social Security.

Our job is to protect the sacred, contractual right of our American workers.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, did my colleagues know that by 2030, one-fifth of the entire population will be age 65 or older?

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According to a Manpower Inc. study released this week, nearly one in three U.S. companies will hire more workers in the upcoming second quarter, of this year. Tight labor conditions are going to continue to persist and demand for workers is at the highest level in 20 years. Those seniors that we have taken the earnings limit off of now have an incentive to go back to work, and I think that these companies will hire them.

Mr. SHAW. We need them. It is not only what they are entitled to. We need them in the workforce. There is so much talent that we have lost. Go into the hospitals today, go down the corridors, see the age of the nurses that are about to retire. When the baby boomers come through and when they start using the hospitals more, who is going to be there to take care of them? We have a shortage of nurses in this country.

The school teachers, some of the greatest teachers that we have are age 65 and older. We need to keep them in the workplace to train our kids. On a construction job, the supervisors are older people and they are there to train the apprentice, the young people coming in. We need to pass these skills down. It is wrong when people are living longer, enjoying life more, want to work or even have to work that we come back and penalize them. That is just so wrong. It is so wrong.

We talked earlier about class warfare. What about this one? For so long, if you were wealthy, if you had stocks and bonds, if you had real estate, if you had income that was not what we call earned income, that is stuff that you actually earn by working, you were not penalized. But if you were a working person, whether you had to work or just wanted to work, you were penalized. What kind of class warfare is that? We are getting rid of that. We are getting rid of that. It is an earned penalty whether you are living off of dividends, interest or living off of the sweat of your brow, you are not going to be penalized anymore once you pass retirement age and go on to Social Security.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. That was a good statement. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA).

Mr. HOEKSTRA. First I would like to express my appreciation to my colleagues for moving that bill through the committee, moving it to the House floor and being able to come out on the floor of the House and getting unanimous support.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. I have never seen a faster subcommittee than this guy ran. It was bang, bang and it was out, with a unanimous vote.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. A unanimous vote, bipartisan, all the right characteristics. I think you are going after one of the most unfair things in the tax code. You have identified that. I did nine town meetings last week. In my first town meeting, it is the exact issue that came up.

There was a gentleman who had retired from teaching, had been substitute teaching and said, I reached the threshold. The school wanted to keep

me in the classroom. I wanted to stay in the classroom. It is one of my rural communities, Fremont, Michigan. He said I wanted to stay in the classroom but I looked at it and it made no sense for me to stay in the classroom, in effect, it would almost cost me money for the privilege of being in the classroom to teach those kids.

That gentleman now is going to be able to come back and he will be able to do it this year. He will be able to call up that school district and say, I can teach as much as you now want me to teach this year and as much as I am available to teach because the other nice thing about this bill is that, as you said in your closing statement today on the floor, the bill goes into effect on January 1, not of 2001 but of 2000, correct?

Mr. SHAW. That is correct.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. When this bill gets signed by the President, it will in effect be retroactive, a retroactive tax cut for workers for this year. It fits in perfectly. It was 2 weeks ago that we had a hearing in my subcommittee about the shortage of workers that we are facing. So whether it is the school teacher and qualified teachers in Fremont, Michigan or whether it is other industries around the country today, we know that there is a shortage of workers and that seniors have so much to add in terms of their skills and their expertise to filling that need that it is not only the fair thing to do, it is the right thing to do.

We need these workers if they want to. We need them to stay in the workforce. The least we could do is make the tax code neutral to that decision rather than penalizing them for staying in the workforce, at least now as they consider whether they are going to work or whether they are going to enjoy their retirement, they do not have to take a look at the tax code and see, now, what does the tax code want me to do and how many hours does it want me?

What a ridiculous process to go through. It is the fair thing to do; it is the right thing to do. Again I think as the chairman pointed out, when you take a look at what we are doing with Social Security, the lockbox this past year, not spending one dollar of the Social Security surplus and dedicating that all to paying down the debt, we are doing a number of things that are starting to shore up and save Social Security so that we can address the next issue which the chairman is also working on with a great passion which is doing the fundamental reforms to ensure that this program will not only be there for the seniors of today but for the baby boomers of tomorrow and for our kids.

So we really are taking a step by step approach. I again appreciate the work that the chairman is doing there and also appreciate the chairman's support for one little thing, we call it the worker right to know. Again it is an issue of the American people deserve to know how much money we are putting into Social Security and one of the things that is kind of a little bit of misinformation out there is all the workers get their W–2 at the end of the year and they see the portion that they have paid in and it is a pretty good size number, it is 6.5 percent of what they have made, they say, wow, that is my Social Security contribution. That is the money that was sent to Washington for me.

What they do not recognize and what they do not know is that for every dollar that they paid in, their employer was forced to match that, and so really it is 13 percent of their income is coming here for Social Security, supposedly with their name on it.

Mr. SHAW. I think that is something that people sort of miss, that kind of goes over their head, because Social Security, both the employer and the employee's portion of it is part of the compensation of the American worker, so they are paying in, I think it is 12.4 percent of their wages is going into the Social Security Administration. That is plenty high. When you start thinking about it, particularly for low-wage people, we can save Social Security without in any way raising that tax, and it would be wrong to raise that tax. We do not need to tax American workers one dime more and we can save Social Security just by getting busy and doing it.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Most people do not realize that that tax was 2 percent to start with. It is up to 13 percent now. It has been raised eight times since 1939. That is atrocious. You are absolutely right that we should never ever increase that. In fact, we ought to start decreasing it. Most of the options show the way to do that.

Mr. SHAW. Actually under the Archer-Shaw bill which you pointed to earlier, it would be many years from now, but the future Congress could many years from now actually reduce that tax substantially and still keep Social Security fully funded and paying out the benefits for all times.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Our seniors are paying a penalty, a severe penalty today, where they are paying a 33 percent tax really on their earnings. Some of them because of the situation are as high as 80 percent tax bracket, marginal tax bracket. So they are really getting penalized. I think it is a credit to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) that we sent the President a clean bill, and I have to tell you that we got a clean bill out of the House.

You will admit that. There is nothing else on it. It is an elimination of the Social Security earnings penalty. He has promised to sign that bill if it reaches his desk without other provisions. However, I am a little worried about the Senate. Some of the Senate Democrats are claiming that they would like to offer amendments to end the penalty on seniors. Although we have bipartisan support, some Democratic obstructionists want to alter the core objectives.

I think we should all plead with our friends across America to write their Senators and tell them we do not need an amendment to this Freedom to Work Act because we want the President to sign it, and he said he would if it comes out clean. I am hopeful, I think it is Senator ASHCROFT that has submitted the bill over there and Senator LOTT says that they are going to push for expeditious passage. I look forward to a big signing with the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) of the total bill when it is done. Your mention that it will take effect retroactively is exactly correct, January 1, this year.

Mr. SHAW. I am sure that we will all be in the Rose Garden smiling together with the President and be there when he signs it. I am certainly looking forward to that day.

I again want to congratulate you and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON), your original cosponsor in carrying this through. I want to congratulate the entire House on the decorum we had today. There was a little fringe politics, a little boxing going in. I felt a couple of jabs coming from the other side but on the whole the debate was of the highest caliber I have ever seen, just like a fresh air blowing through this institution. I made note during the debate that people tuning in and looking at it would think they were looking at another parliamentary body somewhere else and not here in Washington at the United States Congress. This was certainly one of the finest days that I have seen. My congratulations to you.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. It is a rare day in Washington.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Again I would like to express my appreciation to my two colleagues for sponsoring it and moving this bill forward. I think the reason we had such a great debate on the floor today is that Members on both sides of the aisle recognized that it was the right thing to do.

The end result is we have provided seniors the opportunity to continue doing what many of them want to do, which is to continue working because they love their jobs and in many cases they are in professions where they can mentor, train, and teach young people. This provides a wonderful avenue to keep those skills and those resources in the workplace. Congratulations to my colleague from Texas for spearheading this effort and getting it done. Now we will watch as we see what we can do to move it over to the other body.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. I appreciate the support of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA). I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. There are a lot of parents of this bill. The gentleman from Texas is one of those parents. This is something that has been

in the works with bills introduced for the last 15 or 16 years trying to correct an injustice.

It is interesting it has taken us this long. Then there is a unanimous vote to move ahead. When it is an injustice and it is moving ahead with fairness, then I think there is a general attitude in this Chamber when it is reasonable, when it is fair, when it is getting rid of something that is unjust, then it is very good.

I would just say there is another provision that I hope we can move ahead with in terms of fairness, in terms of encouraging individuals to work, and, that is, to increase benefits for individuals that, at age 65, decide to delay taking those Social Security benefits. And so if they wait a year, they should end up with more benefits. It is called delayed retirement credit. A provision of this bill that would make an 8 percent increase in benefits for every year was an amendment that I hoped to incorporate in this bill someplace along the line.

I talked to the White House, the President has agreed to it, the Democrats and Republicans have agreed to it. The actuaries at the Social Security Administration have suggested that it does not cost money because actually it might save money encouraging individuals that want to delay taking Social Security to have an increased benefit later on, to make it actuarially sound. Another point that I think is important in this issue is that widows eventually would have the higher benefit when they become widows. This kind of action, the kind of piecemeal approach of sending one bill at a time to the President I think is the right policy decision, so you can measure the merits, the pros and cons of each policy. Again my congratulations and thanks to the gentleman from Texas for having this hour.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. I appreciate those comments. Do you want to tell people what the percentage is right now, because you are not raising it very much.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Right now under the legislation as we amended it in 1983, it started at 2 percent per year increase after age 65, then it went to 4. This year it is going to 6 percent. The amendment that I have proposed would move it up to 8 percent, which is the actuarially sound amount. If you are going to live an average life span, then it is reasonable if you put off taking benefits and continue working, continuing paying the FICA tax to support Social Security, it ends up ultimately being somewhat of an advantage and so moving that 8 percent per year up until you are age 70 is a reasonable step to take.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. But what you are saying, they will get their money back where they are not now.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Especially if you exercise and you live longer than the average, then you of course are going to get more than your money back. So everybody should exercise, all seniors should contribute to the workforce and contribute their talents, now they can do it under this legislation.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. We can all live to be 100 and earn our Social Security benefits, right?

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. It is so interesting. I chaired the Social Security task force. The futurists for health care are suggesting that within 25 years, anybody that wants to live to be 100 years old would have that option.

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Within 35 to 40 years, anybody that wants to live to be 120 years old will have that option. This is just another signal that everybody, especially younger people, better save now, so save and invest now, because who knows what medical technology is going to do.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Well, I thank the gentleman for joining us today. I would just like to say that I want to repeat that this legislation will take effect retroactively, from January 1 of this year, which is important to a lot of seniors. That means you can go to work right now.

Republicans agree, we have got to set in motion steps to reform Social Security overall. I think the gentleman is involved in some issues like that. I can think of no better way than by repealing the Social Security earnings limit as a start.

I always tell people, you know, I fought in two wars, Korea and Vietnam, for freedom; and I think that that entitles our seniors the freedom to earn the savings they have been putting away and paying for during their years of employment, year after year.

I think Nick probably agrees with me, America's seniors need, want, and deserve a penalty elimination. No more penalties. This is a day of freedom. I salute the gentleman and all America. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Sam, everybody salutes you. You are a great American and a great veteran.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUYKENDALL). The Chair reminds all Members that it is not in order in debate to refer to other Members by their first names.

A CRISIS IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, today was a historic day; and I join my colleagues on the other side in celebrating the passage of the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. It is a great achievement. We all should be quite proud of it. I congratulate my colleagues. It was a bipartisan achievement, and we should all celebrate it and also take the next step. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle said we should take steps to reduce the Social Security tax as soon as possible, so I hope that that is going to be somewhere in the proposed budget proposals and appropriations proposals, that we will begin to take back, roll back, the increase in the payroll taxes.

The payroll taxes represent the largest increases in taxes over the last 2 decades. So we heard our colleagues on the Republican side say they think it ought to be rolled back. We want to endorse that wholeheartedly. Let us roll back the payroll tax and lower the taxes that people pay for Social Security.

The immortal words of Thomas Jefferson kept ringing in my ears as I listened to the debate today, ''life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,'' the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

In affirming the fact that we want to take care of our senior citizens, we say we want to have more life, longer life, and we are all in favor of that. Life is sacred; and all over the world I think there is no ideology, no political philosophy at this point and no religion that condones irreverence for life.

Reverence for life exists everywhere. No political party anywhere in the world openly says that some people should be destroyed and others should be kept in existence anymore. Reverence for life is there. We hope that the reverence for life, although there might be a debate about when life begins, how early it begins, whether there is life as we know it in the womb, or afterwards, all of those debates are debates where we respect each other's opinions and ought to work that out. But certainly once a human being is here, reverence for that life ought to exist.

As we practice law enforcement, as we practice law enforcement we must all bear that in mind, that no one can be careless about another human being's life.

I am going to be on the floor discussing the Congressional Black Caucus alternative budget. I have said before that everything that we do in this Congress relates to the budget, and certainly the Social Security and the rollback of taxes is one item that we shall propose in our Congressional Black Caucus alternative budget. We will be dealing with many other subjects, education, housing, health, health care, economic development, livable communities, foreign aid, welfare, low-income assistance, juvenile justice and law enforcement.

This last item, juvenile justice and law enforcement, was placed in the top priorities of the Congressional Black Caucus alternative budget preparation process by the gentlewoman from

Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), who said it may not be a big budget item, she is not sure what form it is going to take, but we should address in this budget, which sets the tone for all that we are going to do this year, it will set the tone for the way the appropriations come out.

We are spending money, and in spending money we show what is most important to us. We ought to deal with the juvenile justice and law enforcement system, certainly from the point of view of African Americans and other minorities, because there has been a series of eruptions in the last year that have made it quite clear that America has a very profound problem when it comes to law enforcement for minorities.

The recent verdict in the trial of the four policemen who shot and killed Amadou Diallo is an indication of how profound that problem is. The verdict is not only outrageous because of the fact that it allows four armed policemen who shot down an innocent man standing in a doorway in the vestibule of his own home, it also is an outrage because of the fact that to cover up for those four men, a whole system went into place. The judicial system, the criminal justice system, collaborated in a coverup. We had very strange things happening.

This is a problem. There are rogue cops. There are extreme elements in the law enforcement profession. We see them all the time, from Waco to the Amadou Diallo shooting. We see it in Los Angeles, where policemen are confessing about 2 decades of placing evidence on people and pretending they are guilty, convicting them, and also beating them up and sometimes shooting them. All kinds of things are being confessed and uncovered in the Los Angeles Police Department.

We saw it in New Jersey, when finally the New Jersey State Police admitted they had an official policy of racial profiling. In Philadelphia some years ago we had the same problem of policemen who confessed after they were exposed of wrongfully placing evidence and people being convicted as a result.

We see it tragically in Illinois, where in Illinois the governor said there should be no more executions until we take steps to straighten out law enforcement and the criminal justice system so that innocent people are not placed on death row. Why did he do this? Because of 25 people who were on death row, indisputable evidence was generated to prove that 13 were innocent, 13 of 25 were innocent. That, said the governor, is more than he can take; and he decided he would no more be a part of the possibility that innocent people would die.

So we have in the whole Nation a pattern. We have 2 million people in prison in this Nation, and some people are proud of that. We are the only industrialized nation that has that kind of large number of people in prison. Most of those 2 million people in prison are people who are minorities. We have a problem that is nationwide. Amadou Diallo's case is not a New York case, and for that reason I come to the floor of the House to make certain that it gets the appropriate attention here in this forum.

Mr. Speaker, the polls are showing in New York State that the overwhelming majority of the citizens of New York think that there was a miscarriage of justice in the verdict on the Amadou Diallo trial. Black and white together demonstrated in the streets of New York against this outrage. Criminally negligent homicide was obvious, if not manslaughter. After all, 41 bullets were fired, 19 entered the body of Amadou Diallo, and some of those bullets were fired after the body was on the ground. There were bullet holes in his feet, indicating that he was lying prone and they were still shooting.

This problem of miscarriage of justice in the criminal justice system unfortunately is a nationwide problem, as I have just said, not just a New York problem. For that reason, we must insist that this Nation address the issue at this level.

We are violating human rights on a massive scale. The situation deserves the immediate attention of the Congress of the United States. Acquittal of the officers who slaughtered Amadou Diallo is an outrageous miscarriage of justice, and it is a profound abuse of human rights.

The leadership of the Caring Majority now has a sacred duty to set forth and carry out for as long as necessary a comprehensive plan for justice for Amadou Diallo and all the related people who are victimized by an oppressive criminal justice system.

We want a permanent end to systemic police oppression and criminal justice system conspiracies throughout the entire Nation. Such a plan must include mass demonstrations, because only through mass demonstrations do we offer all citizens the opportunity to show their outrage. But beyond the direct action, there must be long-term legal, legislative and international diplomatic efforts to address this human rights abuse.

The criminal justice system in America allows itself to be contaminated by the extremists in law enforcement, by the extremists in the police profession. The rogue cops and the rogue agents are abetted by the fact that the system will not expose them.

When the rogue cops and the extremists commit crimes, or even violate ordinary procedures, immediately a coverup system goes into motion. An entire police department goes into motion to cover up the actions of a few, automatically, regardless of who they are.

Several of these police who shot Amadou Diallo had a record of being brutal and using excessive force. That record was not allowed to be discussed in the trial, one of the problems with the trial. Several of them had been involved in incidents that were of a racist nature. None of their past history could be discussed.

But all of it is relevant when you are seeking to determine which elements of the police department, which elements in the law enforcement system, are extreme and ought to be exposed. But instead of exposing them, respectful cops, people who are decent and know better, people who have a guilty conscience for years afterwards, go into motion. They call it the blue wall of silence. Automatically say nothing, do nothing to hurt your fellow policemen, and, in some cases, tell a lie, cover up.

One of the reasons Amadou Diallo was shot so many times was the fact that there is also an unwritten code which says that if you have an extreme situation like that, every cop must be involved who is on the scene. There were four, and, even though he was down and dead, all four had to shoot, because that way you had a situation where there was no innocent witness. Nobody could be innocent and be a witness to what happened against the others. That is an unwritten code, which results in many times excessive shooting by police, large numbers of bullets being fired. The public is baffled, why did they do that? They did it so everybody would be culpable; nobody could be a witness.

When these extreme situations occur, judges become part of the process of coverup, district attorneys become part of the process of coverup. The rigged American criminal justice system has once more in the case of Amadou Diallo massacred the human rights of a powerless minority person.

Amadou Diallo was, first, a hate crime victim of deadly profiling. Policemen going through a minority neighborhood see a man on the steps of his own home, in his own vestibule, and decide he might be a criminal. If that is not racial profiling, I do not know what is racial profiling. It never happens in white neighborhoods. It never happens. We have not had these outrageous extreme cases in white neighborhoods. Amadou Diallo was a victim of police profiling.

He was, secondly, the victim of a desperate police coverup, a coverup conspiracy which began when the police officers, who knew he was already helpless, all fired bullets into his body in order to guarantee that all four would be defendants and there would be no innocent witnesses. Like the blue wall of silence, this multiple assault technique is part of an unwritten code of coverup.

Additionally, Amadou Diallo was a victim of the government's failure to appoint a special prosecutor to try a unique case involving a police department which routinely works in collaboration with the Bronx district attorney's office. Now, we have made demands for years that in cases involving police corruption, police misconduct, a special outside prosecutor who does not

work with those police on an ongoing basis ought to be appointed.

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For the last 40 years we have made that demand, and it still goes unheeded. The prosecution's case in this trial, and the whole world saw it, and I want to congratulate the judge for at least one thing, he was willing to allow the trial to be on TV. Everybody could see the ineptness of the District Attorney's presentation. Now, we cannot believe that it was by mistake.

Finally, Amadou Diallo was a victim of bold manipulation of other vital components of the judicial system. A judge who was known for his predilection to defend police officers, known for that, who was ignorant of and insensitive to the civic and social environment in which Diallo was killed. The New York City environment, this judge in Albany, the capital of New York State, knew very little about it.

And then they recruited, in this change of venue, moving from New York City, the Bronx, to Albany, they recruited a jury that was definitely unfamiliar with the New York City factors, and large numbers of Upstate people are hostile to the whole complex set of problems that New York City faces, hostile to New York City's complex problems.

Is that a jury of peers of the police? I do not think so. They do not live in Albany. Is it a jury of the peers of Amadou Diallo? Certainly not. But not by accident did all of this happen: The venue was changed, and a judge is selected who constantly asks the jury to see the case through the eyes of the police.

When we take the charge of the judge to the jury, we would have a classic case of a jury being assaulted repeatedly with statements which push them to a decision that was an unjust decision and a miscarriage of justice. Given the negative structuring of this case, its outcome was predictable.

Nonetheless, the caring majority of our community and the entire Nation, the shock, we are not evil enough to believe there is not a level of decency below which common sense and self-evident truths will not allow even the oppressive criminal justice system to sink. There might have been subtle factors that could be twisted to confuse a jury. However, manslaughter or negligent homicide were certainly one or two obvious crimes which they should have been convicted for.

There are difficult days and months and years ahead, but the leadership of the African-American community and other endangered minorities, because the same problem in New York City is a problem in the Hispanic community, it is a problem in the Asian community, these other minorities are equally endangered. All decent, caring citizens must not allow this outrage to continue. For as long as necessary, we must unite to persevere and unite to push for justice.

Let me just pause for a moment before I ask my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), the gentleman from Queens (Mr. MEEKS), to join me. Let me just pause and repeat what I said before.

There are a set of demands that were made in connection with the Amadou Diallo killing. On Saturday, March 27, 1999, that is a little less than a year ago, a group of people in New York City met about the Amadou Diallo case. They drew up a set of demands at that time. I am going to read those demands, those 10 demands.

As I said before a few minutes ago, these ten demands which were set forth on March 27 of 1999 were demands, most of which had been repeated over and over again for the last 40 years. The characters change. There is a different mayor now, but previous mayors have been approached in the same way.

Mayor Giuliani in this case was asked to immediately implement the recommendations of the Mollen Commission, which existed for a long time. They called a long time ago for the establishment of an independent investigative body with full subpoena power that had jurisdiction over police corruption and police brutality in New York City.

Twice the City Council of New York has passed legislation creating a body to monitor corruption, but the mayor has done everything in his power to block its implementation, the present mayor, first by veto, and then when the Council overrode his veto, by tying the matter up in court.

The mayor must also implement the recommendations from both the majority and dissenting reports of his own task force that he appointed in 1997 in the wake of the shocking Abner Louima incident.

Abner Louima was a Haitian immigrant who was lucky that he did not lose his life after having been grossly abused in the police station. Only the hard work of a hospital which was able to deal with the damage done to his internal organs saved his life, and he at least is alive today, but there are probably few police brutality victims who have lived after experiencing such horror.

The second demand made this time, and it has been made for the last 40 years, was that a civilian complaint review board be immediately appointed. We had one that was dismantled by this present mayor; that it be immediately reappointed, that it be strengthened and fully funded, so it can effectively investigate civilian complaints of police misconduct.

The civilian complaint review board has been on the table for 40 years. For 40 years this reasonable proposal has been frustrated and distorted, and we have had enough. There are members of our community that we have appealed to, not to get irrational, not to be emotional, do not become violent, do not do anything outrageous, that would injure and harm individuals or groups or the image of our city or the image of our neighborhoods.

Let us all be rational and reasonable. Let us understand that we are all disciples of Martin Luther King, and nonviolence is the way to work out these kinds of problems. They are waiting for us to work them out. We have made these reasonable demands for 40 years, and for 40 years we have not been able to make any headway.

The third demand, the State legislature must pass legislation creating a special prosecutor for police brutality and corruption in New York. In conjunction with this, the State Attorney General must create a special unit on police misconduct, and should issue an annual report documenting instances of misconduct throughout the State.

This was a reasonable demand made by reasonable people, and they have ignored it. Only under great pressure, only under great pressure did the last Governor, Governor Cuomo, appoint a special prosecutor in the horrifying Griffeth case, where a man was chased to his death on a highway, but that was an exception to the rule. Why not as a rule do what is rational and reasonable; understand that the District Attorneys cannot effectively prosecute the police? They work with the police every day. They are not in a position to prosecute the police. There is a gross conflict of interest that we cannot overcome.

Item four, the police department must develop a comprehensive training program, developed in consultation with outside experts, to school its officers in racial and cultural sensitivity, and must also implement a rigorous process of in-depth psychological screening of its recruits and officers.

I can only tell the Members that I know police officers who say that when this effort was made, under pressure, with one of the two teams that they pretended to introduce comprehensive training related to racial and cultural sensitivity, that it has been a big joke. The police force has laughed it into oblivion. They do not take it seriously because the command from the top does not make themselves take it seriously. This is a reasonable demand.

Demand number four is a reasonable demand. Why is it not met? Why do they not respond to reasonable demands?

Demand number four, the New York Police Department should reflect the makeup of the citizen population it serves. New York City police officers should live in New York City. The State legislature should immediately pass a law mandating residency for city officers.

This is a reasonable demand. I ask Members, anywhere in America, is this an unreasonable demand? In most of our counties and cities throughout the United States there is a requirement that police officers and other civil servants live in the community. New York City is the exception. New York City is the exception even in New York

State, where most jurisdictions require that their local police live in their jurisdiction, that they live in the city or county that they serve.

Why is New York City an exception? Because the power brokers in New York are such that they were able to force the State, to get the State legislature to pass laws which exempt New York City. They cannot do what other places in New York State can do. They cannot require a residency law.

The City Council of New York City has on several occasions passed laws which require police to live in the city; not to disrupt the lives of existing police officers and say, if you are a police officer now you have to move back into the city. No. It has been very generous, and they only require new recruits to. Anybody coming into the police department as a new recruit must live in the city.

The City Council passed it, it has gone to the State legislature, and it refuses to pass it.

One of my close colleagues, Assemblyman Al Vann, has recently offered legislation again in the New York State Assembly. It has no chance of passing by the Republican-controlled Senate or being signed by the Governor.

This is a reasonable demand. This is the way it is done in most of America. Why cannot the power brokers, the mayor, the Governor of New York city and New York State, respond in a reasonable way to reasonable demands?

Demand number six, the police commissioner must also take specific and immediately steps to recruit more minorities and women to serve as police officers and develop a plan to increase promotion opportunities for women and minority officers.

This is a reasonable demand, that we have recruiting programs to get more minorities. The number of minorities in the police force has gone down over the last two decades instead of up. The number of minorities, Hispanic and black, are less now in the upper ranks than they were 10 years ago. We have obviously not had a sincere effort by the police department and the city administrations to meet this kind of reasonable demand.

Demand number seven, who can disagree with demand number seven, that the salary and benefits for police officers must be improved? Law enforcement officers are entrusted with extraordinary responsibilities and they should be compensated accordingly.

Traditionally, New York City police officers have certainly not been underpaid when compared to the surrounding suburbs, but now their pay is falling behind. We think that the recruitment problem of high-quality people, whether they are white or African-American or Hispanic, the recruitment of high-quality people is enhanced by maintaining decent salaries and benefits, and certainly the members of the police department do not disagree with us on that one.

However, we see no special effort to package the police benefits and salaries and the recruitment program in a way to attract more minorities to the present police structure.

Demand number eight, the police department's 48-hour rule, which delays the ability of the New York Police Department investigators to question any police officer charged with violations of New York Police Department rules and regulations, must be eliminated. They have 48 hours in which they cannot question a police officer in New York. If something goes wrong, he has 48 hours to get his story together. We cannot question him until the 48-hour period has elapsed.

Demand number nine, that weapons, ammunition, and tactics used by the department must be assessed and periodically reviewed, not only to measure effectiveness, but to protect the safety of innocent New Yorkers. The use of hollow point bullets should be discontinued immediately. That is point number nine.

I must congratulate the mayor and the city administration for responding to point number nine. After the death of Amadou Diallo, at least there has been a restriction on the use of hollow point bullets. So we have ten demands, and one, there has been a reasonable effort made to try to comply with it.

Point number 10 is addressed not to the mayor of New York City, but to the Congress. Congress must call on the Justice Department to honor its commitment to monitor and issue annual reports documenting instances of police misconduct throughout the country. This promise was made in the wake of the Rodney King incident, and has yet to be acted upon.

The Justice Department is still too timid in its approach to the violation of civil rights and human rights of citizens across the country by police and the criminal justice system. These are reasonable demands, and when we tell our people in our districts, be reasonable, do not get too emotional, we are going to resolve this problem through nonviolent, legal, rational means, we are going to negotiate it through, as leaders we would like some response from the other side of the table.

The other side of the table not only includes Mayor Giuliani, in the case of New York City, not only includes Governor Pataki, but the whole power structure of New York, the businessmen and what we call the permanent government of New York.

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Certain organizations and institutions sit there year after year as we make these demands and they put no pressure on to make certain that reasonable responses are made to reasonable demands. They are as guilty as the public officials who year after year, administration after administration, ignore these reasonable demands.

At this point, I would like to yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), my colleague from Queens, who is also a member of the Task Force on Police Brutality of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I compliment my colleague, the gentleman from New York, (Mr. OWENS) for his very eloquent statement. As indicated, I am the cochair of the Congressional Black Caucus's Task Force on police brutality. And just late last year as a task force, we traveled and conducted four hearings around this country; one here in Washington, D.C.; one in New York City; one in Chicago, Illinois; and one in Los Angeles, California.

The theme of the testimony that we heard was the same. There seems to be a pervasive police mentality that is going on across this Nation that is very Bull Connor'ish, particularly in the African-American and Latino communities.

There was a cry throughout all of these hearings, and there were a number of other cities, major urban cities throughout this country that were crying for us to come to their cities too to conduct such hearings in which we would have heard the same type of testimony.

As a result of the Congressional Black Caucus and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CONYERS), the ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary, and a number of organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Council of La Raza, the National Urban League, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the time is right, based upon the debate that we just heard from the gentleman from New York, the time is right now for us in Congress to move and pass some aggressive legislation that will begin to address this police mentality that is Bull Connor'ish.

Mr. Speaker, it will also do something to bring people together as opposed to divide us. The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CONYERS) is sponsoring a bill very shortly that all Members of this House need to join in support of called the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act of 2000.

This bill will create a national minimum standard for law enforcement agencies to meet. It provides tools for developing better operations, enhances the tools and resources available to the Federal Government as well as individual citizens to investigate and stop police misconduct, and addresses a number of issues such as deaths in custody, racial profiling, and abuses by the Immigration and Naturalization and Customs Services that have traditionally plagued Americans of color.

The time is right. It is within our national interest to have an accreditation of law enforcement agencies. There are currently no national standards and, as a result, there are huge discrepancies between law enforcement agencies and policies dealing with everything from the use of force to handling of citizen complaints.

Included in these new uniform standards would be early warning programs, civilian review procedures, traffic stop documentation and procedures, administrative due process requirements and training. The bill also provides for law enforcement development plans, management schemes, managements like the new management standards will deal with administrative due process, residency requirements, as the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) was talking about, compensation and benefits, use of force, racial profiling, early warning programs, and civilian review boards.

It will deal with training of law enforcement agencies and it will require standards in the areas of the use of lethal and nonlethal force dealing with law enforcement misconduct, including excessive force, racial profiling, and how police officers communicate with the public.

Recruitment: Law enforcement agencies will also be required to look at policies relating to recruitment and hiring a diverse force that is representative of the communities they serve. They develop valid job-related educational and psychological standards and initiatives to encourage residency and continuing education.

Oversight: Law enforcement agencies will be required to look at how they handle citizens' complaints with the potential establishment of civilian review boards and the implementation of early warning programs and administrative due process. There will be administrative due process procedures. There will be enhanced funding to combat police misconduct; enhanced authority in practice and pattern investigations.

There will be a study of deaths in custody. There will be a deprivation of rights under the color of law, a national task force on law enforcement and oversight.

An immigration enforcement and review commission should be established, as well as Federal data collection on racial profiling.

These are some of the items that will be covered in this bill that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CONYERS) will be coming out with very shortly called the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act of 2000.

Let me move to the terrible situation, which is just a symptom of what is taking place across America, and that is the matter in regards to Amadou Diallo. I know some say that there was a jury and the jury was an integrated jury, but that is not all that matters in this particular case. What does matter, and I say this as a former prosecutor and an attorney, I know that a judge can charge one in to make one's case, or charge one out to lose their case. In listening to the charges of this judge, I knew immediately thereafter that tragedy and a miscarriage of justice would be had.

I find that a decision by the appellate division, which changed the venue of this case, which virtually denied Mr. Diallo the opportunity of having this case judged by his peers, and even the police officers who were police officers of the City of New York, there should have been members of the jury from the City of New York. The changing of venue, in my opinion, was a miscarriage of justice.

What matters is that this jury, being from Albany, was not acquainted with the pattern and practice of police violence against minority communities in New York City. It simply cannot be that an innocent person standing at his own doorway, minding his own business, was shot down in a firing squad fashion and those who committed this act are not guilty of anything. Not even reckless endangerment.

Hundreds of millions of people around the world, who laud the virtues and the superiority of the American system of justice, can now see some hypocrisy of America's claims, particularly when it comes to people of color. All New Yorkers, indeed all Americans can also see this. And we see it, I see it, and some of the other hypocrisy of the mayor of the City of New York.

When a verdict suits the mayor, he praises the court system. But where a decision is contrary to what he wants, he calls judges and jurors silly and irresponsible.

We and our constituents will never forget that this mayor approved the creation of the Street Crimes unit that is over 90 percent white, no diversity, and that the mayor allowed it to operate under the slogan, ''We own the night.''

We should note with alarm the jubilation by many members of the police department in precincts around this city. Also note that it has been reported that the judge, after the verdict, went to a celebration party with the lawyers of the defendants. Imagine. Judges, police officers celebrating and forgetting that an innocent, unarmed man was killed.

Those who celebrate dismiss the death of Mr. Diallo and him as an innocent man make a mistake saying this will erase the unwarranted acts of a firing squad. Do those jubilant people believe that they made policing easier? That this is the way to garner the respect of New Yorkers? I submit not. I submit it is a Bull Connor'ish type mentality.

Have they forgotten that in New York City that a majority of the New Yorkers that they swore to defend and protect are, in fact, people of color? The killing of Amadou Diallo and the acquittal of the four police officers unfortunately follow a practice and pattern of police relations with the black and Latino community that has been in effect for a very long time.

Clearly, reforms are necessary and must be instituted with speed, courage, and determination. But it is clear that the administration of the New York City Police Department and the command structure there are incapable of instituting meaningful reforms without Federal intervention.

The City of New York is hurting today. There is an open wound there. That wound was caused by the decision that sends a message that the police can in fact fire 41 bullets at an unarmed man of color as he enters his home. A healing of these wounds can only happen if the Justice Department conducts a thorough investigation of the violation of Mr. Diallo's civil rights.

In addition, as I said this morning, they must relentlessly evaluate and find just solutions to the patterns and practices of the New York City Police Department. If New York City is to heal, the message must be that all human life is valuable. The Justice Department is the only doctor that is available that can help us heal the wound of the City of New York.

I say to the rest of the citizens of New York, we must come together and arm ourselves with the ballot and go out this November, and every November thereafter, like we have never done in the history of this country. I yield back to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), who is also cochair of the Congressional Black Caucus Task Force on Police Brutality. I just want to repeat for all, before I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS), my second colleague from New York, I want to repeat that the fact that we are talking about the verdict that the majority of New York City and New York State citizens consider to be a miscarriage of justice. We are talking about the fact that 10 reasonable demands that have been made for the last 40 years which, if they had been heeded, would have gone a long ways toward preventing what happened in the Amadou Diallo case.

We are talking about the fact that there are extremist elements in police departments, in law enforcement agencies. The rogue cops and the extremist elements, however, are aided and abetted by the cover-up procedure that takes place, from the commissioner and the mayor on down, when something goes wrong.

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The criminal justice system goes into motion to cover up these cases. Our appeal is to meet those 10 demands in the case of New York City. We will go a long ways toward seeing to it that this never happens again.

We also appeal for national action. Tomorrow, members of the Congressional Black Caucus will be meeting with the Justice Department to talk about their duty to intervene in this case, to follow through on the legislation that already exists, which enables them to investigate whether or not the civil rights of Amadou Diallo were violated. If they were violated, they can prosecute these same four policemen on the violation of the civil rights of Amadou Diallo.

We also would like national action in this Congress. My colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), has said that the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) will be introducing a bill which is called the Law Enforcement Trust Integrity Act of 2000.

We would like to see a response from the entire Congress. This is a matter for the caring majority. All decent citizens should want to see to it that there are no further miscarriages of justice; all decent citizens who want to see to it that the rogue cops, the extremist elements of law enforcement, are isolated.

Mr. Speaker, beyond that, we want to let it be known that we are going to organize and appeal to the United Nations that the pattern of the violations that exist throughout the entire Nation, which ranges from Amadou Diallo's killing to the Los Angeles Police Department's confessions of gross brutality and miscarriages of justice to the fact that we have 2 million people in prison, most of whom are minorities, to the police profiling of the New Jersey State troopers, on and on it goes.

And we would like to raise this debate to a higher level and have the rest of the world look at the violations of human rights in America. Already Amnesty International has said that New York City has a pattern of police oppression which violates human rights.

I would like to yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) who is from the 10th Congressional District.

Mr. TOWNS. Let me thank the gentleman for taking the time out. And I agree with the gentleman, this is something that needs to be done, and certain things need to be said.

I would also like to congratulate and thank my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), for the work that he has done in the area of police brutality, because, as you know, throughout this Nation, the problem of police brutality is something that we must begin to address.

I am really sad today. My heart is heavy, because when I think about what is happening in this Nation, even in the city that I am from, when I think about senior citizens, a lady 93 years old said to me that you cannot even trust the police.

I think on that note, the police department should support the Law Enforcement Trust Act, because I think that the police officers that are on the force that are doing what is right should recognize that those that are doing things that are not right also creates a kind of negative stigma for the whole department and for policemen everywhere.

I think that law enforcement authorities should support the Law Enforcement Trust Act. We have had too many situations where minorities, men of color and women of color, have been shot. You could call the roll.

I mean, in New York I was just sitting there thinking in terms of Eleanor Bumpers, in terms of what happened to her, and Michael Griffin, then Randy Evans, I could go on and on, and, of course, Amadou Diallo.

All of these are names of people that have been killed by the police department. And we have not done a whole lot to correct this over the years. We have too many people who you talk to who have horror stories about the police.

You can talk to people on the street. People stop me all the time to tell me what happened to them. So profiling, let us face it, we might as well take our heads from out of the sand and from behind trees, and realize the fact that this is something that exists and let us now come together and work toward it.

We need to make certain that we have a program put in place that is going to monitor these kinds of issues, because when you have people talking about it on a regular basis, even at church they talk about the kinds of things that the police department is doing.

The people are now afraid of the police department, that is how bad things have gotten. And I think that those policemen of goodwill understand that and should now come forth and say yes, I really feel that something needs to be done, and it needs to be done now.

The Justice Department I think now has to step in, because of the tactics that have been used by the unit, in terms of street gang units, street police units. I think that a street crime unit, the kind of tactics that they are using, I think that the Justice Department should take a look at it, because all of these people that I talk to cannot be wrong.

If you just walk the streets of New York, in terms of the communities of color, they will tell you what the police are doing; how they were stopped and how they were asked all of these different questions. And the only reason that the person stopped them is because they happened to be of color.

I think the time has come in the United States of America where we must address that. Now, I know that it is not all police officers, and I don't want to stand here and indict all of them; but I think it is enough for us to stop at this point in time and begin to address it.

To the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and those who are having police brutality hearings around this Nation, I think that you must continue until the message is heard all over that something needs to be done, and that the things that are going on with the street crime unit and all of these things that people are complaining about must be addressed.

I do believe that if we pay enough attention and we stop for a moment, we can do something about it. Too many people have been left with tears as a result of what has happened with the police department. It is always ''I thought they had a this,'' ''I thought they had a that.''

I mean, I can tell you about the story of Randy Evans. No weapon. Police officer just shot him.

I think that we need to understand that we have to address those issues. We have to do it as quickly as possible.

Let me close by saying simply this to my colleagues, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS), the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), who is also offering up the Law Enforcement Trust Act, I think the time has come to do that. I think that we can no longer afford the luxury of sitting back.

I think when we go to the Justice Department, we need to go with a clear message, in fact, that the street crime unit must be investigated, that tactics must be investigated. This kind of stuff should not go on in a civilized society.

So at this time I would like to yield back to the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) and say to him I really appreciate the work that he is doing.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from the 10th Congressional District in Brooklyn, New York (Mr. TOWNS). He mentioned Randolph Evans as an example of the police slaughter that has gone on over the last 30 years. Randolph Evans was a young man standing in a crowd on the grounds of a housing project. There was some kind of disturbance. The police officer walked up, he put a gun to his head, and shot him in front of a whole host of witnesses.

There was no defense for that. So they came up with a defense at the trial that the police officer suffered from psychomotor epilepsy. Psychomotor epilepsy. I have never heard the term since then. But he was acquitted as a victim of psychomotor epilepsy. He had taken the life of a young man, and he was acquitted. This shows my colleagues why we were so outraged many years later to find 41 shots being fired at Amadou Diallo.

The gentleman from the 10th Congressional District of Brooklyn and I also share another problem. In the New York Times yesterday there is a report of ''High Infant Mortality Rates In Brooklyn'' and how they mystify experts. In Brownsville, which is in my district, in Bedford-Stuyvesant, which is mostly in the district of the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS), there is an alarming increase in the number of babies who are dying at birth. While all across the Nation there seems to be a decrease, there is an alarming increase in these two communities. It so happens these two communities are communities that have the largest number of welfare recipients in New York City. The third community suffering also is in the Bronx, a large number of welfare recipients.

The enforcement of the new Welfare Reform Act in New York City by Mayor Guiliani has been harsh and brutal. There is no mystery here. Mothers are suffering because of the harsh and brutal way in which the Welfare Reform Act is being implemented.

They are suffering from the lack of care. They are suffering from the fact that it is more difficult to get housing. It is more difficult to get help for their children. They are suffering because there is not enough day care.

So I started this discussion by saying that, whenever I come to the floor, I want to discuss the budget that we are getting ready to prepare, because the budget sets the tone for everything else we do and is important here in the House of Representatives.

The budget will guide the discussion leading to the appropriations process. The way we spend money tells the world what we think is important. We must spend money on better health care for these youngsters so at the beginning of their lives they have a chance.

We have a problem at the end, a problem with respect to young people like Amadou Diallo, Randolph Evans, and others. We do not want them to be cut down in the prime of their lives by irresponsible and reckless police officers. The rogue police officers, the extremist police officers must not be aided and abetted by the police department and the mayors and the governors and the judges. They must expose and isolate these rogue extremist elements within the application and law enforcement area throughout the Nation.

Thomas Jefferson said, ''You have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.''

I congratulated the Congress when we started. Today we took a great step forward. We moved the cap on the earnings of senior citizens. We recognize that a long life should be rewarded. Every step should be taken to make that long life as pleasant as possible. But at the end of life or in the middle or in the beginning, it is all important and equal amounts.

We want to, all three of us, declare that for all those people in our districts and the rest of New York City and throughout the State and anywhere else in the country, we want to know what action you are going to take. We have told you we call for these demands to be met. We are appealing to the Justice Department to intervene.

We are going to take the case in some form to the United Nations. There was a demonstration on Saturday before the United Nations. That is just a beginning, because there are gross violations of human rights throughout the entire Nation.

We also are going to call for an activity and an action in which everybody can participate. We are going to call for an April week of caring majority nonviolent outrage. We had a day of outrage once in New York City. They know what that means. We are calling for an April week of caring majority nonviolent outrage where all of the citizens of New York, black and white, can express themselves. That effort will be followed by demands that the negotiations be met.

In the last 40 years, more than 50 outrageous killings of New York City citizens by the police have gone unpunished. From the children, Clifford Glover, and Randolph Evans, to grandmother Eleanor Bumpers who was killed in her own living room, mental patient Gideon Bush, and immigrant Amadou Diallo, the careless actions of individual policemen have been supported and excused by a collaborating judicial system and by the establishment press and media, by the power brokers, and the governors of New York City.

We declare that the caring majority of New York City will no longer surrender to these gross injustices. We are going to take action until they yield on our reasonable demands.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the article in the New York Times that appeared February 29, 2000, which talks about the ''High Infant Mortality Rates In Brooklyn Mystify Experts'' as follows:

[From the New York Times, Feb. 29, 2000]

HIGH INFANT MORTALITY RATES IN BROOKLYN MYSTIFY EXPERTS

(By Jennifer Steinhauer)

In central Brooklyn—where storefronts are boarded, housing projects stand in defiant opposition to the boom times, and the hospitals are more or less broke—babies are dying at rates that the city as a whole has not seen in nearly two decades. And they die, in some cases, at a rate double what the federal government has set as the infant mortality goal for the nation.

Often, they die months before they were meant to be born, their bodies a tangle of minute bones and skin, weighed in grams rather than pounds. Some never see their mother's faces; they are gone right after birth. Others leave the hospital with a shopping bag of drugs and a mother overwhelmed by her own myriad problems, and do not make it to their first birthday.

While the infant mortality rate in New York has fallen steadily in the last decade, it has fallen much more slowly in neighborhoods like Bedford-Stuyvesant and Brownsville, neighborhoods with considerable populations of new immigrants.

In New York City in 1988, babies less than a year old died at a rate of 6.8 per 1,000 which is slightly better than the national average, 7.2. Bedford-Stuyvesant, however, has one of the highest rates in the country, 14 per 1,000, a 20 percent increase over 1997. The last time the average rate of infant mortality was that high in New York City over all was 1983.

That the number is on the rise at all is startling. It stands against the national trend even in cities with severe social problems, like Washington, where the rate is 12.5 per 1,000.

In Brownsvill, the story is much the same; the rate slides up and down each year, averaging about 10 deaths per 1,000 babies in the last five years. While the disparity between children of black and white mothers has always been stark, there is evidence that the gap is closing elsewhere in the city. The infant mortality rate in the Tremont section of the Bronx, for example, is 8.1, a 54 percent decrease from 1988.

The figures have so concerned the city's health commissioner, Dr. Neal L. Cohen, that he has made reducing infant mortality one of his top priorities for this year.

There seems to be no clear answer to why the same neighborhoods stand out year after year, and why some would buck the downward trends. Experts seem to agree that even when the resources exist—prenatal care at low cost, hospitals willing to deliver babies, government-subsidized infant formula and food—it is still profoundly difficult to get many pregnant women through the doors.

''It is perplexing question,'' said Dr. Katherine La Guardia, who runs the ambulatory obstetrics and gynecology clinic at Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center in Brownsville. ''A huge amount of effort has gone into improving prenatal care, but we still don't know how one reaches the most unreachable.''

Those are the mothers who are addicted to drugs, who are H.I.V. positive, unemployed or living in New York as illegal immigrants. Women who fit those descriptions often avoid going to see doctors before they give birth out of fear, experts said, that their babies will be taken from them or that they will be deported. Others are discouraged by family members, who do not believe in prenatal care or are suspicious of the entire medical system.

''The question is, how do we make women less afraid to get care,'' Dr. La Guardia said.

Other mothers want prenatal care but cannot get it because they live too far from a health clinic or hospital, or have small children and no one at home to care for them while they make the trek to the doctor.

There are also anomalies that cannot be readily explained. For instance, neighborhoods with a high concentration of immigrants from the Caribbean seem to report the highest infant mortality figures. ''What is interesting about Bedford is that 42.1 percent of the women are foreign-born,'' said Dr. Tanya Pagan Paggio, an associate professor of medicine at the City University of New York.

''This is important because when you look at other places in the city where there is a high level of foreign-born, infant mortality rates are closer to 6 percent,'' Dr. Paggio said. ''In Bedford, there are a lot of Caribbean people. And we know that Jamaican women have a 9.4 per 1,000 rate, Haitian women have about 11 per 1,000 and rates among women from Trinidad and Tobago are also high. You have to wonder if these women have access to service they need.''

Robin Bennett is desperate not to let her baby become another sad statistic. At 23, she is pregnant with her fourth child, a baby with a heart condition. One son is in foster care, and the other lives with her mother. Her daughter, who is 18 months old, lives with Ms. Bennett in a government-subsidized apartment in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Her problems are as complicated as they are numerous: her apartment is full of bugs that bite her baby, she said, adding that one of her children was a result of a rape. Her mother, who has AIDS, is her main line of support.

''Sometimes I cry at night because I wonder if the stress in my life gave this baby her hole in her heart,'' Ms. Bennett said. She finds herself gravitating to Brooklyn Perinatal Network, an organization that tries to keep babies like Ms. Bennett's from dying by shepherding women into prenatal care, advocating for them on housing issues and giving other social support.

In fact, a lack of access to housing, nutritious food and adult support may contribute to infant mortality as much as poor medical care, many experts say.

''Prenatal care has probably been overstated,'' said Dawn Misra, an associate professor at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health and an expert on infant mortality. ''If you look at a program like Healthy Start, you see it is a broader initiative with resources like food, social support and other

things like smoking cessation clinics, which is import because smoking may lead to low-birth-weight babies, and low birth weight is the leading cause of infant mortality.''

When Bedford-Stuyvesant lost a majority of its financing in 1997 for Healthy Start, a federal program intended to help poor women have healthy babies, the infant mortality rate shot up, said Ngosi Moses, who runs the Brooklyn Perinatal Network. ''When resources became scarce, those rates rose,'' Ms. Ngosi said. ''This shows you when money is put into the community, good things happen, and when the money is pulled out, they go out.''

The $6.8 million that was spread over 22 programs in the early 1990's now has to cover 94 programs.

Brownsville is a neighborhood that a decade of economic expansion seems to have left untouched, where Healthy Start does not even exist. Rows of private homes are boarded up, and stores are scarce, save for a few of the dollar-bin variety.

The number of people, especially women, who are infected with the AIDS virus is ''astonishing,'' Dr. La Guardia said.

In most hospitals in the city, it is almost a given that a mother will leave the maternity ward with a healthy baby in her arms. In Brownsville, it is often just short of a victory.

Dr. La Guardia and her boss, Dr. Martin Gimovsky, who heads the obstetrics department at Brookdale, spend their days trying to unravel the histories and medical problems of the poor women who come through its clinics and labor and delivery floor each day. Many have never had a day of prenatal care.

On a recent Wednesday afternoon, during Dr. Gimovsky's clinic for women with high-risk pregnancies, dozens of women crammed into a waiting room. Almost all of them had had children before, including the recently homeless woman with AIDS who did not know her due date and had had virtually no prenatal care.

''You've gained weight,'' the resident said reassuringly.

''Well, I'm living somewhere now, so I am much more relaxed,'' said the woman, who would not give her name.

Cynthia Martinez, who has three children and is pregnant with a fourth, still calls her first baby, the one who was stillborn, by her name, Cynthia Michelle. ''She is 10 now,'' she said. The baby stopped moving at 7 months, and by the time Ms. Martinez delivered her, the doctors told her she was dead.

Distraught, Ms. Martinez said that she grabbed the baby of the woman she shared a room with when it was brought in for a feeding and refused to let her go. ''I just kept saying, 'You can't take this baby from me,'' Ms. Martinez, 24, said, ''I guess I thought she was mine. My mother told me that God had taken one from me but would give me more.''

Few patients at Brookdale, one of the city's most financially strained hospitals, pay the full price of their care, if they pay at all. Many are covered by the Prenatal Care Assistance Program, a state-financed program for poor pregnant women.

''We work with the patients no one wants,'' said Dr. Gimovsky, a plump and congenial doctor, who jokes easily with the teenage girls who fill the cramped clinic space. He recruited Dr. La Guardia by likening her work to that of the Peace Corps. ''You don't make any money at this,'' he said cheerfully, ''but this is what I want to do with my life.''

Although the infant mortality rates in Brownsville are historically lower than in Bedford-Stuyvesant, the March of Dimes earmarked the neighborhood for a $152,000 program to try to get more services to women. It is also pushing legislators in Albany to raise the maximum income women may earn and still qualify for prenatal care.

Dr. La Guardia has been at Brookdale for only a few months. Unlike Dr. Gimovsky, she is businesslike, almost stern, and deeply weary over the hospital's dire fiscal situation.

''I am still in shock,'' she said. Money would permit the hiring of more doctors and nurses. Ultrasound machines, standard equipment in any Manhattan obstetrics office, are scarce. A portable ultrasound, the latest in technology, is unheard of.

''Clearly, there are more dollars that need to be funneled into this area,'' Dr. La Guardia said. ''You wonder if there is any hope.''

SENIOR CITIZENS' FREEDOM TO WORK ACT PASSED TODAY

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, the Social Security earnings limit is a very outdated provision in the Tax Code. In fact, it goes back to the Great Depression. It was designed at that time to open up more jobs for young people during the Great Depression. The idea was that this would force seniors out of the workforce by putting this special earnings limit on them. But today in this era of low unemployment and in this era of much longer life spans, seniors should be welcome to stay in America's workforce.

What we did today in this House is to pass a bill that repeals this penalty on senior citizens who make the choice to continue to work. This was long overdue. Our seniors have worked their entire lives to build our country into what it is today. It is wrong for the Government to force them to choose between contributing to society or receiving their full Social Security checks.

In my home State of California alone, there are more than 161,000 seniors affected by the Social Security earnings test that were penalized by that test.

1700

If this legislation is passed by the Senate and signed into law, that means all these Californians over the age of 64 will be able to continue adding to our economic productivity while keeping all of their Social Security. These are individuals who paid into Social Security on the assurance that their money would be there when they retired.

The idea that the Federal Government can withhold access to their money, frankly, is outrageous. However, this is precisely what the Federal Government has done with the earnings test. It is denying seniors the benefits that they have paid for. It is denying them their earned right, and this is wrong.

With this booming economy and tightening of the labor force, the Federal Government should not discourage Americans from working. Rather, it should encourage people to be more productive. By repealing the earnings limit, more individuals will now work, pay more social security taxes, increase Federal revenues, and improve economic efficiency. America would also benefit from older workers' valuable work experience and work skills.

The earnings test discriminates against those who must work to supplement their benefits, because only wages are counted for purposes of this test. Income from hard-earned paychecks should not be treated less fairly than income from investment, and that is another reason why we needed to repeal it.

Repealing the Social Security earnings limit will also eliminate the need to recalculate affected retirement credits and benefits. And how much would that save a year? One hundred fifty million dollars annually is spent by the bureaucracy in doing this calculation.

Now, I constantly hear from seniors in my district about this issue. Whenever we hold a town meeting, or if we stop at a senior center or community center, the issue of allowing senior citizens to work without losing Social Security comes up.

Senior citizens have a place in our society and in our work force, and no one should ever discourage or deny that. It is unfair for the government to penalize them for wanting to work, and that is why the best thing we can do to honor seniors and their contributions is to repeal this senseless outdated earnings limit.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope the Senate and the President move quickly on this legislation that we have passed today and which I coauthored.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. DOGGETT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. WEYGAND, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CARSON, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SOUDER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. CHENOWETH-HAGE, for 5 minutes, March 8.

Mr. BILBRAY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FOLEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PAUL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WALSH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SOUDER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. METCALF, for 5 minutes, today.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Administration, reported that that committee did on the following date present to the President, for his approval, a bill of the House of the following title:

On Tuesday, February 29, 2000:

H.R. 149. To make technical corrections to the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 and to other laws related to parks and public lands.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 03 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 2, 2000, at 10 a.m.

RULES AND REPORTS SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO THE CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(d), executive communications [final rules] submitted to the House pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1) during the period of July 15, 1999 through January 24, 2000, shall be treated as though received on March 1, 2000. Original dates of transmittal, numberings, and referrals to committee of those executive communications remain as indicated in the Executive Communication section of the relevant CONGRESSIONAL RECORDS.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

6385. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting notification concerning the Department of the Air Force's Proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) to Israel for defense articles and services (Transmittal No. 00–23), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(b); to the Committee on International Relations.

6386. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting notification concerning the Department of the Air Force's Proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) to Egypt for defense articles and services (Transmittal No. 00–29), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(b); to the Committee on International Relations.

6387. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting Copies of international agreements, other than treaties, entered into by the United States, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); to the Committee on International Relations.

6388. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a report consistent with the War Powers Resolution regarding U.S. military forces in East Timor; (H. Doc. No. 106—203); to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed.

6389. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier Model DHC–7–100 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99–NM–107–AD; Amendment 39–11526; AD 2000–02–07] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6390. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company GE90 Series Turbofan Engines [Docket No. 99–NE–62–AD; Amendment 39–11496; AD 99–27–15] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6391. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A340–211, -212, -213, -311, -312, and -313 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99–NM–336–AD; Amendment 39–11495; AD 99–27–14] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6392. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Model F27 Mark 050 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99–NM–236–AD; Amendment 39–11494; AD 99–27–13] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6393. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier Model CL–600–2B19 (Regional Jet Series 100) Series Airplanes [Docket No. 98–NM–192–AD; Amendment 39–11510; AD 2000–01–12] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6394. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Raytheon Model BAe.125 Series 1000A and 1000B Airplanes and Model Hawker 1000 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99–NM–80–AD; Amendment 39–11499; AD 2000–01–02] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6395. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; de Havilland Model DHC–8–100, -200, and -300 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 98–NM–179–AD; Amendment 39–11531; AD 2000–02–13] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6396. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Fairchild Aircraft, Inc. SA226 and SA227 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 98–CE–84–AD; Amendment 39–11507; AD 98–19–15 R1] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6397. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300 B2–1A, B2–1C, B2–203, B2K–3C, B4–103, B4–2C, and B4–203 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99–NM–24–AD; Amendment 39–11498; AD 2000–01–01] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6398. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300, A300–600, and A310 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 2000–NM–09–AD; Amendment 39–111522; AD 2000–02–04] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6399. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. (Agusta) Model AB412 Helicopters [Docket No. 98–SW–69–AD; Amendment 39–11528; AD 2000–02–09] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6400. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter Deutschland GMBH Model MBB-BK 117 Helicopters [Docket No. 99–SW–60–AD; Amendment 39–11509; AD 2000–01–11] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6401. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Dornier Model 328–100 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99–NM–219–AD; Amendment 39–11527; AD 2000–02–08] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6402. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Cessna Aircraft Company Model 182S Airplanes [Docket No. 98–CE–125–AD; Amendment 39–11532; AD 2000–02–14] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6403. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; British Aerospace (Jetstream) Model 4101 Airplanes [Docket No. 99–NM–306–AD; Amendment 39–11524; AD 2000–02–05] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6404. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Model A109A and A109A II Helicopters [Docket No. 99–SW–91–AD; Amendment 39–11493; AD 99–27–12] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6405. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300 B4–600R and A300 F4–600R Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99–NM–130–AD; Amendment 39–11488; AD 99–27–07] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6406. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300 B4–203 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99–NM–327–AD; Amendment 39–11490; AD 99–27–09] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6407. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 757–200,

-200PF, and -200CB Series Airplanes Powered by Rolls-Royce RB211–535C/E4B Turbofan Engines [Docket No. 98–NM–323–AD; Amendment 39–11487; AD 99–27–06] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6408. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; CFE Company Model CFE738–1–1B Turbofan Engines [Docket No. 99–NE–39–AD; Amendment 39–11497; AD 99–27–16] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6409. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 777–200 and -300 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99–NM–323–AD; Amendment 39–11456; AD 99–25–13 C1] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. ARCHER: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 5. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age; with an amendment (Rept. 106–507). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. COMBEST: Committee on Agriculture. H.R. 3615. A bill to amend the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 to ensure improved access to the signals of local television stations by multichannel video providers to all households which desire such service in unserved and underserved rural areas by December 31, 2006; with an amendment (Rept. 106–508 Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SMITH of Texas (for himself, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. MCCOLLUM, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, and Mr. SCARBOROUGH):

H.R. 3767. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to make improvements to, and permanently authorize, the visa waiver pilot program under section 217 of such Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HORN:

H.R. 3768. A bill to require that any city that is completely surrounded by any other city must be assigned its own ZIP codes; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. PAUL:

H.R. 3769. A bill to prohibit the destruction during fiscal year 2001 of intercontinental ballistic missile silos in the United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. JACKSON of Illinois (for himself and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 3770. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for the applicability to operators of Internet Web sites of restrictions on the disclosure or records and other information relating to the use of such sites, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BERMAN:

H.R. 3771. A bill to eliminate the numerical limitation on the number of aliens granted asylum who may become lawful permanent residents in any fiscal year; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 3772. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on pigment yellow 199; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 3773. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on pigment blue 60; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 3774. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on solvent violet 13; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 3775. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on solvent blue 67; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 3776. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on pigment yellow 147; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 3777. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on pigment yellow 191.1; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3778. A bill to amend the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to provide duty-free treatment for, and clarify the classification of, machines and components used in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3779. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3780. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3781. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3782. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3783. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3784. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3785. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3786. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3787. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3788. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3789. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3790. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3791. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the maunfacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3792. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3793. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3794. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BOEHNER, and Mr. MATSUI):

H.R. 3795. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on machines, and their parts, for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs

(DVDs); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. DANNER:

H.R. 3796. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 2–Methyl-4-chlorophenoxyacetic acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. DANNER:

H.R. 3797. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 2,4–Dichlorophenoxyacetic acid, its salts and esters; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FORBES (for himself, Mr. NADLER, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. ACKERMAN):

H.R. 3798. A bill to amend section 211 of the Clean Air Act to prohibit the use of MTBE as a fuel additive, to amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act to accelerate the cleanup of MTBE released from leaking underground storage tanks, and to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to assist communities with MTBE contamination in drinking water supplies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 3799. A bill to amend chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code, to allow members of the Armed Forces to sue the United States for damages for certain injuries caused by improper medical care; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GIBBONS (for himself and Ms. BERKLEY):

H.R. 3800. A bill to establish a panel to investigate illegal gambling on college sports and to recommend effective countermeasures to combat this serious national problem; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GREENWOOD:

H.R. 3801. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Iminodisuccinate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GREENWOOD:

H.R. 3802. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Iminodisuccinate salts and aqueous solutions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. SPENCE):

H.R. 3803. A bill to suspend until June 30, 2003, the duty on transformers for use in certain radiobroadcast receivers capable of receiving signals on AM and FM frequencies; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. SPENCE):

H.R. 3804. A bill to suspend until June 3, 2003, the duty on transformers for use in certain radiobroadcast receivers with compact disc players and capable of receiving signals on AM and FM frequencies; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 3805. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on polyvinylchloride (PVC) self-adhesive sheets; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MINK of Hawaii:

H.R. 3806. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to add certain identifying information to the inscriptions on the markers on certain graves in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific containing the remains of certain unknowns who died in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MOAKLEY (for himself, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. OLVER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. WEYGAND, Mr. BALDACCI, and Mr. GEJDENSON):

H.R. 3807. A bill to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to ensure that petroleum importers, refiners, and wholesalers accumulate minimally adequate supplies of home heating oil to meet reasonably foreseeable needs in the northeastern States; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. MOLLOHAN:

H.R. 3808. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on BEPD 2–Butyl-2-ethylpropanediol; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MORELLA (for herself, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. MOAKLEY, and Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey):

H.R. 3809. A bill to amend chapter 4 of title 39, United States Code, to allow postal patrons to contribute to funding for organ and tissue donation awareness through the voluntary purchase of certain specially issued United States postage stamps; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. NEY:

H.R. 3810. A bill to permit any individual who has attained 62 years of age to engage in recreational fishing in navigable waters in any State without obtaining a license; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H.R. 3811. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude certain severance payment amounts from income; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. PELOSI (for herself, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. MATSUI, Mrs. MORELLA, and Mr. ROMERO-BARCELO):

H.R. 3812. A bill to create incentives for private sector research related to developing vaccines against widespread diseases and ensure that such vaccines are affordable and widely distributed; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on International Relations, and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROTHMAN:

H.R. 3813. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on cyclohexadee-8-en-1-one (CHD); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SMITH of Texas (for himself, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. CANNON, and Mr. GOODLATTE):

H.R. 3814. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act with respect to the number of aliens granted nonimmigrant status described in section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, to implement measures to prevent fraud and abuse in the granting of such status, to provide for expedited processing of certain employers' petitions with respect to aliens seeking such status, to increase, and modify the use of, fees paid by employers petitioning with respect to such aliens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Science, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 3815. A bill to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the design, planning, and construction of a project to reclaim and reuse wastewater within and outside of the service area of the Lakehaven Utility District, Washington; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. STUPAK (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. COYNE, Ms. CARSON, Mr. EVANS, Mr. FILNER, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. REYES, Mr. FROST, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Ms. BERKLEY, and Mr. QUINN):

H.R. 3816. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide that a stroke or heart attack that is incurred or aggravated by a member of a reserve component in the performance of duty while performing inactive duty training shall be considered to be service-connected for purposes of benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. TANCREDO:

H.R. 3817. A bill to redesignate the Big South Trail in the Comanche Peak Wilderness Area of Roosevelt National Forest in Colorado as the ''Jaryd Atadero Legacy Trail''; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. THOMAS (for himself and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 3818. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on octylmethoxycinnamate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. WOLF (for himself, Mr. DAVIS of Virginia, and Mrs. MORELLA):

H.R. 3819. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for expenses incurred in teleworking; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, Mr. METCALF, and Mr. HUNTER):

H.J. Res. 89. A joint resolution withdrawing the approval of the United States from the Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LANTOS (for himself, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. CONDIT, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. FORBES, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. KOLBE, Ms. LEE, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. NADLER, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WEINER, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. KUCINICH, and Mr. PASTOR):

H. Con. Res. 259. Concurrent resolution expressing the concern of Congress regarding human rights violations against lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered individuals around the world; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. BONILLA (for himself, Mr. DELAY, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ISTOOK, Mrs. NORTHUP, Mr. DICKEY, Mr. GOSS, Mr. PEASE, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin, Mr. GIBBONS, Mr. BUYER, Mr. GANSKE, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. BARR of Georgia, Mr. COMBEST, and Mrs. MYRICK):

H. Con. Res. 260. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration require ample public comment and a sound scientific basis for its recently proposed regulation on ergonomics; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. BONIOR, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WYNN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. WEINER, Mr. ROEMER, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ROMERO-BARCELO, Mr. DINGELL, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. MEEHAN, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. FORBES, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. ROTHman, Ms. BERKLEY, Ms.

DELAURO, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. VELAZQUEZ, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. BALDACCI, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. NADLER, Mr. LARSON, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. DIXON, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. HOLT):

H. Con. Res. 261. Concurrent resolution condemning the discriminatory practices prevalent at Bob Jones University; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LANTOS (for himself, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. GEJDENSON, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. WEINER, Mr. HORN, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. PORTER, Mr. EVANS, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mrs. JONES of Ohio):

H. Res. 429. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives concerning the participation of the extremist FPO in the government of Austria; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. FROST:

H. Res. 430. A resolution commending the paralegals of the United States and supporting a National Paralegals Day; to the Committee on Government Reform.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, private bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. DICKEY:

H.R. 3820. A bill to provide for the liquidation or reliquidation of certain entries of carbides; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H.R. 3821. A bill to provide for the liquidation or reliquidation of certain color television receiver entries to correct an error that was made in connection with the original liquidation; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 7: Mr. CAMP.

H.R. 72: Mr. OWENS and Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 73: Mr. GOSS.

H.R. 148: Mr. ADERHOLT and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 218: Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey.

H.R. 254: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. BAKER, and Mr. MCINTOSH.

H.R. 303: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia and Mr. HILLEARY.

H.R. 325: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 380: Mr. WALDEN of Oregon and Mr. MANZULLO.

H.R. 390: Mr. SANDERS.

H.R. 460: Mr. HOLDEN, Ms. CARSON, Mr. COOK, and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 531: Mr. COX, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. HAYES, and Mr. KINGSTON.

H.R. 534: Mr. TIERNEY and Mr. TANCREDO.

H.R. 583: Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.

H.R. 632: Mr. BILBRAY.

H.R. 637: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 638: Mr. OSE, Mr. BAKER, and Mr. FROST.

H.R. 750: Mr. EDWARDS.

H.R. 783: Mr. BROWN of Ohio and Mr. JENKINS.

H.R. 826: Mr. MORAN of Kansas and Mr. WISE.

H.R. 979: Mr. FROST, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 1020: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota and Mr. MATSUI.

H.R. 1041: Mr. PAUL, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. CRANE, and Mr. BONILLA.

H.R. 1071: Ms. DELAURO, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BORSKI, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. ORTIZ.

H.R. 1079: Mrs. WILSON, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, and Mr. COYNE.

H.R. 1093: Mr. YOUNG of Florida.

H.R. 1111: Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. BALLENGER, Mr. HERGER, Mr. COYNE, and Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 1182: Mr. TRAFICANT.

H.R. 1196: Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 1216: Mr. FORD, Mr. WALSH, Mrs. WILSON, and Mr. MASCARA.

H.R. 1285: Mr. GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1288: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H.R. 1322: Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. STUMP, and Mr. ROGAN.

H.R. 1396: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. SCOTT.

H.R. 1488: Mr. PHELPS.

H.R. 1592: Mr. EVERETT, Mr. KASICH, and Mr. COX.

H.R. 1606: Mr. FORD.

H.R. 1621: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Mr. FARR of California, and Mr. DIXON.

H.R. 1644: Mr. COSTELLO and Mr. CRANE.

H.R. 1681: Mr. WYNN.

H.R. 1747: Mr. WALDEN of Oregon and Mr. BOEHNER.

H.R. 1795: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. COX, Mr. OWENS, Mr. ROMBERO-BARCELO, Mr. WEYGAND, Mr. FORBES, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. GOODLING, Mr. SAXTON, and Mr. GOODE.

H.R. 1843: Mr. WATT of North Carolina.

H.R. 1870: Mr. WOLF, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. COSTELLO, Mrs. THURMAN, and Mr. REYES.

H.R. 2060: Mr. GILMAN.

H.R. 2200: Mr. BOEHLERT.

H.R. 2233: Mr. WATT of North Carolina.

H.R. 2258: Ms. DELAURO and Ms. MCKINNEY.

H.R. 2265: Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 2282: Mr. WELDON of Florida.

H.R. 2335: Mrs. CEHNOWETH-HAGE, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. DOOLITTLE, and Mr. HANSEN.

H.R. 2340: Mr. SALMON and Mrs. JONES of Ohio.

H.R. 2341: Mr. TURNER and Mr. HALL of Ohio.

H.R. 2355: Mr. BOSWELL.

H.R. 2356: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.

H.R. 2362: Mr. TANCREDO and Mr. RYUN of Kansas.

H.R. 2372: Mr. COBLE Mr. NEY, Mr. BUYER, Mr. TANNER, and Mr. SHOWS.

H.R. 2382: Mr. DELAY and Mrs. THURMAN.

H.R. 2498: Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. FOSSELLA, and Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 2535: Mr. BLAGOJEVICH and Mr. OLVER.

H.R. 2562: Mr. BALLENGER.

H.R. 2571: Mr. CAPUANO and Mr. ANDREWS.

H.R. 2594: Mrs. JONES of Ohio.

H.R. 2631: Mr. FORD, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 2640: Mr. GEJDENSON and Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 2651: Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 2733: Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 2865: Ms. MCKINNEY.

H.R. 2891: Mr. BOUCHER.

H.R. 2899: Mr. TOWNS.

H.R. 2900: Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HOLT, Mr. DIXON, Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 2907: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 2911: Mr. SHOWS.

H.R. 2934: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. LAFALCE, Mr. OLVER, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. MCKINNEY, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 2991: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, and Mr. HULSHOF.

H.R. 3091: Ms. CARSON, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. WU, Ms. ESHOO, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. SWEENEY.

H.R. 3105: Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 3115: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 3132: Mr. GEJDENSON and Mr. STUPAK.

H.R. 3148: Mr. TOWNS.

H.R. 3174: Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 3180: Mr. CLEMENT.

H.R. 3193: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 3195: Ms. STABENOW, Mr. EVANS, and Mr. FROST.

H.R. 3242: Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma and Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 3293: Mr. SISISKY, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. WELLER, Mr. ROGAN, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. WICKER, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. MCINTOSH, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. SWEENEY, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. EHRLICH, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. HILL of Indiana, Mr. PACKARD, Mr. MASCARA, Mr. LAMPSON, and Mr. MCNULTY.

H.R. 3295: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. POMEROY.

H.R. 3377: Mr. KILDEE, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.

H.R. 3396: Ms. PELOSI, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mrs. TAUSCHER, and Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD.

H.R. 3430: Mr. LANTOS, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. STUPAK, and Mr. MCNULTY.

H.R. 3445: Mr. SAXTON.

H.R. 3449: Mr. HOLDEN and Mr. SHAYS.

H.R. 3485: Mr. SALMON.

H.R. 3504: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 3518: Mr. EHLERS, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. COOK, and Mr. BEREUTER.

H.R. 3543: Mr. LUCAS of Kentucky and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 3573: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. KANJORSKI.

H.R. 3575: Mr. SHAYS and Mr. KOLBE.

H.R. 3576: Mr. NEY, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. GOODE, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. BAKER, Mr. BEREUTER, and Mr. HAYES.

H.R. 3582: Mrs. MYRICK and Mr. COOK.

H.R. 3590: Mr. CUNNINGHAM.

H.R. 3607: Mr. FROST.

H.R. 3608: Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. QUINN, and Mr. WYNN.

H.R. 3614: Mr. CASTLE, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. HALL of Ohio, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. BRYANT, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. WISE, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. PHELPS, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. BOEHLERT.

H.R. 3615: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma, Mr. GUTKNECHT, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. STENHOLM, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. KLINK, and Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 3620: Mr. GOODLING.

H.R. 3621: Mr. SKELTON, Mr. ROEMER, Mrs. KELLY, Ms. DANNER, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska, and Mr. HILL of Indiana.

H.R. 3625: Mr. BONILLA and Mr. COOKSEY.

H.R. 3629: Mr. BEREUTER.

H.R. 3634: Mr. EVANS, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 3641: Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut, Mr. BOEHLERT, and Mrs. ROUKEMA.

H.R. 3650: Mr. WU, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. BROWN of Ohio.

H.R. 3655: Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, and Mr. FROST.

H.R. 3660: Mrs. CHENOWETH-HAGE, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. MICA, Mr. HALL of

Ohio, Mr. BARR of Georgia, Mr. OXLEY, Mr. GARY MILLER of California, Mr. LINDER, Mr. PETRI, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. SCHAFFER, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. COMBEST, Mr. METCALF, Mr. MOLLOHAN, and Mr. HUTCHINSON.

H.R. 3662: Mr. WEYGAND, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. BALDACCI, Mr. MCNULTY, and Mrs. JONES of Ohio.

H.R. 3680: Mr. DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. INSLEE, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mrs. KELLY, Ms. DUNN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. FROST, and Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 3688: Mr. UDALL of Colorado.

H.R. 3695: Mr. RYUN of Kansas and Mr. HOSTETTLER.

H.R. 3700: Mr. ROMERO-BARCELO, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. SWEENEY, and Mr. FROST.

H.R. 3766: Mr. BLAGOJEVICH, Mr. COYNE, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. HALL of Ohio, and Mr. PASTOR.

H.J. Res. 48: Mr. HASTINGS of Washington and Mr. UDALL of Colorado.

H. Con. Res. 108: Mr. MCNULTY and Mr. FROST.

H. Con. Res. 182: Mr. COOK.

H. Con. Res. 220: Mr. OWENS and Mr. LEVIN.

H. Con. Res. 252: Mr. BENTSEN, Mr. FROST, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mrs. NORTHUP, Mr. EHLERS, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. SHAYS, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. BEREUTER, Mr. HORN, Mr. DREIER, Mr. PACKARD, Mrs. BONO, Mr. HULSHOF, and Mr. WATKINS.

H. Con. Res. 253: Mr. BLILEY.

H. Res. 107: Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. NADLER, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. HOEFFEL, Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, and Mr. POMEROY.

H. Res. 187: Mr. ABERCROMBIE.

H. Res. 238: Mr. UPTON.

H. Res. 332: Mr. PORTER, Mr. PETRI, and Mr. METCALF.

H. Res. 397: Mrs. THURMAN.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 1304: Mr. DELAHUNT.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS—ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

The following Members added their names to the following discharge petitions:

Petition 7, by Mr. SHOWS on House Resolution 371: Maurice D. Hinchey, John Elias Baldacci, Harold E. Ford, Jr., Nita M. Lowey, Major Owens, Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., Peter A. DeFazio, Ron Klink, Gerald D. Kleczka, William O. Lipinski, William (Bill) Clay, Loretta Sanchez, Martin Olav Sabo, and Edward J. Markey.

Petition 8, by Mr. STARK on House Resolution 372: Maurice D. Hinchey, John Elias Baldacci, Harold E. Ford, Jr., Nita M. Lowey, David D. Phelps, Edward J. Markey, Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., Major Owens, Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., Peter A. DeFazio, Ron Klink, Gerald D. Kleczka, William O. Lipinski, William (Bill) Clay, Martin Olav Sabo, and Ike Skelton.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 106th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 146 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2000 No. 21

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Loving Father, Your presence is with us even when we become busy and momentarily forget You. Thank You for continually breaking through the barriers of insensitivity with overtures of Your love. Sometimes we go for hours without thinking of You or asking for Your help. You are our closest friend as well as our God. Help us to keep that friendship in good working order.

Lord, you know us. We get so absorbed in our activities and begin to think we are capable of functioning without Your peace and power. Show us the mediocrity of our efforts without Your intervention and inspiration. We dedicate this day to live for Your glory and by Your grace, sustained by Your goodness. You are our Lord and Savior. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable WAYNE ALLARD, a Senator from the State of Colorado, led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLARD). The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, today the Senate will immediately resume consideration of the Robb school construction amendment. By previous consent, the Senate will proceed to vote on or in relation to the amendment at approximately 10 a.m.

Following the disposition of the Robb amendment, Senator ABRAHAM will be recognized to offer his amendment regarding computers. Other amendments will be offered, and therefore votes will occur throughout the day in an effort to complete the education savings account bill as soon as possible. An agreement is being discussed to have all first-degree amendments offered by 5 p.m. today.

I thank my colleagues for their attention. I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent, because of confusion in the vote being scheduled at 10 and also giving 30 minutes for debate, that there be 30 minutes for debate equally divided and, by necessity, of course, the vote would occur a little after 10.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

AFFORDABLE EDUCATION ACT OF 1999

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1134 which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1134) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax-free expenditures from education individual retirement accounts for elementary and secondary school expenses, to increase the maximum annual amount of contributions to such accounts, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Robb amendment No. 2861, to eliminate the use of education individual retirement accounts for elementary and secondary school expenses and to expand the incentives for the construction and renovation of public schools.

AMENDMENT NO. 2861

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 30 minutes for debate equally divided on amendment No. 2861.

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. ROBB. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Iowa be recognized to make a brief statement, and then I will continue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I am proud to be a cosponsor of the pending amendment with my colleague from Virginia, Senator ROBB. Senator ROBB has been a great advocate for improving education for many years.

The facts about the need for this amendment to help modernize and upgrade our nation's public school facilities are well known.

The average school building is 42 years old. Nearly three-quarters of all public schools were built before 1970.

Fourteen million American children attend classes in schools that are unsafe or inadequate and the General Accounting Office estimates it will cost $112 billion to upgrade existing public schools to overall good condition.

Forty-six percent of schools lack adequate electrical wiring to support the full-scale use of technology.

Enrollment in elementary and secondary schools is at an all time high and will continue to grow over the next 10 years, making it necessary for the United States to build an additional 6,000 schools.

It is a national disgrace that the nicest places that our children see are shopping malls, sports arenas and movie theaters and the most run down place they see are their public schools. What signal are we sending them about the value we place on them, their education and future?

How can we prepare our kids for the 21st century in schools that did not make the grade in the 20th century?

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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Last year I visited Hiatt Middle School in Des Moines. This school opened its doors in 1925 and students spend all but a few hours a week in classrooms built during a time when Americans could not imagine the technological advances that would occur by the end of the century.

In 1925, Americans were flocking to movie theaters to see—and hear—the first talking motion picture—Al Jolson's ''The Jazz Singer.'' The students who walked through the doors of the brand new Hiatt school that year could not imagine IMAX theaters with surround sound where a movie goer actually becomes a part of the film.

In 1925, consumers were lining up in department stores to buy novelties like electric phonographs, dial telephones, and self-winding watches. CD's, DVD players, cellular telephones, or palm pilots were unthinkable.

And, the introduction of state-of-the-art technologies like rural electrification and crop dusting were revolutionizing the lives of families and farmers alike.

There have been incredible technological and scientific advances in the past seven decades. Yet, our schools have not kept pace with the times. We continue to educate our children in schools built and equipped in bygone eras.

We must make sure that every child and every school can facilitate the technology of the 21st century. However, Iowa State University reports that we need at least $4 billion over the next ten years to repair and upgrade school buildings in Iowa and make sure they can effectively utilize educational technology.

The amendment we are offering is a comprehensive, two-prong response to this critical national problem.

First, we would authorize $1.3 billion to make grants and loans for emergency repairs to public schools.

Mr. President, the Iowa Fire Marshall reported a five-fold increase in the number of fires in schools over the past decade. During the 1990's there were 100 fires in Iowa schools. During the previous decade there were 20.

It is clear that public schools have an urgent need to make repairs now and these grants and no-interest loans will finance up to 8,300 repair projects. We will fix the roofs, upgrade the electrical systems, and repair the fire code violations.

The second part of our comprehensive strategy is to provide $25 billion in tax credits to modernize our nation's schools. These tax credits will subsidize the interest on new construction projects that will enable school districts to build new schools to replace outdated buildings or add more class rooms so they can reduce class size.

A few weeks ago I visited a school in Des Moines where students attend class in closets because there is no room. This is simply unacceptable.

In closing, I would like to share a few words from Tunisia, Washington, D.C. fifth grader in Jonathan Kozol's book, ''Savage Inequalities.''

> It's like this. The school is dirty. There isn't any playground. There's a hole in the wall behind the principal's desk. What we need to do is first rebuild the school. Build a playground. Plant a lot of flowers. Paint the classrooms. Fix the hole in the principal's office. Buy doors for the toilet stalls in the girl's bathroom. Make it a beautiful clean building. Make it pretty. Way it is, I feel ashamed.

Our amendment will make it possible to rebuild her schools. It will make it possible to fix the hole in the wall, put doors on the bathroom stalls and paint the classrooms. By modernizing and repairing Tunisia's schools we will make her feel a little less ashamed of herself and her school.

This is a serious national problem. And it demands a comprehensive national response. Our amendment is that response and I urge my colleagues to support this important amendment.

Mr. President, I am proud to be a cosponsor of the pending amendment with my colleague from Virginia, Senator ROBB. Senator ROBB has truly been one of the educational leaders over his tenure in the Senate. He has shown great leadership especially in this area that is so important as we are reducing class sizes around the country. I have visited schools in Iowa and other States recently where, because of the reduction of class sizes, they are out of room; they need more space. And we know the average school building in this country is 42 years old; 74 percent of our schools were built before 1970.

The Robb amendment addresses this very critical need in our country. I am proud to be a cosponsor. I congratulate him for his very strong leadership in the whole area of education but especially in the area of modernizing and rebuilding our schools.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. ROBB. I thank the Chair.

I thank my distinguished colleague from Iowa for his statement this morning and for his continued leadership in education.

Mr. President, we are now considering amendment No. 2861. It is an amendment I sent to the desk yesterday afternoon but agreed to debate this morning.

I always welcome any opportunity to talk about education, about its importance to our society, about ways we can improve our system of education, and about how we at the Federal level can be better partners with our States, our localities, and our families.

We met yesterday morning with the Governors of our 50 States. During my own term as Governor of Virginia in the early 1980s, we took a great deal of pride in being able to pump over $1 billion of new money—over and above the baseline projections—into public education. That was back when $1 billion was still serious money.

Education is not the only engine of innovation fueling opportunity for economic prosperity; it is one of the most critical tools in maintaining a democracy. Thomas Jefferson said that ''an enlightened citizenry is indispensable to the proper functioning of a Republic.'' So when we have an opportunity to talk in this Chamber about education, we are really talking about our future as well as our past.

To my dismay, the opportunity we have today to engage in really productive and constructive debate about education is really a mirage. We have traveled this road before. We have debated this same bill and others similar to it, and the President has exercised his veto power and has promised to veto this bill again if it arrives in its current condition.

The Affordable Education Act, while it contains many admirable provisions that would primarily enhance the affordability of higher education, also contains a poison pill, one that many of us are simply unable to swallow. This bill, in essence, would allow the diversion of public moneys to private elementary and secondary schools. As stewards of public taxpayer dollars, any policy that diverts public money away from public schools, it seems to me, is both unwise and inequitable.

We have heard many times the figures about education savings accounts. The average tax benefit to parents whose children attend private schools would be $37 a year while the benefit to families whose children attend public schools would be just $7 a year. Yet we know that 90 percent of our schoolchildren attend public schools. We also know our classrooms are overcrowded and many are dilapidated to the point of being unsafe. We know we face a very real and imminent teacher shortage over the next 10 years. We know we need to continue our efforts to help States finish the business we started with Goals 2000. We need to help States align their new standards and assessments with their curricula. We know we need to encourage more professional development for teachers and administrators. I believe we need to give even greater flexibility to States and localities in the use of Federal dollars in exchange for improved academic performance. We need to do all of these things and more.

I wish to talk about one specific area that demands our immediate attention. As a member of the Finance Committee, I have frequently mentioned the need to build and modernize our Nation's schools. In fact, I introduced school modernization legislation last July. It has 21 cosponsors and has been endorsed by over 50 organizations, from education groups to professional organizations to the National Conference of Mayors.

Without good, safe, and modern facilities, the rest of the education debate becomes practically moot. When a roof collapses, teachers and administrators really care most about fixing the roof and reopening the school. When fuses blow because of poor electrical wiring, administrators know

they can't buy more computers before first rewiring the schools. Trailers may be a cheaper temporary fix to the problem of overcrowded classrooms, but even the most modern trailers are not adequate to accommodate 21st century learning.

One of the largest investments Congress ever made in our national infrastructure occurred under the leadership of a Republican President, Dwight Eisenhower. In the 1950s, we spent roughly $1 billion to build and renovate our Nation's schools. That was a time when $1 billion really meant something. My friends in Fairfax County tell me it now costs them over $25 million to build just one high school. My friends in Loudoun County need 22 more new schools in the next 5 to 6 years because of skyrocketing enrollments.

There are a lot of problems we face in the education arena, but we simply can't ignore the massive infrastructure problem we have anymore. Everyone, from civil engineers to architects to construction firms to the education community, recognizes that we have to help and we have to help now. All of our talk about reducing class size and improving technology education and investing in school safety really puts the cart before the horse when there are no new classrooms for the newly hired teachers, no electrical upgrades to handle the new computers, no new roofs to ensure the safety of our children.

Instead of talking about legislation which clearly is destined for defeat or veto, we could be talking about reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Instead of talking about giving greater tax benefits to 10 percent of American families, we could be talking about how to better serve the 90 percent of American families who want the best education system that all levels of government can provide. Instead of talking about pouring money into private schools, I would rather be talking about pouring foundations for public schools.

So I offer an amendment with Senator HARKIN, Senator CONRAD, Senator LAUTENBERG, and Senator BINGAMAN that would authorize $25 billion in tax credit bonds for school modernization and renovation. The amendment would also authorize up to $1.3 billion a year for the next 5 years in grants and zero-interest loans to needy school districts so they could make urgent repairs such as those required to remedy fire code violations and other urgently needed safety repairs.

This amendment still helps families save money for college. It still increases the annual limit for education savings accounts to $2,000. It also helps our States and localities meet a massive infrastructure need.

In 1995, the GAO estimated we had $112 billion in repair needs and $73 billion in new construction needs. In a study just released by the National Education Association, the total unmet school infrastructure needs across the country now total $307 billion. These numbers were gathered from the individual State departments of education across the country. These are the dollars our States admit they can't come up with despite their surpluses. Even if every State used all of their available surpluses, that amount would still only meet 7.1 percent of the school construction needs that exist now nationwide.

I don't think this Congress has taken seriously the enormity of this particular problem. We can't just sit by and do nothing. Without the pending amendment, the school construction assistance provided in this bill is negligible. Our amendment would help build 6,000 schools and help make urgent repairs to some 25,000 schools. The underlying bill we are considering today will only build or renovate 200 schools. That is a stark contrast.

With over 12 million children attending schools with leaky roofs, our students deserve better. With over 3,000 trailers being used in my State of Virginia alone, our students deserve better. In Alabama, it is reported that the roof of an elementary school collapsed just after the children had left for the day. In Chicago, teachers place cheesecloth over air vents to keep lead-based paint flecks from getting into their classrooms. In Maine, some teachers are forced to turn out the lights when it rains because their wiring is exposed under leaking roofs. The list goes on and on.

Helping States and localities build schools doesn't interfere with local school control. We know the overwhelming majority of school districts face this particular infrastructure crisis. I simply do not accept the argument that the Federal Government cannot and should not play a role in this crisis. The needs are simply too great. If we can help States and localities build roads, we can certainly help them build schools. Both are critical to our sustained economic success.

We should expect great things from our Nation's schools and our Nation's students. They should expect real debate and results from Congress. But by choosing to rehash the same old debate about helping wealthy families pay for private school, we send a message to America that this Congress is more interested in sound bites than in solutions.

The American people, and many Members here, are thirsty for solution-oriented dialog. If this bill is passed without addressing some of the most urgent needs, we are not meeting our obligations and we are missing a very real opportunity to make a difference.

I reserve the remainder of my time and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I'd like to focus on the issue of school construction. All of us, Democrats and Republicans, recognize the need for well constructed and well-maintained school facilities. Nobody wants an inadequate learning environment for our children.

Senator ROBB has offered an amendment on school construction. His amendment, as I understand it, basically contains the administration's school construction package. I opposed this package last year, and I continue to do so today.

Before I even talk about Senator ROBB'S amendment, I want to make a point that is often lost in this discussion. The Federal Government already provides a significant subsidy for school construction. Under current law, states and localities can issue debt that is exempt from federal taxation. This benefit allows them to finance school construction by issuing long-term bonds at a much lower cost than they otherwise could. The interest subsidy saves school districts money and allows them to stretch their resources to meet their needs.

Now let me comment on the substance of Senator ROBB'S amendment. Among other things, it creates a new type of bond—called a ''qualified school modernization bond'' and authorizes the issuance of up to $23.6 billion of these bonds. Unlike regular tax-exempt bonds, for which the holder receives tax-exempt interest payments, holders of these new qualified school modernization bonds would receive a federal tax credit, in an amount to be set by the Treasury Department.

This program involves a dramatic increase in federal bureaucracy, while at the same time striking at the heart of local control of education—which is the hallmark of our nationwide educational system.

In order to qualify for these bonds, a state or local school district would need to secure the approval of the Department of Education. In giving its OK, the Department of Education is supposed to consider whether a comprehensive survey of the district's renovation and construction needs had been completed, and how the state or locality would respond to the construction needs. In other words, federal officials in Washington would be micromanaging a local school district's renovation plans—in effect, second guessing the decision of state and local officials.

It just does not make sense for the Department of Education to get involved at this level. President Clinton himself stated in 1994 that ''the construction and renovation of school facilities has traditionally been the responsibility of state and local governments financed primarily by local taxpayers.'' In that respect at least, I agree with the President.

While I am on the subject of local control, I want to point out that state and local governments have, in fact, responded to the need for school construction and renovation. On March 3, 1999, the Finance Committee had a

hearing where we evaluated the appropriate federal role in school construction. At that time, Dr. Dennis Zimmerman of the Congressional Research Service explained that since the early 1990's, the approval rates for school bond issues and for total school construction dollars has increased substantially. From 1991 until 1998, the approval rate for new issues went from less than 50 percent to almost 67 percent. During those same years, the approval rates for new construction dollars went from about 48 percent to over 82 percent.

Additionally, the inflation adjusted annual growth rate of school bond volume—measured in dollars—during the last 20 years is 7.7 percent. This compares to an annual school age population growth rate of only 0.2 percent and an annual increase of 4.1 percent in state/local receipts. With respect to bond volume, in the first 6 months of 1996, voters approved $13.3 billion in school bonds, an increase of more than $4 billion over the first 6 months of 1995.

The bottom line is that many states and localities are doing their homework, passing bonds, building and renovating schools, and enjoying favorable treatment under the existing Tax Code. They are stepping up and meeting the challenge—and they are doing so without a massive intrusion by the Federal Government. One of the witnesses at our hearing, Bill Manning, the president of a large school district in my little State of Delaware, told us that if we really wanted to improve education at the local level, we should diminish the federal role, rather than increase it.

The package of school construction measures in the Finance Committee bill would retain state and local control, and would also work within the existing tax-exempt bond framework. The latter point is important because our purpose here is to provide state and local governments with incentives that they can use, and not concepts that are untested and uncertain.

For instance, 2 years ago, Congress enacted a tax credit bond program for school construction. Called qualified zone academy bonds (''QZABs''), the law provided for an authorization of $400 million in 1998 and $400 million in 1999. According to the Bond Market Association, however, few QZAB transactions have taken place.

Mr. President, in the extenders tax legislation last fall, we did extend the QZAB program through 2001. One of the reasons for this extension was to evaluate how this pilot program is performing. My point here is simply that setting up a big program with a high authorization does not always translate into a successful policy result. We need to look at how the program will play out in the real world—whether the rhetoric will translate into results. We need to look at how the program will play out in the real world.

The proposals in the Finance Committee bill provide local school districts with the flexibility they need to address the needs of their constituents. On this point, does anyone really believe Washington, DC, bureaucrats really understand local school construction needs better than the local school board?

How do we accomplish the objective of enhancing the financing of school construction activities, while maintaining local control, in this bill?

The answer is several important school construction measures.

The first proposal is directed at innovative financing for school districts. It expands the tax exempt bond rules for public/private partnerships set up for the construction, renovation, or restoration of public school facilities in these districts. In general, it allows states to issue tax-exempt bonds equal to $10 per state resident. Each state would receive a minimum allocation of at least $5 million of these tax-exempt bonds. In total, up to 600 million per year in new tax exempt bonds would be issued for these innovative school construction projects.

This proposal is important because it retains state and local flexibility. It does not impose a new bureaucracy on the states and it does not force the Federal Government to micromanage school construction.

The proposal also is important because it promotes the use of public/private partnerships. Many high-growth school districts may be too poor or too overwhelmed to take on a school construction project themselves. With these bonds, those districts can partner with a private entity—and still enjoy the benefits of tax-exempt financing.

Mr. President, there is a second bond provision in this bill. That provision is designated to simplify the issuance of bonds for school construction. Under current law, arbitrage profits earned on investment unrelated to the purpose of the borrowing must be rebated to the Federal Government. However, there is an exception—generally referred to as the small issuer exception—which allows governments to issue to $5 million of bonds without being subject to the arbitrage rebate requirement. We recently increased this limit to $10 million for government that issue at least $5 million of public school bonds during the year.

The provision in the Finance Committee bill increase the smaller issuer exemption to $15 million, provided that at least $10 million of the bonds are issued to finance public schools. This measure will assist localities in meeting school construction needs by simplifying their use of tax-exempt financing. At the same time, it will not create incentives to issue such debt earlier or in larger amounts than is necessary. It is a type of targeted provision that makes sense.

Mr. President, I also want to make sure that my colleagues realize that the Robb Amendment strikes the language in the bill relating to K–12 withdrawals from education savings accounts. This flexibility—the ability to use a family's savings for any of the family's education expenses—is a central component of this bill. Removing it sends the wrong message to American families and does nothing to help them meet the increasing need of education.

For these reasons, I oppose this amendment and urge my colleagues to do so as well.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the statement of Dr. Dennis Zimmerman of the Congressional Research Service and Mr. William Manning of the Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. DENNIS ZIMMERMAN

State and local governments historically have assumed most of the financial responsibility for public elementary and secondary schools. They raised about 92 percent of total school revenue for school year 1995–96; the federal government contributed about eight percent of revenue.

Federal financial support can be divided into two major components. Direct federal support provided by on-budget spending programs in school year 1995–96 amounted to $19.1 billion (as measured by the states), 6.6 percent of total school revenue. The federal policy objectives of this direct federal spending are fairly clear: 55 percent of this assistance in fiscal year 1995 targeted disadvantaged children; another 22 percent targeted disabled children; 12 percent targeted school system support for such things as professional development and drug abuse education; and six percent targeted children whose parents live and/or work on federal property.(1)

Indirect federal support for capital facilities is provided through the tax system. The interest income individuals and businesses earn on state and local debt is excluded from their taxable income. This exclusion lowers the interest rate on state-local debt, a reduction in effect paid for by the federal tax revenue not collected on the excluded interest earnings. The estimated revenue loss on school facilities bonds amounted to $3.7 billion in 1996, about 1.2 percent of total education revenue.(2) The federal government imposes no limit on the amount of tax-exempt bonds state-local governments may issue for governmentally owned school facilities.

Unlike federal direct spending for public elementary and secondary schools, this tax subsidy is not motivated by a federal education policy objective. Its existence is a byproduct of the income tax structure established in 1913 which incorporated the concept that the various levels of government should refrain from taxing each other. As a result, the tax subsidy is identical for all state-local capital facilities—schools, roads, hospitals, parks, etc.—and does not affect state-local taxpayer choices among different types of facilities.

In summary, three facts stand out about federal financial support for public elementary and secondary schools:

It is minor compared to state-local support.

On-budget spending is targeted to four major policy objectives (the disadvantaged, the disabled, system support, and the federally impacted).

The major tax subsidy was not adopted to pursue a federal education policy objective,

and has been structured not to influence state-local taxpayer choice among capital facilities for different public services.

THE STATE-LOCAL SECTOR AND AMERICA'S PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

Attention recently has focused on the deficiencies of public elementary and secondary school capital facilities. Studies have suggested that as much as $112 billion of investment may be necessary to restore school facilities to good overall condition, and that the resources of many local school districts are inadequate to rectify the situation.(3)

It is useful to evaluate this information in an economic context. The gap between ''good overall condition'' of school facilities and their current condition is a serious problem not to be minimized that undoubtedly has an adverse impact on human capital formation. But budget constraints are a fact of life: our desire for both private and public spending (consumption) exceeds our ability to pay for it. It is likely that a similar study assessing the condition of state-local capital facilities for any function—roads, sewage treatment plants, prisons—would reach a similar conclusion.(4) A gap exists between the ''good overall condition'' of the capital stock we desire and the less-than-good overall condition we choose to live with.

When making budget allocation decisions, state-local decision makers decide where to spend additional tax revenue based in part upon their assessment of which activity will provide the highest return or value. It is a given that positive returns will result from additional investment in almost any activity funded by state-local budgets. But a ten percent return in education facilities will not be funded if decision makers judge a twelve percent return is available in sewage treatment facilities. In other words, one must consider the possibility that state-local decision makers made their spending decisions with complete information; that they chose the existing less-than-good condition of education facilities because they place a higher value on spending the available tax revenue for private consumption or other state-local services.

For the Nation as a whole, state-local taxpayers have not been neglecting education facilities. Table 1 presents referendum data on public elementary and secondary school bond issues for the years 1988 through 1998. The percentage of bond issues approved and the percentage of dollars approved appear in columns 2 and 3. Both series tell approximately the same story. Approval rates declined substantially in the early 1990s, reaching a low of 49.9 percent for Issues in 1991 and 48.4 percent for Dollars in 1993. Since those lows, the approval percentage for both Issues and Dollars has risen substantially. The 1998 approval rates of 66.8 percent for Issues and 82.4 percent for Dollars are now higher than the levels that prevailed in 1988.

TABLE 1. SCHOOL BOND REFERENDA 1988–1998: APPROVAL RATES FOR ISSUES AND DOLLARS

Year	Share of Issues	Share of Dollars
1988	0.657	0.776
1989	0.580	0.736
1990	0.573	0.707
1991	0.499	0.490
1992	0.532	0.604
1993	0.568	0.484
1994	0.592	0.516
1995	0.553	0.544
1996	0.586	0.691
1997	0.619	0.619
1998	0.668	0.824

Source: Securities Data Company.

The increasing approval rates are consistent with the 7.7 percent real annual growth rate of school bond volume (dollars of new issues) that occurred from 1979 through 1998. This is not surprising. We are now in the longest uninterrupted economic expansion in the Nation's history, during which the state-local surplus rose from $80.1 billion in 1990 to $148.7 billion in 1998. As real income rises, state-local taxpayers can be expected to spend more on a wide range of public services, including investment in schools. But these bond data do not provide evidence about how much of the growing bond volume was necessary to keep pace with growing student enrollment and whether schools were faring better or worse than other state-local services.

Table 2 compares the 7.7 percent real annual growth rate of school bond volume over the last two decades to the rates for school-age population (ages 5 to 19) and state-local receipts net of federal grants.

The school-age population grew at a 0.2% annual rate, so most of this 7.7 percent real annual increase in bond volume was devoted to maintaining or improving the facilities of a relatively stable school population. State-local receipts net of federal grants grew at a 4.1 percent real annual rate. These data suggest state-local taxpayers have been devoting an increasing share of own-financed revenue to schools, and school construction spending has fared better than all other functions combined.

TABLE 2. SCHOOL NEW-ISSUE BOND VOLUME AND OTHER ECONOMIC INDICATORS, 1979–1998: REAL ANNUAL GROWTH RATES

School Bond Volume	Population Ages 5–19	State-Local Receipts Net of Federal Grants
7.7%	0.2%	4.1%

Source: CRS calculations based upon data from Securities Data Company and Economic Report of the President, 1999.

Of course, these aggregate data undoubtedly mask a considerable amount of variation among states and school districts. Several circumstances arise which may cause school districts to provide grossly inadequate school facilities, and alleviation of some of these circumstances may be consistent with historical federal policy objectives for financing public elementary and secondary education.

A district might suffer from inadequate fiscal capacity; residents may be poor and the district may lack significant commercial and industrial property tax base. If its state does not have a vigorous fiscal equalization program for education finance, resources may not be available to provide minimal capital facilities.

Some school districts might experience a substantial influx of retirees, or be at the height of a long-term aging of their population. Retirees may feel they have done their duty by supporting school finance in their child-raising years. Seeing few direct benefits to themselves, they may be reluctant to support additional spending to maintain minimal services, particularly if they have relocated.

Some school districts have experienced rapid population growth (often resulting from immigration to the United States). A ''normal'' financing effort might prove to be inadequate to maintain minimal services when student enrollment expands rapidly.

Some states and local governments impose very tight borrowing restrictions and/or super-majority approval requirements for bond referenda that may frustrate the majority's spending preferences.

IN SUMMARY

The condition of America's school facilities may or may not be worse than the capital facilities for other state-local public services.

The proportion of school bond votes approved rose from a low of 50 percent in 1991 to 67 percent in 1998. The percentage of dollars approved in 1998 was 82 percent versus 49 percent in 1991.

State-local taxpayers have devoted an increasing share of their own-source revenue to school bond finance; over the last twenty years, the volume of new-issue school bonds has grown at a 7.7 percent real annual rate, while state-local own-source revenue has grown at a 4.1 percent real annual rate. Since the school-age population has grown at a mere 0.2 percent rate, most of this spending has been devoted to maintaining or improving facilities.

These data present a favorable picture for the Nation's school facilities, but may hide a subset of communities that find it difficult to maintain adequate school facilities due to: a high concentration of the poor; a concentration of retirees who are reluctant to support school spending; high population growth rates, sometimes resulting from an influx of immigrants; and very tight borrowing restrictions and/or super-majority requirements for approval of bond referenda.

TAX-EXEMPT BOND PROPOSALS

Several proposals have been introduced that would adjust the current tax treatment of state-local debt to increase federal financial support for school construction.(5) The Administration has proposed Tax Credits for Holders of Qualified School Modernization Bonds and Qualified Zone Academy Bonds; Representative Archer has proposed a lengthening of the period during which arbitrage can be earned and not rebated to the Treasury; Senator Graham has proposed allowing school facilities to be financed with private-activity bonds; and it has been proposed that the annual issuance ceiling to qualify for the small-issuer arbitrage rebate exemption be raised. The last two proposals were adopted by the Senate Finance Committee but not accepted by the Conference.

Each of these proposals is described. Each proposal's effect on the share of the debt service costs borne by state-local taxpayers is estimated, and the targeting of the proposal is compared to the targeting of federal on-budget spending for elementary and secondary education.

School Modernization Bonds

Description. This Administration proposal would authorize issuance of $11 billion of tax credit bonds in 2000 and $11 billion in 2001. School bond volume in 1998 was about $23 billion, so this proposal could be available to approximately 50 percent of the school bond market in 2000 and 2001.

Cost Reduction. Tax credit bonds pay 100 percent of state-local interest cost on bonds, as opposed to 25 to 30 percent of interest costs for traditional tax-exempt bonds. Thus, unlike tax-exempt bonds, tax credit bonds lower the cost of investing in school facilities relative to investing in capital facilities for any other public purpose. This lower relative cost would be a powerful incentive for state-local taxpayers to adjust their public budgets and provide more education services and less of all other services.

Targeting. Half of the annual borrowing authority would be reserved for the Nation's communities with the highest incidence of children living in poverty. The remaining half would be allocated to the states and qualifying school districts based upon the federal assistance they received under the Basic Grant Formula for Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (based primarily upon incidence of low-income children). But states would not be constrained by the Title I formula and could use any appropriate mechanism for distributing the funds. Thus, half of the subsidy

would conform to the federal government's existing criteria for federal spending programs in education, and half could potentially be spent on other school districts.

Relaxation of Arbitrage Restrictions

Description. State-local arbitrage bonds are tax-exempt bonds issued where all or a major portion of the proceeds are used to acquire securities with a higher yield. Because state-local governments pay no federal income tax on their interest earnings, Congress has restricted their ability to earn arbitrage profits. Bonds for construction are allowed to earn arbitrage profits if they conform to a schedule for spending the bond proceeds: 10% within six months of issuance; 45% within 12 months of issuance; 75% within 18 months of issuance; 95% within 24 months of issuance; and the permissible 5% retainage (amounts by which the earlier targets are missed) within 36 months. Failure to comply triggers a requirement to rebate the arbitrage earnings to the U.S. Treasury.

This proposal would slow and lengthen the spend-down schedule that must be met for bonds issued to finance public school education facilities in order to qualify for exemption from arbitrage rebate. No rebate would be required if: 10 percent of bond proceeds is spent within 1 year of issuance; 30 percent is spent within 2 years; 50 percent is spent within 3 years; and 95 percent is spent within 4 years. The 5 percent retainage would have to be spent within 5 years. The proposal applies to all school bonds.

Cost reduction. Issuers must be cautious when attempting to earn arbitrage profits. Suppose the interest rate on the tax-exempt bond issue is 6 percent and the interest rate on a comparable long-term taxable bond is 8 percent. In theory, the issuer could earn 2 percent arbitrage profit by investing the tax-exempt bond proceeds in 8 percent long-term taxable securities. This is a risky investment strategy. The issuer's investment horizon is short because the spend-down rules require sale of all the securities within 36 months (60 months if this proposal is passed). Should interest rates have risen when the issuer must sell the taxable bond to pay for construction costs, the bond must be sold at a discount and the issuer will suffer a capital loss that could easily exceed the arbitrage earnings. Thus, the calculations in this testimony assume the issuer earns arbitrage profits of 0.75 percent, not the 2 percent yield differential. The important point here is not so much the share of the principal that could be paid off by the arbitrage profits, but the differential between current law and the proposed changes.

Assuming the issuer takes maximum advantage of arbitrage opportunities with a 0.75 percent profit, current law could provide arbitrage profits for tax-exempt bonds sufficient to pay for 1.05 percent of the amount borrowed. For tax credit bonds, this percentage would rise to 9.5.(6) Allowing a five-year spend-down period for tax-exempt bonds would increase the percentage borrowed that could be financed with arbitrage profits from 1.05 to 2.4 percent. If combined with tax credit bonds, the percentage would rise from 9.5 to 21.2 percent.

Targeting. The arbitrage proposal would apply to all school bonds. No attempt is made to target its availability to school districts that meet the federal government's targeting criteria for its on-budget spending programs.

Public School Construction Partnership Act

Description. This proposal introduced by Senator Graham in the 105th Congress would include public elementary and secondary education facilities in the list of exempt facilities eligible for the use of tax-exempt private-activity bonds. A state could issue bonds equal to the greater of $10 per resident or $5 million on behalf of corporations that would use the bond proceeds to build school facilities and lease the buildings to school districts. A corporation must charge a lease payment such that the building could be transferred to the school district at the end of the contract without further compensation to the corporation. The bonds would not be subject to the private-activity bond volume cap, so they would not compete with other private-activity bonds for scarce borrowing authority.

Cost reduction. This proposal might reduce the federal subsidy. Private-activity education facility bonds would be issued as revenue bonds whose debt service is secured by the corporation building and operating the facility rather than as general obligation bonds whose debt service is secured by the full faith and credit of the issuing school district. As a result, the interest rate on the private-activity school bonds is likely to be higher and the spread between the taxable interest rate and the interest rate on the school bonds is likely to be lower. The federal government would pay a smaller share of interest costs than it would pay on governmental tax-exempt school bonds.

A school district that chose this option could conceivably receive compensation sufficient to offset its higher interest cost in two ways. First, it might face very restrictive bond referenda requirements that preclude getting approval from the voters. Although private-activity bonds require the issuing jurisdiction to hold a public meeting, they do not require a vote. Second, the corporation might be a more efficient builder and operator of the facility, or it may be able to avoid compliance with a host of regulatory rules pertaining to government construction projects (such as the Davis-Bacon Act). These savings might enable the corporation to provide lease terms whose present discounted value is lower than would be the case for principal and interest payments on the debt.(7)

Targeting. All but $5 million must be allocated to high-growth school districts, defined as having: (1) a 5,000 or greater student enrollment in the second academic year preceding the date of the bond issuance; and (2) an increase in student enrollment of at least 20 percent in the 5–year period ending with that second academic year. It is not clear how many of the eligible districts would have characteristics that are targeted by federal on-budget education spending.

Small Issuer Arbitrage Exemption

Description. When the requirement for rebate of arbitrage earnings was enacted in 1986, governmental units that issued no more than $5 million of bonds per year were exempt. In 1997, the exemption limit was increased to $10 million, provided at least $5 million is used to finance public school construction. This proposal would increase the exemption limit to $15 million, provided at least $10 million is used to finance public school construction.

Cost reduction. The value of the small-issuer exemption is that the spend-down rules do not apply; the issuer can earn arbitrage profits on the amount borrowed for the entire three-year spend-down period. When considering a $5 million marginal investment on a variety of public functions, state-local taxpayers will likely notice that (under current law) school bonds could earn arbitrage profits sufficient to pay 2.3 percent of the amount borrowed, while bonds for other functions could earn arbitrage profits sufficient to pay only 1.05 percent of the amount borrowed. If tax credit bonds could be combined with the small-issuer exception (while retaining the three-year spend-down requirement), arbitrage profits would be sufficient to pay 20.3 percent of the amount borrowed.

Targeting. This provision would apply only to relatively small governmental units. It is not clear how many of these units would have the characteristics that are targeted by federal on-budget education spending.

ENDNOTES

(1) U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, Public School Expenditure Disparities: Size, Sources, and Debates over Their Significance, No. 96–51 EPW by Wayne Riddle and Liane White, December 19, 1995, 31p.

(2) Indirect financial support is also provided by the deductibility of state-local income and property taxes from federal taxable income. This provision is not discussed here. The tax-exempt bond revenue estimate is based on a 1996 federal revenue loss from all outstanding bonds of $25 billion (Budget of the U.S. Government, Analytical Perspectives, Fiscal Year 1998), and assumes the school share of the outstanding stock of all state-local bonds is equal to the school share (14.7 percent) of new-issue state-local bonds issued in 1996. A small amount of tax credit bonds are also available for school districts with high concentrations of students receiving free lunch.

(3) U.S. General Accounting Office, School Facilities: America's Schools Not Designed or Equipped for 21st Century, GAO/HEHS–95–95, April 4, 1995; and GAO, School Facilities: Condition of America's Schools, GAO/HEHS–95–61, February 1, 1995.

(4) For an example, see Commission to Promote Investment in America's Infrastructure, Financing the Future: Report of the Commission to Promote Investment in America's Infrastructure, February 1993.

(5) The question of whether these proposed increased federal subsidies represent an improvement in economic efficiency is complex. The answer depends in part upon the extent to which returns from elementary and secondary education accrue to society rather than the individual and how widely these ''external'' benefits spill beyond state borders.

(6) Since the federal government pays 100 percent of the interest cost on tax credit bonds, arbitrage earnings would be 6.75 percent, not the 0.75 percent for tax-exempt bonds.

(7) Some have suggested the efficiencies in such public/private partnerships may be sufficiently great that school districts could reduce costs even if they used taxable debt. Ronald D. Utt, How Public-Private Partnerships Can Facilitate Public School Construction, Heritage Foundation Backgrounder No. 1257, February 25, 1999.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM E. MANNING

Bill Manning has been President of the Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education (Delaware's second largest school district) for nine years. An attorney by trade, Mr. Manning has been among Delaware's leaders in proposing and implementing a variety of educational reforms: public school choice, charter school legislation and rigorous academic standards statewide. Red Clay is currently the only district in Delaware to have reached an agreement with its teachers association pursuant to which Red Clay teachers will be evaluated based on student performance. Among other recognitions, Mr. Manning was honored, in October, 1998, as one of the nation's ''unsung heroes'' in education reform by the Center for Education Reform in Washington, DC.

Demographically, Red Clay is a composite of all cross sections of Delaware and America. It has both affluent areas and poverty

stricken areas; suburban and city. Red Clay students speak a variety of native languages, including a large component of Spanish-speaking children.

Red Clay's capital assets are probably typical of those found throughout America. No new schools have been built for more than 30 years and existing schools require repair and renovation. After one unsuccessful attempt, Red Clay received referendum approval both to make the most needed repairs to its buildings and invest in technology. That capital program, however, is much smaller than Red Clay would prefer, and new schools and renovations remain critical.

STATEMENT REGARDING THE FEDERAL ROLE IN SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

I don't want to begin my testimony by assuming that the federal government should have any role at all in public education. Indeed, many of those in the education reform community believe that the federal government should diminish, rather than increase, its role in public education. Let me give you one good reason why that is so. With all of the talk regarding education reform these days, one particular notion is being identified as having preeminent importance: ''accountability.'' Indeed, it is acquiring buzzword status. Presidents, members of Congress, governors and school board members all over the country are talking about the importance of accountability and they are all correct. However, to the extent that you shift the locus of decision making from the school to the district to the state to the federal level, the more you have diminished the chances that those responsible for delivering educational services can be held accountable for their successes or failures. Put another way, if I am a school administrator and I can point to burdensome and inappropriate federal regulations as the reason for my failure to provide adequate facilities, I will.

All of that leads me to bring two messages today: (1) Don't do anything at all and, if you have loose change rattling around in the federal coffers, send it back to those who gave it to you in the first place. (2) If you must do something, make good on all the promises of local autonomy and flexibility that inevitably accompany all such programs. Don't let the public educational establishment claim that: ''But for this federal regulation or that federal guideline, we could have done the job.''

If you detect a note of cynicism about federal promises for local autonomy and flexibility, you are correct. That cynicism, however, is justified as we out in the states hear more and more about some of the proposals before you. For example, I understand that the President's proposal wants to encourage capital spending by school districts that would not have been possible without such financial assistance. Therefore, as a criterion for eligibility, one would not be surprised to see the Department of Education require an applicant to make some sort of showing that its proposed capital expenditure would not otherwise happen.

One imagines several responses to such a rule. First, the ''green eyeshade guys'' that exist within each school district will now slow down some projects, testing the political waters each day to see whether increased federal funding is soon to be available. After all, to move forward with capital projects at this time may be to render them ineligible at a later time. Thus, the games begin. Second, what is so wrong with providing assistance to a district that has already decided to ''bite the bullet'' and ignore other priorities in order to make capital repairs? It seems to me that this particular element of the President's proposal removes, rather than creates, incentive for local responsibility.

To take another example, one who is reading about the President's current proposal comes away with the sense that there will be significant means-testing within the eligibility criteria. I certainly hope, on behalf of my school district, that I will be able to use whatever capital assistance the federal government decides to give me anywhere in my district—whether it be in downtown Wilmington or out in the suburbs.

Please understand that any federal rules and regulations accompanying any new federal financial assistance will apply on top of a host of other regulations already imposed at the state level. Indeed, as I indicated, this hotchpot of regulations imposed upon local school districts at the state level already gives the establishment enough places to hide from true accountability as it is. It is almost inconceivable that a new regime of federal requirements would not be, in some ways, inconsistent with a body of regulations that, in my view, is already too large. Thus, the prospect of time wasted and projects left undone because of conflicts between federal and state regulation grows with every new federal program. Please make any program that results from the proposals before you serve as a testament that the federal government can, if it wants to, render meaningful assistance without creating matching unnecessary burdens.

Let me close with a few specific suggestions. First, I believe, as do many of you, that charter schools are already improving the educational landscape by offering variety, quality and single-school focus to those who previously had to pay to get those things. That's the good news. The bad news is that charter schools are still regarded by the educational establishment in some quarters as the enemy. Thus, the organization that owns our school buildings is sometimes stingy with them when it comes to housing charter schools. Nor do the funding formulae in many state charter school bills provide adequate capital—as opposed to operating—assistance to charter schools. In that environment, it would be particularly fitting if the federal government took special care to ensure that our new charter schools were well housed. Please don't overlook them.

As you review the variety of proposals before you, I suggest that you carefully review those that would render assistance to local school districts needing capital assistance and simultaneously reduce federal ''red tape.'' In Delaware, for example, we have several lending institutions that are members of the Federal Home Loan Bank—one of the Nation's few triple A rated institutions. If these lenders could offer the Federal Home Loan Bank's credit to support bond-financed school construction projects, then the cost of debt—even tax exempt debt—would go down. However, for reasons that appear only to have historical significance, Federal Home Loan Banks are not permitted, under Section 149 of the Internal Revenue Code, to provide such credit enhancement. Nor does it appear that those federal (and former federal) instrumentalities that are so authorized by Section 149 (Federal Housing Administration, Veteran's Administration, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, Ginnie Mae and Sallie Mae) are actually in the business of assisting school financing. Thus, Section 149 of the Internal Revenue Code should be amended to permit Federal Home Loan Banks to sell credit enhancement products—at least in the area of school construction finance if not all projects eligible for tax exempt financing.

I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts with the Committee. I realize that my plea to send those tax revenues that might otherwise have been spent by the federal government back to the taxpayers requires that Congress ignore the political head of steam building over this issue. So, if the federal government decides it wants or needs to play a role in building schools, please do it in a way that leaves school board members like me, as well as the administrators and teachers who we employ, exposed to the consequences of our failure, if that be the case, to do our job and deliver a quality education to each of our students.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I yield the remainder of my time.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the amendment offered by Senator ROBB. During consideration of S. 1134, the Affordable Education Act last year in the Finance committee, I joined my colleague in offering a similar amendment during the markup. Regrettably, that amendment was not adopted.

Under the Robb amendment, an allocation of $24.8 billion in bonds would be authorized to permit states and local school districts, over the next 5 years, to issue bonds to modernize and renovate approximately 6,000 schools. Sixty-five percent of the bond authority would be allocated to states based on their title I allocation, and 35 percent to the 100 school districts with the largest number of low-income students. Additionally, $1.3 billion would be authorized for a new grant and zero-interest loan program to fund the most urgent school repair needs in local schools. There is also $400 million set aside for Bureau of Indian Affairs schools.

Today we are considering our first major education measure of the 21st century. It is critical that we weigh carefully the direction of that education policy. What should our priorities be as we enter the 21st century? How should we allocate our limited Federal resources in education? How do we respond to growing concerns about the digital divide, and what is the role of education in that debate?

Under S. 1134, the major provision of the bill would expand tax-free expenditures from the current higher education individual retirement account to permit student expenses for elementary and secondary education including private, parochial, or public education. S. 1134 would increase the limit on the annual contribution for an education IRA for a four-year period (2000-2003) to $2,000.

Expenses authorized for IRA expenditures would include traditional expenses including tuition, books, supplies, computer equipment, tutoring services, as well as student expenses for room, board, transportation and supplementary items. Additionally, S. 1134 makes a number of important changes, which I support, in prepaid tuition plans, employer-provided educational assistance, and student loan interest deduction.

There is no question, of the merits of encouraging families to save to meet the educational needs of their children. Education IRA's are one way to encourage this savings, and we know it

has been very helpful to families planning for higher education expenses. As we debate this legislation, however, it is critical that we define our national education priorities, and allocate our limited Federal resources to meet those objectives. Does an expansion of education IRA's respond to our national education priorities? Does the allocation of limited Federal resources for education IRA's respond to the education needs of our children into the 21st century?

In the past 5 years, a number of very respected organizations have alerted us to the critical elementary and secondary school infrastructure needs. In 1995, the GAO reported that $112 billion was needed to bring the nation's schools into good overall condition. The report cited that one-third of schools—about 25,000—were in need of extensive repairs. More recently, the National Center for Education Statistics released a report stating that the average public school in America is 42 years old. Many of these schools are also lagging in technology infrastructure and their effort to connect to the Internet.

I know the need for repairs in our schools is great from my visits to North Dakota schools and conversations with educators, and state officials. North Dakota State Superintendent of Schools, Wayne Sanstead, informed me last year during consideration of the markup of S. 1134, that costs associated with school modernization in the North Dakota would exceed $420 million. 88 percent of schools reported need to upgrade or repair facilities, and 62 percent reported unsatisfactory environmental conditions.

I ask unanimous consent Mr. President, that a letter from the N.D. Department of Public Instruction which outlines the critical school infrastructure needs in North Dakota be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. CONRAD. It is critical that we ask whether an expansion of education IRA's for elementary and secondary education expenses is the best use of our limited Federal education dollars and responds to our national education priorities. We need to examine who will benefit from this IRA expansion as opposed to who will benefit from meeting school infrastructure needs.

According to the Department of Treasury, 70 percent of the proposed education IRA benefit would go to 20 percent of all taxpayers. Higher income families would derive the most benefit. Many families with incomes less than $55,000 would receive little benefit. Additionally, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation, the average annual benefit for children attending private and parochial schools would be limited to approximately $37.

On the other hand, 90 percent of our children attend public schools, and public school enrollments are increasing. According to the National Council on Education Statistics, a record 52.7 million children are enrolled in public schools, and that number is expected to increase to 54.3 million by 2008. It is estimated that at least 2,400 new school facilities will be needed to meet this student enrollment increase. Studies also show that building conditions and overcrowding in school facilities are linked to student achievement.

There is no question where our education resources should be directed. Although it is important to encourage families to save for their children's education, we have a more urgent need to ensure that a majority of our children have the best educational environment for learning. Regrettably, that is not the case in too many of our local school districts. Local school districts face many challenges in school modernization efforts. Interest payments on bonds are already a major expense for local taxpayers. Additionally, taxpayers are burdened with many unfunded Federal mandates and it becomes difficult to finance new construction or repairs through an expansion of bond authority. Also, many of our rural communities across the nation, including North Dakota, are experiencing declining enrollments in local school districts leaving many of these smaller, rural schools with more limited education resources, and very limited ability to undertake bond initiatives.

It is clear where Federal support for education should be directed. The importance of school modernization is underscored by the emphasis on technology in our economy in the 21st century. Information technology will play a key role in our continued economic growth. The condition of our public school facilities, including technology infrastructure and the ability to connect to the Internet, is critical in sustaining our current economic growth. It is also important in ensuring that our children are equipped to enter the job markets in the 21st century, and able to benefit from the extraordinary growth that we have experienced in recent years.

School modernization is critical for our children's success, and should be one of our key national education priorities as we enter the 21st century. Local communities cannot face the task of funding the necessary school building and technology infrastructure improvements on their own. They urgently need our help. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote in support of the amendment offered by Senator ROBB.

EXHIBIT 1

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,
Bismarck, ND, March 2, 1999.

Hon. KENT CONRAD,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR CONRAD: I am writing this as a follow-up to our recent conversation concerning the Senate Finance Committee's plans to conduct hearings regarding funding for school modernization.

I am attaching the executive summary of a school facilities inventory completed by the Department of Public Instruction with assistance from the Barton Malow Company. The study was done in the fall of 1994 and the report was issued in January of 1995.

While some school construction has taken place since that time there is no reason to believe that the basic assumptions outlined in the executive summary about North Dakota's needs for school building renovation and upgrading have changed significantly. As the executive summary indicates the total projected costs to bring North Dakota's 453 public school facilities up to state-of-the-art facilities would be approximately $420 million or nearly one million dollars per building.

Our small rural North Dakota school districts in particular have extensive and potentially expensive school renovation needs which have been consistently deferred because of budget constraints due to fluctuations of our agricultural economy and the impacts of significant declining enrollment which further erodes school districts funding base.

Even in those few circumstances where some of these rural districts consider consolidation school renovation would still be needed. In fact, consolidation that appears to be required in some rural areas to sustain school programs will in turn require construction of updated larger facilities to accommodate consolidation enrollments. Clearly, North Dakota, and in this case, especially rural North Dakota would benefit from federal financial assistance for school renovation and construction.

In addition, North Dakota's Native American reservation schools are in some cases in desperate need of renovation and upgrading. While they have access to some funding through other federal programs, our experience is that the money available through those programs is not adequate and not available in a timely fashion. These districts would also benefit from a general federal infusion in the area of school construction and renovation.

In sum, I am encouraged and strongly support your efforts to pursue this source of funding to help our hard-pressed agricultural areas. If I can provide further information or be of advocacy assistance in this congressional effort please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

I look forward to visiting with you and your staff when I once again preside over Council of Chief State School Officers Legislative Committee deliberations on March 15 and 16.

With best wishes,

Dr. WAYNE G. SANSTEAD,
State Superintendent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. ROBB. Mr. President, I wish to address a couple of the issues raised by my distinguished colleague from Delaware. One of the issues the Senator from Delaware suggested was that this creates a whole new bureaucracy. But with all due respect, it does not create a whole new bureaucracy. States only have to keep a tally on how much bonding authority they have used. That is it. That is not a whole new bureaucracy.

Talking about the concern about assessments and making additional assessments, the truth is that most of the States have already made those assessments. So we are not talking about any additional burden.

When we talk about the QZAB as not having been used, 94 school districts in 15 States have utilized the QZAB, and that, indeed, is the model upon which these school modernization bonds are featured. We are not talking about an untested bill.

With respect to the number of students that we are trying to help under the circumstances, currently we have 52.7 million students in America's schools. In 8 years, that total will climb to 54.3 million students in our schools. We are talking about a significant increase in the number of students at the same time we are trying to decrease the number of students in individual classes. We know the schools are getting older and older, with the average age of the schools in this country today being 42 years old. We have a pressing, urgent problem.

With all due respect to my distinguished colleague from Delaware, I would recommend a visit to a number of the schools because the schools in many cases are in desperate need of infrastructure repair. And this is designed to provide Federal assistance in ways that do not get involved in local school control. I recognize and respect that particular feature.

This is simply designed to assess the financing of those greatly needed improvements, which I believe the Senator from Delaware and any other Senator in this Chamber will find if they visit the schools in their districts. They are old and getting older, and we can't meet the reduction in class size. The school population is increasing. Most of the children we are talking about for the years 2007 and 2008 are already born. We know the numbers. We have to be able to respond to the need. This is a way to do it without interfering with local control.

The basic difference between the two of us is whether or not we ought to put public moneys into private education or whether as stewards of the public purse we have a responsibility to make sure we fund public education first.

I respectfully request that my colleagues support this particular measure and stand up for the students and the future of education in America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, let me remind my colleagues that we have already considered and rejected the President's school construction proposal in the past. In 1998, in connection with an education tax bill, Senator Moseley-Braun offered the President's package, and it was defeated by a vote of 56–42. Last year, my distinguished colleague, Senator ROBB, offered this school construction plan, and it was defeated 55–45.

We all agree on the need for well-built and well-maintained schools. There is no one in this body who wants our children to learn in a substandard learning environment. But the evidence shows the States are stepping up and meeting the challenge of providing schools for their students. We should not create a new Federal program that injects the Federal bureaucracy into additional State and local controls. For these reasons, I oppose the amendment, and I move to table it.

Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. L. CHAFEE). Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I urge the Senate to support of Senator ROBB's amendment to provide funding for rebuilding and modernizing the nation's schools. The Coverdell bill does nothing for crumbling schools.

Schools, communities, and governments at every level have to do more to improve student achievement. Schools need smaller classes, particularly in the early grades. They need stronger parent involvement. They need well-trained teachers in the classroom who keep up with current developments in their field and the best teaching practices. They need after-school instruction for students who need extra help, and after-school programs to engage students in constructive activities. They need safe, modern facilities with up-to-date technology.

But, all of these reforms will be undermined if facilities are inadequate. Sending children to dilapidated, overcrowded facilities sends a message to these children. It tells them they don't matter. No CEO would tolerate a leaky ceiling in the board room, and no teacher should have to tolerate it in the classroom. We need to do all we can to ensure that children are learning in safe, modern buildings.

Nearly one third of all public schools are more than 50 years old. 14 million children in a third of the nation's schools are learning in substandard buildings. Half of all schools have at least one unsatisfactory environmental condition. The problems with ailing school buildings aren't the problems of the inner city alone. They exist in almost every community, urban, rural, or suburban.

In addition to modernizing and renovating dilapidated schools, large numbers of communities across the country need to build new schools, in order to keep pace with rising enrollments and to reduce class sizes. Elementary and secondary school enrollments have reached an all-time high again this year of 53.2 million students, and will continue to rise over the next ten years. The number will increase by 324,000 in 2000, by another 282,000 in 2001, by still another 250,000 in 2002, and continue on an upward trend in the following years.

Last year, the Senate heard testimony from a student in Clifton, Virginia whose high school is so overcrowded that fights often break out in the overflowing halls. The problem is called ''Hall Rage,'' and it's analogous to ''Road Rage'' on crowded highways. The violence in the hallways is bad enough. But it's even worse, because it's difficult for teachers to teach when students are distracted by the chaos in the hallways and outside the classrooms.

The Department of Education estimates that 2,400 new public schools will be needed by 2003 to accommodate rising enrollments. The General Accounting Office estimates that it will cost communities $112 billion to repair and modernize the nation's schools. Congress should lend a helping hand and do all we can to help schools and communities across the country meet this challenge.

In Massachusetts, 41 percent of schools report that at least one building needs extensive repairs or should be replaced. 80 percent of schools report at lest one unsatisfactory environmental factor. 48 percent have inadequate heating, ventilation, or air conditioning. And 36 percent report inadequate plumbing systems.

In Detroit, over half—150 of the 263—school buildings were built before 1930. Their average age is 61 years old, and some date to the 1800's. Detroit estimates that the city has $5 billion in unmet repair and new construction needs. Detroit voters recently approved a $1.5 billion, 15-year school construction program, but it's not enough.

In an elementary school in Montgomery, Alabama, a ceiling which had been damaged by leaking water collapsed only 40 minutes after the children had left for the day.

At Cresthaven Elementary School in Silver Spring, Maryland, a second-grade reading class has to squeeze through a narrow corridor with a sink on one side into a space about 14 ft. wide by 15 ft. long. The area used to be a janitor's office, and the teacher has no place to sit.

Schools across the country are struggling to meet needs such as these, but they can't do it alone. The federal government should join with state and local governments and community organizations to guarantee that all children have the opportunity for a good education in safe and up-to-date school buildings. The Robb amendment is an excellent start on this high priorities, and I urge the Senate to approve it.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I oppose this amendment offered by Senator ROBB today to the Affordable Education Act which would remove the provision of the bill to expand the use of educational individual retirement accounts for elementary and secondary education expenses, and instead expand incentives for the construction and renovation of our nation's public schools.

While I understand the overwhelming need for additional resources to help repair and rebuild crumbling schools across the United States, this amendment would strip the legislation of its very admirable intent to assist parents in saving scarce resources for a child's elementary and secondary schooling

years. Parents should have the ability to make decisions about their own child's education, particularly in the early, formative years, as they do with higher education. I believe that the education savings accounts for elementary and secondary education are a step in the right direction in helping families to make these often difficult decisions about the education of their child.

This vote on the Robb amendment is a particularly difficult one for me to cast because I, too, am extremely concerned about the dilapidated state of our nation's schools. My home state of West Virginia has a school renovation and construction need in excess of $1.2 billion, and the nation a need totaling more than $250 billion. Mr. President, this is alarming! Our nation's schools are in disrepair and provide a less-than-appealing workplace for our students and faculties. They lack the basic infrastructure to allow our students to become ''ready'' for the age of technology, and many ill-equipped schools deny students the opportunity to engage in meaningful laboratory experiences in the sciences. Some schools are overcrowded, and many have become small communities of portable classrooms.

Mr. President, it is my hope that the Senate will revisit this important issue of funding for school construction in a context that would not pit one good initiative against another.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired. The question is on agreeing to the motion to table amendment No. 2861. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 17 Leg.]

YEAS—57

Abraham	Feingold	Mack
Allard	Fitzgerald	McConnell
Ashcroft	Frist	Murkowski
Bennett	Gorton	Nickles
Bond	Gramm	Roberts
Brownback	Grams	Roth
Bunning	Grassley	Santorum
Burns	Gregg	Sessions
Byrd	Hagel	Shelby
Campbell	Hatch	Smith (NH)
Chafee, L.	Helms	Smith (OR)
Cochran	Hutchinson	Snowe
Collins	Hutchison	Stevens
Coverdell	Inhofe	Thomas
Craig	Jeffords	Thompson
Crapo	Kyl	Thurmond
DeWine	Lieberman	Torricelli
Domenici	Lott	Voinovich
Enzi	Lugar	Warner

NAYS—42

Akaka	Dorgan	Kohl
Baucus	Durbin	Landrieu
Bayh	Edwards	Lautenberg
Biden	Feinstein	Leahy
Bingaman	Graham	Levin
Boxer	Harkin	Lincoln
Breaux	Hollings	Mikulski
Bryan	Inouye	Moynihan
Cleland	Johnson	Murray
Conrad	Kennedy	Reed
Daschle	Kerrey	Reid
Dodd	Kerry	Robb
Rockefeller	Schumer	Wellstone
Sarbanes	Specter	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

McCain

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. CRAIG. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, under a previous order, it is my understanding we will now go to the amendment of Senator ABRAHAM of Michigan; am I correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. COVERDELL. I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

AMENDMENT NO. 2825

(Purpose: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the deduction for computer donations to schools and to allow a tax credit for donated computers, and for other purposes)

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that amendment No. 2825 be called up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objectiohn, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Michigan [Mr. ABRAHAM], for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. REID, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. DORGAN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. TORRICELLI, proposes an amendment numbered 2825.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert:

SEC. . EXPANSION OF DEDUCTION FOR COMPUTER DONATIONS TO SCHOOLS.

(a) EXTENSION OF AGE OF ELIGIBLE COMPUTERS.—Section 170(e)(6)(B)(ii) (defining qualified elementary or secondary educational contribution) is amended by striking ''2 years'' and inserting ''3 years''.

(b) REACQUIRED COMPUTERS ELIGIBLE FOR DONATION.—Section 170(e)(6)(B)(iii) (defining qualified elementary or secondary educational contribution) is amended by inserting '', the person from whom the donor reacquires the property,'' after ''the donor''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to contributions made in taxable years ending after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. . CREDIT FOR COMPUTER DONATIONS TO SCHOOLS AND SENIOR CENTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart D of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 (relating to business related credits) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 45D. CREDIT FOR COMPUTER DONATIONS TO SCHOOLS AND SENIOR CENTERS.

''(a) GENERAL RULE.—For purposes of section 38, the computer donation credit determined under this section is an amount equal to 30 percent of the qualified computer contributions made by the taxpayer during the taxable year as determined after the application of section 170(e)(6)(A).

''(b) QUALIFIED COMPUTER CONTRIBUTION.—For purposes of this section, the term 'qualified computer contribution' has the meaning given the term 'qualified elementary or secondary educational contribution' by section 170(e)(6)(B), except that—

''(1) such term shall include the contribution of a computer (as defined in section 168(i)(2)(B)(ii)) only if computer software (as defined in section 197(e)(3)(B)) that serves as a computer operating system has been lawfully installed in such computer, and

''(2) notwithstanding clauses (i) and (iv) of section 170(e)(6)(B), such term shall include the contribution of computer technology or equipment to multipurpose senior centers (as defined in section 102(35) of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3002(35)) described in section 501(c)(3) and exempt from tax under section 501(a) to be used by individuals who have attained 60 years of age to improve job skills in computers.

''(c) INCREASED PERCENTAGE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO ENTITIES IN EMPOWERMENT ZONES, ENTERPRISE COMMUNITIES, AND INDIAN RESERVATIONS.—In the case of a qualified computer contribution to an entity located in an empowerment zone or enterprise community designated under section 1391 or an Indian reservation (as defined in section 168(j)(6)), subsection (a) shall be applied by substituting '50 percent' for '30 percent'.

''(d) CERTAIN RULES MADE APPLICABLE.—For purposes of this section, rules similar to the rules of paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 41(f) shall apply.

''(e) TERMINATION.—This section shall not apply to taxable years beginning on or after the date which is 3 years after the date of the enactment of the [New Millennium Classrooms Act].''

(b) CURRENT YEAR BUSINESS CREDIT CALCULATION.—Section 38(b) (relating to current year business credit) is amended by striking ''plus'' at the end of paragraph (11), by striking the period at the end of paragraph (12) and inserting '', plus'', and by adding at the end the following:

''(13) the computer donation credit determined under section 45D(a).''

(c) DISALLOWANCE OF DEDUCTION BY AMOUNT OF CREDIT.—Section 280C (relating to certain expenses for which credits are allowable) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) CREDIT FOR COMPUTER DONATIONS.—No deduction shall be allowed for that portion of the qualified computer contributions (as defined in section 45D(b)) made during the taxable year that is equal to the amount of credit determined for the taxable year under section 45D(a). In the case of a corporation which is a member of a controlled group of corporations (within the meaning of section 52(a)) or a trade or business which is treated as being under common control with other trades or businesses (within the meaning of section 52(b)), this subsection shall be applied under rules prescribed by the Secretary similar to the rules applicable under subsections (a) and (b) of section 52.''

(d) LIMITATION ON CARRYBACK.—Subsection (d) of section 39 (relating to carryback and carryforward of unused credits) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(9) NO CARRYBACK OF COMPUTER DONATION CREDIT BEFORE EFFECTIVE DATE.—No amount of unused business credit available under section 45D may be carried back to a taxable year beginning on or before the date of the enactment of this paragraph.''

(e) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subpart D of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 45C the following:

''Sec. 45D. Credit for computer donations to schools and senior centers.''

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to contributions made in taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, before the Senator from Michigan begins the debate, I ask unanimous consent to add Senators DASCHLE, REID, SCHUMER, INOUYE, WYDEN, DURBIN, JOHN KERRY, DORGAN, BOXER, and TORRICELLI. We appreciate the work of the Senator from Michigan but also the work product of the Democrats who have been involved in this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I comment to my colleague from Nevada, I appreciate the interest and support and efforts of all the Members he mentioned and those who previously were supporters of this legislation when it was introduced as a free-standing bill. I hope very much to ultimately succeed in bringing this legislation to final successful completion.

First, prior to a discussion on the amendment, I express my strong support for the Affordable Education Act and compliment Senator COVERDELL for his hard work on this effort. At a time when the new high-tech economy demands greater skills from our workers, our educational system is failing in its duty to provide enough of these skills.

At a time when the Department of Labor figures project our economy will produce more than 1.3 million information technology jobs over the next 10 years, our universities will produce, at least at the current pace, less than one-quarter of that number of graduates in related fields.

At a time when we enjoy a critical competitive edge in high tech, we are not giving our own children the skills they need to succeed in the high-tech economy, at least not, in my judgment, at an adequate level. We need to address that, and this amendment, in a small way, attempts to do so.

One crucial problem concerns the skyrocketing cost of education. According to the College Board, the average annual cost for tuition, room, and board at a public university is now $7,472. At a private college, it is a whopping $19,213 per year.

If costs continue rising as they have been, a 4-year college education will cost $75,000 at a public university and $250,000 at a private college by the time the average newborn begins attending in the year 2016.

The Affordable Education Act addresses this problem through practical, pragmatic reforms. I will not detail all of those at this time. Obviously, the proponents of the legislation have been doing an excellent job of outlining what this bill accomplishes.

I firmly believe the continuing growth and prosperity in America depends on continuing affordability of higher education. It is my firm belief we must do more, particularly in the area of closing what is regularly referenced as the digital divide between the digital haves and the digital have-nots.

The amendment I have offered is the full text of my New Millennium Classrooms Act, legislation I have been pursuing for some time in this body. In addition to the cosponsors who were just added, our bill, S. 542, includes the support of Senators WYDEN, COVERDELL, DASCHLE, HATCH, HARKIN, MCCONNELL, HOLLINGS, BURNS, BOXER, HELMS, BINGAMAN, KERREY, BENNETT, LIEBERMAN, and ASHCROFT, just to name a few of its Senate sponsors. I ask unanimous consent the entire list of cosponsors be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows

COSPONSORS (30)

Senators: Allard, Ashcroft, Bennett, Bingaman, Bond, Boxer, Burns, Campbell, Cochran, Collins, Coverdell, Crapo, Daschle, Gorton, Grams, Hagel, Harkin, Hatch, Helms, Hollings, Hutchison, Jeffords, Johnson, Kerrey, Lieberman, McConnell, Santorum, Smith of Oregon, Warner, Wyden.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, on July 29 of last year, the Senate unanimously adopted this amendment to the tax reduction bill. I urge the Senate to do so again today.

This amendment aims to address our shortage of skilled high-tech workers by addressing the shortage of computers and computer training in our schools.

Advanced technology has fueled unprecedented economic growth and transformed the way Americans do business and communicate with each other.

Despite these gains, however, this same technology is just beginning to have an impact on our classrooms and how we educate our children. Thirty-two percent of our public schools have only one classroom with access to the Internet.

It is imperative that we act now to provide our Nation's students with the training they need to succeed in tomorrow's high-tech workplace.

The Department of Education recommends there be at least one computer for every five students. According to the Education Testing Service, in 1997 there was only one computer for every 24 students on average. Not only are our classrooms sadly under-equipped, but the equipment they have is often obsolete, often incapable, for example, of accessing the Internet.

One of the more common computers in our schools today is the Apple IIc, a computer so archaic that it is now on display at the Smithsonian.

While this technological deficiency affects all of our schools, the students who are in the most need are receiving the least amount of computer instruction and exposure. According to the Secretary of Education, 75.9 percent of households with an annual income over $75,000 have computers, compared to only 11 percent of households with incomes under $10,000.

This disparity exists when comparing households with the Internet access as well. While 42 percent of families with annual incomes over $75,000 have online capability, only 10 percent of families with incomes of $25,000 or less have the same capability.

Rural areas and inner cities fall below the national average for households that have computers. Nationwide, 40.8 percent of white households have computers, while only 19 percent of African American and Hispanic households do. This disparity, unfortunately, is increasing, not decreasing. This unfortunate trend is not confined simply to individual households; it is present in our schools as well.

The Educational Testing Service statistics show schools with 81 percent or more economically disadvantaged students have only one multimedia computer for every 32 students, while a school with 20 percent or fewer economically disadvantaged students will have a multimedia computer for every 22 students.

That is a difference of 10 students per computer. Furthermore, schools with 90 percent or more minority students have only one multimedia computer for every 30 students. This is simply unacceptable.

It points up the importance of securing additional computers for use in our schools. Our schools should be great educational equalizers, providing resources and training to everyone, regardless of their race, class, or rural or urban location so all of our kids can succeed.

To achieve this end, our amendment expands the parameters of the existing tax deduction for computer deductions. It will also add a tax credit.

Specifically, it will do the following: First, it will allow a tax credit equal to 30 percent of the fair market value of the donated computer equipment. An increased tax credit provides a greater incentive for companies to donate computer technology and equipment to schools. This includes computers, peripheral equipment, software, and fiber optic cable related to computer use.

Second, it will expand the current age limit on donated computers to include equipment 3 years old or less. Many companies do not update their equipment within the existing 2-year period that currently is required for qualification for the existing tax deductions.

Yet 3-year-old computers equipped with Pentium-based or equivalent chips have the processing power, memory, and graphics capabilities to provide sufficient Internet and multimedia access and run any necessary software.

Third, the current limitation on original use will be expanded to include original equipment manufacturers or any corporation that reacquires the equipment. By expanding the number of donors eligible for the tax credit, the number of computers available will increase as well.

Lastly, it would implement enhanced tax credits equal to 50 percent of the fair market value of equipment donated to schools located within designated empowerment zones, enterprise communities, and Indian reservations.

Doubling the amount of the tax credits for donations made to schools in economically distressed areas will increase the availability of computers to the children who need it most.

Bringing our classrooms into the 21st century will require a major national investment.

According to a Rand Institute study, it will cost $15 billion, or $300 per student, to provide American schools with the technology needed to educate our young people; the primary cost being the purchase and installation of computer equipment.

At a time when the Government is planning to spend $2.25 billion to wire schools and libraries to the Internet, the demand for this sophisticated hardware will be even greater.

Meanwhile, the Detwiler Foundation estimates that if just 10 percent of the computers that are taken out of service each year were donated to schools, the national ratio of students-to-computers would be brought to 5 to 1 or less. This would meet, or even exceed, the ratio recommended by the Department of Education.

This amendment will provide powerful tax incentives for American businesses to donate top quality high-tech equipment to our Nation's classrooms. And it will do so without unduly increasing Federal Government expenditures or creating yet another Federal program or department.

Encouraging private investment and involvement, this act will keep control where it belongs—with the teachers, the parents, and the students.

At the same time, all our children will have an equal chance at succeeding in the new technological millennium.

In my mind, these are laudable goals, goals we must attain if we are going to provide the kind of future our children deserve.

In closing, I am hopeful our colleagues will uniformly join in support of this legislation. It seems to me, as I travel around my State and go into classrooms, there are a lot of places in Michigan—and I suspect in all the other States—where just a little bit more equipment would allow for more students to get the kind of high-tech training they need.

How do we match up a situation where, literally across this country, we have schools that do not have enough computer equipment, and we have countless businesses and enterprises that have used equipment they don't know what to do with? Can't we find a way? In my judgment, this legislation is the way.

If we pass this legislation, I think we will provide a major incentive to merge the used surplus computers that exist in the private sector with the needs of our schools. In doing so, we will provide more students with access to the technology they need to have in order to be able to pursue the jobs of the new century.

I offer this amendment for my colleagues' consideration. I appreciate the attention of the Chamber.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WYDEN. I am pleased to join today with my colleague from Michigan, Senator ABRAHAM, to offer the New Millennium Classrooms Act as an amendment to the Education Savings Account legislation. This is an issue on which he and I have worked for several years now.

The New Millennium Classrooms Act is about digital recycling. It gives companies an incentive to recycle technology. It says the computer Bill Gates may see as a dinosaur, is really a dynamic new opportunity for a student who has none.

The E-Rate program, authored by Senators ROCKEFELLER and SNOWE, has been an enormous success, helping to wire almost all of the nation's schools and a good portion of the nation's classrooms. What schools need now is good equipment. That's the purpose of this amendment.

We know that very early in this new Century 60% of all jobs will require high-tech computer skills. To prepare our children for the jobs of the future, they not only must have access to technology, but they must be trained to use it as well.

The purpose of our amendment is to build more bridges between the technology ''haves'' and the ''have nots;'' to build more on-ramps to the information superhighway. You can't get 21st Century classrooms, using Flintstones technology.

Technology is not cheap and school budgets are limited, making it tough for schools to upgrade their systems by themselves. The point of our amendment is to enhance existing incentives to businesses to donate computer equipment to schools.

There is a federal program in place, the 21st Century Classroom Act of 1997, but its use has been limited. It allows businesses to take a tax deduction for certain computer equipment donations to K–12 schools. But most businesses take longer to upgrade their computers than allowed for under the law.

The New Millennium Classrooms Act would make this law work the way it was intended. First, our legislation would increase the age limit from two to three years for donated equipment eligible for a tax credit. This more realistically tracks the time line businesses follow for their computer upgrades. It will cover hardware that possesses the necessary memory capacity and graphics capability to support Internet and multimedia applications.

Second, our bill expands the current limitation of ''original use'' to include both original equipment manufacturers and any corporation that reacquires their equipment. We believe that by expanding the number of donors eligible for the credit, we will expand the number of computers donated to schools.

Third, our bill provides for a 30% tax credit of the fair market value for school computer donations, and a 50% credit for donations to schools located in empowerment zones, enterprise communities and Indian reservations. The Department of Commerce report highlights the need to encourage computer donation in these notoriously underserved communities and we want to target donations toward these communities.

Finally, our bill requires an operating system to be included on a donated computer's hard drive in order to qualify for the tax credit. This will ensure students don't get empty computer shells, but the brains that drive the computers.

Our legislation is supported by a wide range of business and education groups. Leaders of technology associations, like the Information Technology Industry Council and TechNet, and the National Association of Manufacturers have joined education associations, such as the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of State University and Land Grant Colleges, in support of the amendment.

The Digital Millennium Classrooms Act promotes digital recycling. It will encourage companies to put their used computers into classrooms instead of into landfills. It will help build a safety net under students trying to cross the digital divide. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and again wish to commend Senator ABRAHAM for his leadership on this legislation.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ABRAHAM. I ask unanimous consent to add Senator HAGEL as a cosponsor to my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I commend the Senator from Michigan for his amendment and his work on the New Millennium Classrooms Act. I joined him several months ago at a press conference where he announced his intentions. I think it is among the

more well-intended, helpful measures to deal with the reform and change we are all seeking in education across America.

There is a real need to bring more computers into our classrooms which is, of course, what the amendment is designed to do.

Sixty percent of all jobs will require high-tech computer skills. Yet 32 percent of our public schools have only one classroom with access to the Internet. It is almost an incongruity, when you read every day about what is happening on the Internet and where we have gotten in terms of access. It really does point to the digital divide we all speak of these days.

The change is occurring so quickly, and the large public educational system is not accustomed to it. In fact, many of us are not accustomed to it. But legislation such as that offered by the Senator from Michigan accelerates the ability of public education to stay up with high tech.

The Department of Education recommends that there be at least one computer for every five students. Yet according to the Educational Testing Service, on average, there is only one multimedia computer for every 24 students.

Since the passage of the 21st Century Classrooms Act of 1997, there has not been a significant increase in computer donations due to restrictions on the age of the donated equipment and the limitations on donor qualifications.

According to the Detwiler Foundation, a California-based nonprofit organization dedicated to providing schools nationwide with quality computers donated by individuals and industry, there are very few Pentium computers donated to schools through their organization. This number has not increased since the passage of the 21st Century Classrooms Act of 1997. Of those computers donated, even fewer qualified for the deduction because of the restrictions.

According to the Detwiler Foundation, if even just 10 percent of retired computers each year were donated to schools, we would easily achieve the Department of Education's recommendation of only five students for every one computer. The current deduction is not enough to offset the costs of the donation.

Without the addition of the tax credit, the high costs associated with the transport and installation of the computer equipment cancel out the current tax benefit.

The new millennium classrooms amendment addresses these restrictions without unduly increasing Federal Government expenditures or creating yet another Federal program or department. It encourages private investment and involvement and keeps control with the teachers, the parents, and the students. At a time when the Government is planning to spend $1.2 billion to wire schools and libraries to the Internet, the demand for this sophisticated equipment and technology will be greater than ever.

This amendment increases the age limit for eligible computers from 2 to 3 years; will allow computer manufacturers to donate equipment returned to them through trade-in and leasing programs; allows a 30-percent tax credit for qualified computer donations; allows a 50-percent tax credit for qualified computer donations to schools located within empowerment zones, enterprise communities and Indian reservations; requires that the donated computer must include an operating system.

Increasing the amount of the tax credits for donations made to schools in economically distressed areas will increase the availability of computers to the children who need it most. Educational Testing Service statistics show that schools with 81 percent or more economically disadvantaged students have only one multimedia computer for every 32 students, while a school with 20 percent or fewer economically disadvantaged students will have a multimedia computer for every 22 students. Again, the divide is a most dangerous thing for us to contemplate in education in America.

Public schools with a high minority enrollment had a smaller percentage of instructional rooms with Internet access than public schools with a low minority enrollment.

This bill is not another targeted tax break. Broad-based tax relief and reform efforts should work to lower tax rates across the board while continuing to retain and improve upon the core tax incentives for education, home ownership, and charitable contributions. The new millennium classrooms amendment expands the parameters and, thus, the effectiveness of an already existing education and charity tax incentive, one which will effectively bring top-of-the-line technology into all of our schools.

The 21st Century Classrooms Act tax deduction expires this year. It is imperative we act now to ensure that all our children have access to quality computer technology.

Again, I commend the Senator from Michigan and his cosponsors. This is, indeed, a most appropriate piece of legislation that will do great good in our education system.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if the Senator will withhold that for a second, we have two Senators who are on their way to speak. The minority leader is on his way to speak on this issue, and Senator WYDEN, who is a cosponsor of the amendment, is in the House and is also on his way back. They should both be here momentarily.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, my estimate is that maybe in the next 15 minutes or so——

Mr. REID. I think it would probably be closer to 11:30 because both have prepared remarks.

Mr. COVERDELL. I know Senators are trying to plan their day. It is useful to clarify, even though we are not absolutely certain. The Senator thinks their statements are such that the next vote might occur at or about 11:30?

Mr. REID. I think that is probably when it will be.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I rise in support of this amendment and applaud the authors. I am very hopeful that we can get good bipartisan support for this legislation, in large measure because it is exactly what we need to be doing right now, if, indeed, we are serious when we say we want more technology in schools.

I can't think of a better way to encourage more technology in schools than to ensure that companies are able to use the incentives that are there to maximize the opportunities for schools to acquire the kinds of hardware and software they need to fully equip every school across the country.

As I travel throughout South Dakota, it is with great pride that superintendents and principals will show me their computer room. They will show me how computer literate their students are. They show me how integrated technology is now becoming in schools. But the one consistent lament they have is that they just don't have the resources to ensure that they can acquire the equipment or, in a timely way, replace that equipment, knowing it is going to be outdated in 3 years, knowing they are going to be faced with the same budgetary decisions once again in a very short period of time. There is a longer life for acquiring sports equipment, books, desks, or almost anything else related to schools. The timeframe within which the technology becomes outdated, as we all know, is extremely short.

So this amendment is simply designed to acknowledge that fact—to acknowledge the fact that schools desperately need this technology and all of the equipment associated with it. They need to have the assurance that once they have acquired this technology, they are going to continue to get it in the future. This relatively minor tax incentive, from the perspective of a budgetary impact, will have profound consequences with respect to its effect on companies and the incentive it will create, and with its effect on what can happen in schools if we pass it.

Mr. President, I applaud Senators WYDEN, BAUCUS, ABRAHAM, and others for their effort to make this issue the prominent one it is with this debate on

how we might improve our educational opportunities. As I say, I think that as we look at the next 10 or 20 years, one of the biggest challenges schools are going to face—whether they are rural or urban, private or public—will be the insurmountable task of technology acquisition. I do hope they can overcome the fiscal challenges they all face. Whether or not they do, in part, will be dependent upon whether or not something as simple as this can be passed, creating an incentive that will ultimately provide companies with more reasons to support schools in their effort to acquire technology.

That is what this amendment is all about. It deserves our support. I am sure it will have our support, and I am sure it may not be the last word on what it is we need to do with regard to technology acquisition. But it is a good beginning. I applaud my colleagues—especially Senators WYDEN and BAUCUS—for all their efforts in bringing it to this point. I urge its passage.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote in relation to the Abraham amendment and with respect to the Bingaman accountability amendment be postponed to occur at 1 p.m. today. I further ask that no second-degree amendments be in order to either amendment prior to the votes and the time between now and 1 p.m. be equally divided for debate of both amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Many Senators thought we would be voting at about 11, so they need to pay particular attention to this change.

I thank the Chair.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, what is the business before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HUTCHINSON). There is an order for the Senator's amendment and the amendment of the Senator from Michigan to be debated concurrently, with a vote to occur at 1 o'clock.

AMENDMENT NO. 2863

(Purpose: To ensure accountability in programs for disadvantaged children and provide funds to turn around failing schools)

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Mexico [Mr. BINGAMAN] proposes an amendment numbered 2863.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike section 101 and insert the following:

"SEC. 101 FUNDS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.

''(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated $275,000,000 for fiscal year 2001 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the succeeding fiscal years.

''(b) NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—From the amount appropriated for any fiscal year under subsection (a), the Secretary of Education ('the Secretary') may reserve not more than 3 percent to conduct evaluations and studies, collect data, and carry out other activities relevant to sections 1116 and 1117 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (hereafter in this section referred to as ''the ESEA'').

''(c) ALLOCATIONS TO STATES.—The Secretary shall allocate the amount appropriated for any fiscal year under subsection (a) and not reserved under subsection (b) among the States in the same proportion in which funds are allocated among the States under part A of title I of the ESEA.

''(d) STATE USE OF FUNDS.—(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State educational agency shall use funds received under subsection (c) to—

''(A) make allotments under paragraph (2); and

''(B) carry out its responsibilities under sections 1116 and 1117 of the ESEA, including establishing and supporting the State educational agency's statewide system of technical assistance and support for local educational agencies.

''(2) ALLOTMENTS TO LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Each State educational agency shall allot at least 70 percent of the amount received under this section to local educational agencies in the State.

''(B) PRIORITIES.—In making allotments under this paragraph, the State educational agency shall—

''(i) give first priority to schools and local educational agencies with schools identified for corrective action under section 1116(c)(5) of the ESEA; and

''(ii) give second priority to schools and local educational agencies with other schools identified for school improvement under section 1116(c)(1) of the ESEA.

''(e) LOCAL USE OF FUNDS.—.

''(1) CORRECTIVE ACTION.—Each local educational agency receiving an allotment under subsection (d)(2)(B)(i) shall use the allotment to carry out effective corrective action in the schools identified for corrective action.

''(2) SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.—Each local educational agency receiving an allotment under subsection (d)(2)(B)(ii) shall use the allotment to achieve substantial improvement in the performance of the schools identified for school improvement.''

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I am introducing this amendment to strike the part of the bill that provides the tax savings because I think there is a better use for that amount of funding. I am proposing an alternative use for that funding that I urge my colleagues to seriously consider.

My amendment strikes the part of the bill that provides the average family with a very small tax savings, and there are various estimates as to what that savings would be. Essentially, as I understand it, the Joint Tax Committee says the average benefit per child in public school would be something like $3 in 2001 and $4.50 in 2002.

I think it is clear, regardless of the precise number, that these are not tax savings that are going to help any child in this country get a better education. So my thought is that rather than do that with the funds we are expending through this bill—or proposing to expend—we use the money to provide crucial funds to turn around the failing public schools.

Public schools are where over 90 percent of our children are educated. I grew up in Silver City, NM where, if you want to go to school, you go to public school. That is the way it has always been, to my knowledge. It is going to be that way for some time. We need to be sure the schools that are not adequately training young people and educating young people get the assistance, the resources, the oversight, and the accountability they need in order to move ahead and solve that problem.

Let me talk a little bit more about the bill that is presently pending and then talk about my own amendment. The Joint Tax Committee did this analysis of the Coverdell proposal and indicated that it would, in their view, disproportionately help families with children already in private schools. Eighty-three percent of families with children in private schools would use this account, but only 28 percent of families in public schools would make use of it.

Essentially, the proposal is a way of diverting funds that are otherwise public funds into the private schools, at a time when we all recognize that the public schools have inadequate funds to do the job we are calling upon them to do.

Also, the pending Coverdell bill we are trying to amend has no mechanisms in it to ensure accountability of the use of the funds we are talking about. The bill does nothing to improve teacher quality. It does nothing to provide safe and modern environments for learning. It does nothing to raise academic standards or to impose upon the public schools or bring them to more accountability in the expenditure of the funds.

I believe we need to use Federal funds on initiatives that make a difference in our public schools. That is what my amendment intended to do.

The relevant section of the Coverdell bill costs the public an average of $275 million a year for the next 5 years. That is the cost to the taxpayers. I believe we can use that $275 million each year to ensure that higher standards and accountability are implemented throughout our public schools. We have made some progress in implementing higher standards.

Most States have adopted or are in the process of adopting statewide standards. This is due in part to the fact that Federal law applicable to the program for disadvantaged students—that is title I—requires that standards be adopted. Although States have

adopted standards, many States and districts have not had sufficient funds to ensure the accountability for meeting those standards they have set or to provide adequate resources to the schools that are failing to meet the standards. I think dedicating specific funds to this purpose is necessary in order to create the rewards and the penalties that will allow schools to be held accountable for the improvement in student performance.

The Federal Government directs over $8 billion in Federal funds to provide support programs through title I. But the accountability provisions in title I have not been adequately implemented because they haven't had the resources to do it at the State level, primarily.

Title I authorizes State school support teams to provide support for schoolwide programs to provide assistance to schools that are in need of improvement through activities such as professional developments for the teachers in those schools, and identifying resources for changing the way the instruction is provided.

In 1998, only eight States requiring these school support teams have been able to serve the majority of the schools that they have been identified as needing improvement. Less than half the schools identified as being in the need of improvement in the school year of 1997–1998 reported that having been designated as a school needing improvement actually got some professional development to accomplish that improvement.

Schools and school districts need additional support and resources in order to address the weaknesses that we identify. They need that support and those resources quickly after those weaknesses are identified. They need to be able to promote an intensive range of interventions, continuously assess the results of those interventions, and to implement some incentives for improvement.

The National Governors' Association asked us to provide funds for the purpose this amendment tries to address.

I have a letter that came to me last October when this same issue came before us in the Senate. I offered an amendment at that time which was not successful but which I believe had merit then, and I believe it has merit now.

Let me make it very clear so there is no misunderstanding. At that time, I was not proposing to strike the tax proposal that Senator COVERDELL brought forward and substitute this in its stead. The Governors were not responding to that specific striking aspect of my amendment of today, but they were talking about the need to have additional funds to ensure accountability and to ensure the implementation of these higher standards by the schools that are failing.

The amendment I am offering would provide $275 million to help improve failing schools. The money would be used to ensure the States and school districts have the necessary resources to implement the corrective action provisions of title I by providing immediate, intensive interventions to turn around low-performing schools.

Let me read part of this letter so that folks know what the Governors are saying. It is a letter to me by Mr. Raymond Scheppach, who is the executive director of the National Governors' Association.

It says:

> On behalf of the Nation's Governors, I write to express our strong support for your amendment to provide States with additional funds to help turn around schools that are failing to provide quality education for title I students.

That is what we are trying to do today.

He says further:

> As you know, under current law, States are permitted to reserve one-half of one percent of their title I monies to administer the title I program and provide schools with additional assistance. However, this small set aside—this is one-half of one percent—does not provide the States with sufficient funds to improve the quality of title I schools. A recent study by the U.S. Department of Education noted the ''capacity of State school support teams to assist schools in need of improvement of title I is a major concern.'' The programs authorized to fund such improvement efforts have not been funded. As a result, States have been unable to provide such services.

Then he goes on to various other points but essentially says:

> Your amendment would provide such funding. Therefore, NGA supports your amendment and will urge other Senators to support the adoption of it.

Let me make it very clear to people again. This was a letter related to an amendment to direct funds at accountability in the expenditure of public funds and help these failing schools. It does not include the proposal I am making today as well to strike the Coverdell amendment and substitute this instead as a better use of that money.

But the types of interventions the States and school districts could provide under these funds are things which I think we would all recognize are needed.

First, purchasing necessary materials, up-to-date textbooks, curriculum, technology.

I think we all encounter circumstances where teachers, school administrators, and students tell us about how they have outdated textbooks and inadequate lab materials or whatever in order to really pursue their studies as they would like to.

These funds could be used for that. They could be used for providing intensive, ongoing teacher training.

That clearly is a need, and I think it is a recognized need in the teaching profession.

The people who talk to me about the importance of more teacher training are the teachers. So this is not an attack on our public school teachers. This is a recognition that we need to do more to help them constantly stay abreast of the new developments in teaching and do a better job.

Third, this would provide access to distance learning.

We have the amendment that was talked about just prior to the amendment I am discussing about technology in our schools. All of us recognize there is a great opportunity, particularly in rural communities, to make better use of teacher learning.

This past weekend, I was in some communities in my State where there are very small high schools. I was in Eunice, NM; I was in Jal, NM. Those are communities with very small high schools. Frankly, they are not able to offer all of the courses they would like to offer for their students. They have the opportunity through distance learning, through the Internet, through interactive television, and through a variety of technologies to provide courses to some of their students even though they may not have a teacher in that school who is qualified to teach that course. We need to be sure the funds are there to do that. This amendment would help provide those funds.

These funds must be used to extend learning time for students—afterschool programs, Saturday programs, and summer school—to help them catch up and perform at least at grade level and, hopefully, better than grade level.

These funds could be used to provide rewards to low-performing schools that show significant progress, including cash awards or other incentives such as, in particular, release time for teachers to prepare for the next school year or whatever.

Also, these funds could be used for intensive technical assistance from teams of experts outside the schools to help develop and implement school improvement plans in failing schools.

These teams would determine the causes of low performance—for example, low expectations, outdated curriculum, poorly trained teachers, and unsafe conditions. They would assist in implementing research-based models for improvement.

I am persuaded there are today research-based whole school reform programs that have been developed that can dramatically improve the performance of our elementary schools. I have become most familiar with one which is called Success for All. There are others that are also showing very good results.

This Success for All program was developed at Johns Hopkins University. Bob Slavin was the key researcher who worked on it. This is a proven early grade reading program. It also covers other subjects. The core subject which most schools have adopted and are focused on is the reading. This is a program which, if implemented properly, can ensure substantial results. We have 50 elementary schools in New Mexico that are presently using this Success for All program and the results are impressive. At the end of the first grade, Success for All schools have averaged

reading scores almost 3 months ahead of those in other control schools where that program has not been implemented.

This amendment will not address all the issues of our schools. I believe sincerely that it is a positive step forward. It will be a more meaningful step forward in improving the educational quality in America than this alternative of providing a $5 a year, or whatever the right number is, tax benefit to the average American.

Clearly, we all want to see our schools improved.

Senator REED is on the floor and wishes to speak for a moment on this and then I understand Senator ROTH has an amendment he wishes to offer.

I ask for the yeas and nays on this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. REED.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first, I will speak with respect to Senator BINGAMAN's amendment. Let me commend the Senator for his efforts not only today but throughout his career in the Senate to ensure that accountability is a central part of Federal educational legislation.

Senator BINGAMAN, in 1994, was one of the leaders in this body with respect to the issue of accountability. At that time, I was serving in the other body. Together we worked at the conference on accountability provisions in the 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. As a result of the efforts of Senator BINGAMAN and others, we were able, for the first time, to begin to focus significant attention on the issue of accountability. In fact, the 1994 reauthorization, together with Goals 2000 legislation, accelerated and encouraged a movement throughout the States to develop standards. Practically every State in the country today has standards.

We now have the opportunity to begin measuring how well schools are doing. That is at the heart, I believe, of Senator BINGAMAN's approach today. We need not only to measure how well they are doing but then hold States and localities accountable for those results.

What has happened in the last several years is that the States have not had the resources to fully exploit the opportunities to measure schools against standards and then improve those schools. Half of the schools in the country that are problematic, according to State standards, have not been able to have access to teams of improvement; they have not had access to the support they need to make themselves better. In addition, they have not had access to the professional development which they need to enhance the capabilities of their teachers. All of these efforts together suggest the American people's money would be best spent by devoting time and attention to accountability.

Again, I think the approach that the Senator from New Mexico is taking is exactly on target. As we spend $8 billion a year on title I, we should insist that the States live up to their responsibility to use these funds wisely as measured by the performance of their students. The best way we can do that is to give them the resources and, again, the impetus to take stock of their schools and then to apply corrective measures, remedial measures.

They have not been able to do that. I don't believe it is because they don't want to do it; I believe it is because they have not been able to find the resources to carry out this mission. Senator BINGAMAN's amendment would give them access to these resources. It will give them access not in a restrictive way but in a very open-ended way so they can pick and choose the best device to use in their particular school to ensure that school performance improves. That, again, is why I believe we are all here.

We have a special obligation at the national level to assist, particularly, low-income schools. Regrettably and unfortunately, many of the low-performing schools are low-income schools. Therefore, this effort to help support States to identify low-performing schools and to bring them up to the standards of the State is entirely consistent with the purpose of Federal legislation, which is to assist low-income students to have access to the opportunities that more affluent students and their families take for granted.

I believe what the Senator is proposing is entirely consistent with what we should be about, but also it will go to the heart of leveraging all of our programs and all the State programs to ensure we accomplish the ultimate goal that lies before the Senate of ensuring that every child in this country has access to excellent public education.

Coincidentally, both Senator BINGAMAN and I and others today are beginning the markup in committee of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. We will be pursuing these issues within the context of that legislation. Today, when we have a bill in this Chamber that purports to be a way to assist education, elementary and secondary education, in the United States, we have to seize this opportunity to point out that the heart of our efforts has to be the reinforcement of what we have already begun years ago, which is to develop within the States the capacity to evaluate their schools based upon their standards and then to intervene successfully to fix these schools.

Before we go on to more attenuated means to help education in the United States—such as tax credits and other proposals—we have a primary responsibility and, today, an opportunity to do what we started to do in 1994 to give the States the resources, further incentives to evaluate their schools, identify the schools that are failing, to step in with their choice of intervention strategies, and to fix the schools in America.

There are over 8,000 schools in this country that are not meeting State standards. Those figures come from our Department of Education. What is preventing the States and the localities from stepping in right now? There might be a host of issues, but one thing we can do to accelerate that intervention is to support the Bingaman amendment, to give them resources and give them the clarion call to step in and fix the schools so we can declare—as I hope we can at the end of this debate and certainly I hope at the end of the debate on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—that we are not only committed but we are on a path to ensure that every school in this country is providing every American child with the opportunity to succeed. Every public school in this country is doing that.

I commend the Senator and I thank him for yielding time to me. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I yield myself such time as I may consume off of the Abraham amendment debate time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I intend to offer a substitute amendment to S. 1134 later today. The underlying bill was reported out of the Finance Committee almost 1 year ago, in May 1999. My substitute amendment makes some important and necessary policy changes that were not done before—because of budget constraints 1 year ago. My amendment also updates the bill to account for the passage of time.

When the committee originally considered this education bill, we were operating under last year's budget scenario. Since that time, the surplus numbers have increased dramatically. In today's economic environment, I believe that it is appropriate to use the surplus to provide education tax incentives for American families. Through their hard work, the American people created these favorable economic conditions and the resulting budget surplus. They should be entitled to take some of that surplus back.

We should not have to raise taxes to offset these much needed education tax incentives. My amendment makes this legislation a true tax cut relief bill for education. With a growing Federal surplus created by their tax dollars, Americans should not be taxed again to pay for a national priority.

Accordingly, my substitute amendment strikes all of the revenue raisers in S. 1134. The cost of my amendment is but a small percentage of the projected budget surplus over the next 10 years.

Now let me explain some of the substantive changes that I make in the

substitute amendment. First, the underlying bill increases the maximum contribution amount for an Education IRA from $500 per year to $2,000 per year. The underlying bill also allows contributions to an Education IRA to be used for kindergarten through high school education expenses. These are both important and needed changes. But the underlying bill sunsets both of those benefits after the year 2003. That is not good policy. Accordingly, my bill removes the sunset—it makes permanent both the increase in the contribution limit and the flexibility in the use of the accounts.

Planning and saving for college should take place as early as possible. To help families make those important decisions, they need to know how much money they can put away and for what it can be used. Having provisions that sunset—and thus need to be renewed by Congress—takes away from that certainty. We need to make saving for college easier and more certain—not complex and uncertain.

I can easily see why a family would not want to take their hard earned savings and put them in a program where the terms could change in a few years. My amendment helps to solve that problem. We should not sunset our future—the education of our children.

Education IRAs are extremely important for a few reasons. First, they help families afford the escalating costs of higher education. The increase to $2,000 will make these accounts more attractive to families who want to use them and to institutions who want to offer them. Second, the existence of an education IRA gives an additional push to a student to attend college. Last month, the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee held a hearing on the rising cost of college tuition. One of the witnesses was Dr. Caroline M. Hoxby, an associate professor of economics at Harvard University.

Commenting on the behavioral incentives of an Education IRA, Dr. Hoxby noted that for an eighth grader, there is something different about knowing that there is money being put away for your college education and that you will lose it and the opportunity to go to college if you do not continue to do well. It makes sense that a child who is aware that there is a fund being built up for his or her future education would think longer and harder about going to college.

My amendment also fixes a trap for the unwary. Under current law, a student who takes a distribution from an Education IRA is not able to use the HOPE or Lifetime Learning Credit—even if different education expenses are allocated for the different tax benefits. Again, this is not right. We are providing these education tax incentives to families because they need them. We should not hold them out there—making people believe that they are available—and then take them away. Because of revenue constraints, the original Finance Committee bill fixed this coordination only for a few years. My amendment makes the coordination permanent, and makes sure that families continue to receive the full benefits from all these tax benefits.

My amendment also makes the tax-free treatment of employer-provided educational assistance permanent. In last year's Extenders bill, Congress extended the current tax-free treatment for a few years. That was the right move, but it did not go far enough. First, something as important and necessary as continuing education should not be wrapped up in the uncertainty of extenders legislation. Workers and companies need to plan ahead, and they need to know how these educational expenses will be treated under the Tax Code. Second, we should reinstitute the exclusion for graduate education expenses. Especially in today's dynamic economy—which is marked by high technology and innovation—it is important that workers have access to graduate education. My amendment recognizes that fact, and so it makes permanent tax-free treatment of employer-provided educational assistance for both undergraduate and graduate level courses.

Finally, my amendment updates the Finance Committee bill by changing the effective dates of the provisions. They would all be effective beginning in the year 2001. I should also note that my amendment takes into account the Senate's adoption of the Collins amendment yesterday—and so will include that amendment as well as any others that have been adopted.

Why are the permanent provisions in my amendment so important? Some Senators have tried to rationalize their opposition to this bill by claiming that it would not do enough to advance education. My amendment guarantees that this is simply not true.

My amendment would allow parents to contribute up to $2,000 annually toward their child's education—from the day of birth to the first day of college.

That is just $5.48 a day or $38.46 a week. That may not seem like a lot but, like a train, it may start slowly but it is very powerful. It will gain speed. It is a savings express to college.

By putting their child on the savings express, after 18 years when that child is ready to go to college, the parents will have $65,200, and that just assumes a 6 percent rate of interest—the rate on a Government security. Of course, other investments could yield even more, but a U.S. Government security is the safest in the world.

So parents would have at least $65,200 toward their child's education. $29,000 of that would be solely due to the power of compounding interest. And every cent of that $29,000 would be tax-free—it would go straight into education.

Maybe that still does not seem like a lot to some folks, but it sure seems like a lot to parents who are struggling today to insure college for their children tomorrow.

The average annual cost of college—tuition, room, and fees—in 1997–1998, was $9,536. At the University of Delaware, it is $9,984 for this school year. So the national average total cost is roughly $10,000 per year or $40,000 for the cost of a college education.

My amendment before us today will cover this. It will give parents and students peace of mind.

My amendment is a powerful incentive to save. It is an engine. It is the engine that can pull a long train of savings—and dreams.

Like the Little Engine that Could, my amendment makes this legislation the Education Savings Plan that Will. Parents and children getting on this savings train, will get off at college to a better future.

I am amazed that some people are trying to overlook the train and just see the caboose. I promise you the American people are not. America has waited for this college savings plan for 3 years. This legislation brings it home today. It is time the President got on board.

The measures in this bill are an important step forward. My amendment will not only take us another step forward but keep us on a permanent track to prosperity.

I urge my colleagues to join in a bipartisan effort to make education affordable for American families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAMS). Who yields time? The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, how much time remains on each side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority has 46 minutes; the minority has 33 minutes remaining.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I want to speak briefly to the Bingaman amendment.

First, I associate myself with the remarks of the Senator from Delaware. The Senator talked about the train that could and the train that will, but it will not if we adopt the Bingaman amendment because the Bingaman amendment neuters, makes moot, the education IRA, the education savings account. He takes the funding that is in the bill that is before us and shifts it to the Department of Education. It may be a rational goal or not; that can be debated. The bottom line is that everything Senator ROTH of Delaware has just spoken to would be moot. All the advantages, the accumulation of funds that will allow families to more effectively deal with college costs or educational costs in general will disappear, end, be over, no train.

This is about the third attempt from the other side to bring ''an apple pie goal'' and use it as a tactic to defund educational savings accounts.

With regard to the Bingaman amendment and its issues of accountability, of course those are rightfully being discussed in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which is in committee. It is being jump-started in a

very confrontational way in that the very essence of everything we have been talking about for the better part of 2 weeks would be moot if we allowed the funding that allows the creation of family education savings accounts to be shifted over to the Department of Education and all that bureaucratic morass in the name of a good goal.

Certainly, accountability is something for which we all strive. I do think we ought to remember that accountability in schools is primarily the responsibility of the State governments. Currently, of all the education funds available in America, some 13 percent are now provided by the Federal Government.

What is interesting is about 50 to 60 percent of the administrative overhead and regulations and those things that bog down principals and superintendents and teachers is a Federal mandate. We send off a check for 13 percent, but we demand about a 50-percent overhead on what all those local schools have to do.

We will be voting a little bit later on the Robb amendment which, of course, does the same thing. It creates a national school construction program, and if my colleagues read through the amendment, they will see it is going to take a building of lawyers to understand all the requirements and mandates.

I wanted to make the point that on the Bingaman amendment and, for that matter, the Robb amendment, both have the effect of defunding and making impossible the creation of the education savings account.

I will take a few more minutes to remind everybody that by Government predictions and estimates, the education savings account we are proposing will affect 14 million American families who are educating 20 million children. Because they are setting up this education savings account, they will invest—these are the American families—$12 billion over the next 10 years to be used to help their children for educational purposes.

So every time we confront one of these amendments that removes the funding to establish the education savings account, we are not only throwing the idea away, but we are throwing away $12 billion of volunteered money that would come from these 14 million families for their children. It will be one of the largest infusions of resources we have seen in public-private education in many years, and the Federal Government is not having to raise taxes to do it. They are not having to appropriate money to do it. We are simply saying we will allow the interest that will build up in these education savings accounts not to be taxed.

Over a 10-year period, it is a reasonably small number of tax revenue that is forfeited, and it makes the American public do massive things. Imagine saving $12 billion for the aid of kids who are trying to get through school and college.

I wanted to make it clear that these amendments, under these ''apple pie'' titles have the effect of closing down the idea that we will be opening an education savings account.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the period of time that is consumed in the quorum call be equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending consent agreement be amended to include a vote in relation to the Graham amendment and, therefore, those three votes be postponed to occur at 2 p.m. today. I further ask unanimous consent that no second-degree amendments be in order to either of the three amendments prior to the votes and the time between now and 2 p.m. be equally divided for debate of all three amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURNS). Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, it is my understanding the next 2 hours, then, are evenly divided between the minority and majority.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Therefore, Mr. President, the next votes will occur at 2. The Senate was advised that it would be at 1 and there would be two votes. So the change is that we are able to work another amendment in, and we will have 3 votes at 2.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

AMENDMENT NO. 2864

(Purpose: To provide funds to assist high-poverty school districts in meeting their teaching needs)

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I will be offering an amendment which is entitled Transition to Teaching. This amendment came to my attention as a result of a series of personal experiences.

One set of those experiences related to the military and specifically the U.S. Navy in Pensacola. Several years ago, facing the downsizing of the military and aware that there were going to be a lot of people with talents, particularly in areas such as science and mathematics, who would be looking for a second career, the U.S. Navy in Pensacola, the State university in Pensacola, and the University of West Florida formed a partnership. That partnership was to provide training for naval personnel who were within a few months or years of their retirement date so that when they did reach retirement, they would be prepared to go into the classrooms of America with full certification and commence a second career educating the next generation of young Americans.

This has been a very successful program. It has assisted scores of schools in my State and many more across the country. This program has been generally referred to as the Troops to Teachers Program.

Last August, I did one of my monthly workdays at North Marion High School north of Ocala, FL. There I met a man by the name of Bill Aradine. Bill teaches automobile mechanics at North Marion. North Marion, as do many schools in America, every year faces a major challenge in how to recruit enough young new teachers to fill the ranks.

We are facing, in the next decade, something on the order of 2 million American teachers who are going to retire. These are teachers who largely came to the classroom in the 1950s and 1960s, are now reaching their retirement period, and are going to create tremendous demands for new teachers to fill those ranks. Bill Aradine filled one of those positions at North Marion High School.

What is peculiar about Bill is not just the fact that he is considered to be an outstanding teacher who motivates his students and has prepared students for very good paying jobs upon their graduation from his automobile mechanics program, but what is most peculiar about Bill is the fact that he is a man who already had a career. The career was that, at first, he was an automobile mechanic and then the lead mechanic of one of the large automobile dealerships in Marion County, FL. So when he came to the classroom, he was a fully mature adult with a lot of experience in the area he was going to teach, credibility with the students, and the ability to be beyond a teacher, a mentor, a counselor, and the bridge from the classroom to employment for his students.

Now, Bill made that transition to the classroom out of his own grit, his interest in being able to share with young Floridians what he had learned in a lifetime of automobile mechanics. But Bill, unfortunately, is a rarer commodity than he should be. We ought to be encouraging more people at midcareer to consider the classroom as their second career. We ought to be facilitating their ability, as the Navy and the University of West Florida did, to get certified so they can move

seemlessly into the classroom. We ought to recognize the fact that a student at 40 is different than a student at 18, in terms of their class schedule and their other responsibilities, both family and economic; and we ought to try to make it easier for those Americans to be able to pursue their desire at a second career in the classroom.

That is what the transition to teaching legislation intends to do. It focuses on two of the principal inhibitors to persons pursuing a second career in education. The first of those occurs at the universities. The universities are very well prepared to train people who are right out of high school, who don't have many family or economic responsibilities, and who, at the age of 22 or 23, will go into the classroom. They are not so well prepared to deal with the student who is in their forties, who has all these responsibilities and has to have a greater degree of flexibility in their schedule. As the University of West Florida found, they had to redo their curriculum in order to be able to respond to the needs of the Navy personnel. I suggest the same thing is going to be required if we are going to move the Bill Aradines from a rare exception to a significant stream of persons coming into the classroom as a second career. So the first part of our transition to teaching is focused on the universities to provide them some stimulation and resources to commence the process of restructuring their curriculum so they can be responsive to the needs of the middle-age second career student. Second is to provide stipends to these students while they are undergoing this process of change, recognizing that they have other responsibilities, typically, in terms of supporting their families and the other obligations that an adult would typically have.

So those are the two targets of this legislation in order to facilitate more Americans being able to consider a second career in education and to be able to contribute to that 2 million new teachers that America is going to need in the next 10 years in order to meet the tremendous demands that will be caused by the impending retirements of many hundreds of thousands of current teachers.

I will offer, for purposes of consideration as an amendment to the legislation that is pending before us, an amendment on which I have been joined by Senators BINGAMAN and ROBB, entitled ''Transition to Teaching.'' I will urge its consideration and vote at the scheduled time of 2 o'clock.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I now send my amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Florida [Mr. GRAHAM], for himself, Mr. ROBB and Mr. BINGAMAN, proposes an amendment numbered 2864.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place, add the following:

TITLE —TRANSITION TO TEACHING

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Transition to Teaching Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) School districts will need to hire more than 2,000,000 teachers in the next decade. The need for teachers in the areas of mathematics, science, foreign languages, special education, and bilingual education, and for those able to teach in high-poverty school districts will be particularly high. To meet this need, talented Americans of all ages should be recruited to become successful, qualified teachers.

(2) Nearly 28 percent of teachers of academic subjects have neither an undergraduate major nor minor in their main assignment fields. This problem is more acute in high-poverty schools, where the out-of-field percentage is 39 percent.

(3) The Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) ranked United States high school seniors last among 16 countries in physics and next to last in mathematics. It is also evident, mainly from the TIMSS data, that based on academic scores, a stronger emphasis needs to be placed on the academic preparation of our children in mathematics and science.

(4) One-fourth of high-poverty schools find it very difficult to fill bilingual teaching positions, and nearly half of public school teachers have students in their classrooms for whom English is a second language.

(5) Many career-changing professionals with strong content-area skills are interested in a teaching career, but need assistance in getting the appropriate pedagogical training and classroom experience.

(6) The Troops to Teachers model has been highly successful in linking high-quality teachers to teach in high-poverty districts.

SEC. 3. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this title is to address the need of high-poverty school districts for highly qualified teachers in particular subject areas, such as mathematics, science, foreign languages, bilingual education, and special education, needed by those school districts, by recruiting, preparing, placing, and supporting career-changing professionals who have knowledge and experience that will help them become such teachers.

SEC. 4. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.

(a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary is authorized to use funds appropriated under subsection (b) for each fiscal year to award grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to institutions of higher education and public and private nonprofit agencies or organizations to carry out programs authorized by this title.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out this title, there are authorized to be appropriated $25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2006.

SEC. 5. APPLICATION.

Each applicant that desires an award under section 4(a) shall submit an application to the Secretary containing such information as the Secretary requires, including—

(1) a description of the target group of career-changing professionals upon which the applicant will focus in carrying out its program under this title, including a description of the characteristics of that target group that shows how the knowledge and experience of its members are relevant to meeting the purpose of this title;

(2) a description of how the applicant will identify and recruit program participants;

(3) a description of the training that program participants will receive and how that training will relate to their certification as teachers;

(4) a description of how the applicant will ensure that program participants are placed and teach in high-poverty local educational agencies;

(5) a description of the teacher induction services (which may be provided through existing induction programs) the program participants will receive throughout at least their first year of teaching;

(6) a description of how the applicant will collaborate, as needed, with other institutions, agencies, or organizations to recruit, train, place, and support program participants under this title, including evidence of the commitment of those institutions, agencies, or organizations to the applicant's program;

(7) a description of how the applicant will evaluate the progress and effectiveness of its program, including—

(A) the program's goals and objectives;

(B) the performance indicators the applicant will use to measure the program's progress; and

(C) the outcome measures that will be used to determine the program's effectiveness; and

(8) an assurance that the applicant will provide to the Secretary such information as the Secretary determines necessary to determine the overall effectiveness of programs under this title.

SEC. 6. USES OF FUNDS AND PERIOD OF SERVICE.

(a) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Funds under this title may be used for—

(1) recruiting program participants, including informing them of opportunities under the program and putting them in contact with other institutions, agencies, or organizations that would train, place, and support them;

(2) training stipends and other financial incentives for program participants, not to exceed $5,000 per participant;

(3) assisting institutions of higher education or other providers of teacher training to tailor their training to meet the particular needs of professionals who are changing their careers to teaching;

(4) placement activities, including identifying high-poverty local educational agencies with a need for the particular skills and characteristics of the newly trained program participants and assisting those participants to obtain employment in those local educational agencies; and

(5) post-placement induction or support activities for program participants.

(b) PERIOD OF SERVICE.—A program participant in a program under this title who completes his or her training shall serve in a high-poverty local educational agency for at least 3 years.

(c) REPAYMENT.—The Secretary shall establish such requirements as the Secretary determines appropriate to ensure that program participants who receive a training stipend or other financial incentive under subsection (a)(2), but fail to complete their service obligation under subsection (b), repay all or a portion of such stipend or other incentive.

SEC. 7. EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

To the extent practicable, the Secretary shall make awards under this title that support programs in different geographic regions of the Nation.

SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) HIGH-POVERTY LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term ''high-poverty local educational agency'' means a local educational agency in which the percentage of children, ages 5 through 17, from families below the poverty level is 20 percent or greater, or the number of such children exceeds 10,000.

(2) PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.—The term ''program participants'' means career-changing professionals who—

(A) hold at least a baccalaureate degree;

(B) demonstrate interest in, and commitment to, becoming a teacher; and

(C) have knowledge and experience that are relevant to teaching a high-need subject area in a high-need local educational agency.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, when I introduced Transition to Teaching in October last year, I talked about my workday with Bill Aradine.

He teaches 150 students, from 9th to 12th grade at North Marion High School near Ocala, FL.

He teaches auto mechanics, and has sparked an interest in students that may lead to rewarding, lucrative, and challenging careers for them.

But Mr. Aradine brings something else to his first year in North Marion High School—eleven years of on-the-job experience.

He has years of experience in a local Chevrolet car dealership, and he is starting a second career in teaching.

The students look at him with a different perspective: When he says that ''you will need to know this to succeed'' they know that he knows.

Having just come from the automotive industry, he teaches at the cutting edge.

The information that he brings to his students is what he was actually doing in the workplace not that long ago.

Mr. Aradine is also a bridge between North Marion High students and the world of employment.

He offers them advice, counsel, and real-life connections to future jobs.

As Bill Aradine made the mid-career transition into the teaching profession, students gained a valuable instructor and mentor, and North Marion High School was able to fill a vacancy and ease its teacher shortage.

Every August and September—another school year begins for thousands of young Americans.

Almost every year at this time, I hear from school districts in Florida about teacher shortages:

Miami-Dade hired 1,700 new teachers for the 1999 school year, and still had 300 vacancies to fill on the first day of classes.

Hillsborough County hired 1,493 teachers for the start of the school year and were still 238 teachers short when the first class bell rang.

Orange County needed 1,300 teachers for the new year, and still had 50 vacancies several months after school started.

These concerns will only get worse: 40 percent of current schoolteachers are over age 50, on the verge of retirement.

Who will be the future role models to the next generation of Americans?

The importance of having high-quality teachers, and in sufficient numbers is crucial when we look at the challenges facing education in the future.

The American family structure will change in two key ways: Half of all children will spend some of their childhood in single-parent homes, and are more likely to live in poverty. And, of the children who grow up in a nuclear family, very often both parents will work, thus are less able to be involved in a child's school and schoolwork.

Second, societal expectations for students upon graduation will be greater.

In the middle of this century, 20 percent of the jobs needed skilled workers.

At the end of this century, 80 percent of jobs will need skilled workers.

Thus, the American student will need to graduate from school better prepared for the hi-tech world than ever before, but single parent families and dual-income families, in general, will face more challenges in being actively involved in their child's education.

These challenges, and others, will face the American educational system.

I rise today to take one step forward in easing the nationwide teacher shortage, and offering challenging new opportunities for America's professionals by introducing the Transition to Teaching Act of 1999.

Representatives JIM DAVIS of Florida and TIM ROEMER of Indiana have taken the lead in the House of Representatives on this issue.

We have a very successful model on which to build the Transition to Teaching program.

Since 1994, the ''Troops to Teachers'' program has brought more than 3,000 retired military personnel to our classrooms as math, science, and technology teachers.

Florida schools have the benefit of more than 270 individuals who have successfully completed the Troops to Teachers program, and are bringing their life-experience to the classroom today.

Troops to Teachers, and now Transition to Teaching, overcome two of the main obstacles that mid-career professionals face when becoming a teacher.

It streamlines the teaching certification process.

It provides money to mid-career professionals to become certified.

It's not impossible to do this now, as Mr. Aradine has shown, but this legislation will assist with and simplify the process.

The first issue that is addressed involves teaching colleges within universities.

They are often set up for traditional students, in their early-20's, just starting out in their professional lives.

These programs are generally taken over a multi-year period as a full-time college student.

This legislation encourages teaching colleges to develop curriculum suitable for an individual who has many years of work experience.

These programs are more streamlined, more flexible in school hours, and recognize that the professional brings more life and work experience than a traditional college student.

By developing such programs, colleges can maintain high standards, but allow a mid-career professional, making the change into teaching to become certified in a more efficient, streamlined manner.

Teaching colleges are also asked to develop programs to maintain contact with and support for these new teachers during at least their first year in the classroom.

Second, Transition to Teaching will assist teachers who come to the profession in mid-career in a very tangible way.

Grants will be awarded, up to $5,000 per participant, to offset the costs of becoming a certified teacher.

In return, the teacher agrees to teach in low-income schools for three years, as determined by the percentage of Title One students in the school population.

Thus, two of the biggest obstacles to becoming a teacher in mid-career are alleviated by this legislation:

First, the certification process is streamlined, and second, stipends are provided to offset the cost of this additional education.

By expanding the ''Troops to Teachers'' program into ''Transition to Teaching,'' law enforcement, attorneys, business leaders, scientists, entrepreneurs, and others in the private sector, should be encouraged to share their wisdom with students.

This amendment is timely. We are on the cusp of the retirement of millions of baby boomers.

By encouraging recent retirees, or mid-career professionals, to become certified through Transition to Teaching and spend a few years in the classroom, we will bring the life skills of experienced professionals to our youngest citizens.

I encourage my colleagues to support this amendment.

Our nation's children deserve our best efforts to provide them with a world class education.

Let me just add an economic component to this amendment. This amendment would be in the nature of an authorization. The President has in his budget an item of $25 million, which would be the basis of supporting this program, as well as the current Troops to Teachers Program.

It is estimated that approximately half of the persons who would be trained with that $25 million appropriation that has been recommended by the President would be military personnel and the other half would be civilian. As we begin to stabilize the reduction of the military, the proportion of those persons who would be trained for a second career in the classroom would probably begin to shift with a larger number being from the civilian sector. It is estimated that the cost per student for this program will be approximately $3,500 to $4,000 a year for their training, with the average person

taking between 1 and 2 years to be trained to the point they are certified to go into the classroom.

I believe this is a very reasonable and prudent investment for America to make in Americans who have demonstrated their accomplishments in a first career and are now ready to share their experiences with American youth in a second career in the classroom. This will help to facilitate that transition to teaching for the 21st century.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask whether the floor is in any kind of a parliamentary situation at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time is controlled and evenly divided until 2 o'clock on the pending amendment.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business for a maximum of 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I mention to the Senator that in the context of these amendments that his side has invited Senator WELLSTONE to come to begin his amendment. If that were to come about, we would need to try to accommodate it. If the Senator would help us with that, I see no problem.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I would be pleased to do that.

Mr. COVERDELL. I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

GUN CONTROL

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, none of us can possibly ignore what took place yesterday in Michigan. Another child killed by gunfire. Everywhere across the country we see children killing children. And then we see members of the immediate family their faces contorted by sadness. Anyone who has a child or grandchild has to be dismayed and upset by these tragedies.

I am fortunate enough to have seven grandchildren, the oldest of whom is 6. Nothing is more joyful than to see their smiling faces—to see them learning about life, reading, playing, and singing.

And when I think of my grandchildren, and the other children across this country, I ask myself what it will take to stop the gun violence. When will this Congress say we have enough killing? What does it take to change some minds, to say that guns do kill?

I am so tired of that foolish saying: ''guns don't kill people, people kill people.'' Of course, people kill people, but we would see much less deadly violence if we passed common sense gun safety measures. It is getting close to the 1-year anniversary of the tragedy at Columbine. I will never forget the picture of the child hanging out of the window at that school, looking for help, trying to get away from the terror. I thought that terrible violence—12 children killed and many more seriously injured—would force this Congress to act.

And yet there has been much more gun violence since Columbine. Shootings in Georgia; in Ft. Worth, Texas, at a prayer meeting. Those young people were gathered to worship and along comes someone with a gun and kills them. And then a gunman in California attacks children at a day care. After that terrible assault, the gunman goes on to kill a postal worker because he is Filipino and not white.

When will the National Rifle Association and its friends step up to the issue, not always appealing to the extremists, and say there is a sensible way to approach this problem and reduce the proliferation of guns? They should join with us and help close the gun show loophole that allows guns to be sold without a criminal background check.

A person could be one the 10 most wanted criminals in this country and say to one of the dealers: I have $500; give me a couple of guns. The dealer could sell them, and he would not be breaking the law. It is an outrage.

Of course, some who oppose gun safety legislation talk about the Second Amendment. But there is nothing in the Constitution that says citizens can buy a gun without identifying themselves. There is nothing in the Constitution that says, buy a gun, carry it anyplace you want. No, no; there are overriding considerations that say we have to protect our citizens. We put people in uniform to protect our citizens. Sometimes it is a military uniform, sometimes it is a police uniform. We do it to protect our citizens. Why don't we reduce the possibility that a gun might be introduced into a situation?

In 1996, Congress did pass my domestic violence gun ban. There was a huge fight on the floor of this Senate and the House. In cooperation with President Clinton, on the budget bill, we said anybody who has committed a misdemeanor of spousal abuse or abusing a child, that person should not have a gun. We fought like the devil. People said we have no right to take guns away from people who haven't done something serious.

But domestic violence is serious. And guns make domestic violence incidents even more dangerous. The trigger does not have to be pulled to traumatize a spouse or a child. Let a man put a gun to a woman's head and say: I will blow your brains out in front of your children. That is a wound that does not go away in a hurry. Doctors cannot see that wound on the skin, but it does not go away.

Mr. President, since that law went into effect, 33,000 purchases have been prevented. 33,000 of those wife abusers, spousal abusers, could not get a gun. I feel good about it. And I still cannot understand those people who opposed it and who continue to oppose gun safety measures. They seem to want guns for everyone, wherever they want, at any age, it doesn't matter, hide them, conceal them, do what you want.

That is irresponsible. And we should not have people hiding behind empty slogans like ''guns don't kill people''. Or trying to distort the meaning of the Second Amendment. No one has a right to hurt another. That is not in the Constitution.

Just a few minutes ago we learned that there was another shooting near Pittsburgh. We don't have all the details, but someone shot four people in a McDonald's and then went to a Burger King and shot someone else.

So the gun violence continues, week by week, day by day, hour by hour. Yesterday it was a six-year-old in Michigan killing another child. And we ask ourselves what can be done. Do you put a 6-year-old in jail? Do you lock him up in a cell? Or do you say to a parent or a friend: It is your responsibility?

If you own a car, you have no right to give it to somebody who doesn't know how to drive and tell them to have a good time. That can be criminally prosecuted if a person has an accident. Why is a gun different? Why shouldn't all guns be protected from access by unacceptable users, children, deranged people, et cetera?

We ought to do it. We keep avoiding it with silly excuses in this place. I hope people across America understand we ought to stop this now. We can require gun manufacturers to manufacture guns that don't work except in the hands of an authorized user. Thirteen children a day die from gunshots; over 4,500 kids a year. We can pass a bill that Senator DURBIN from Illinois has authored, the Child Access Prevention Act. It imposes criminal penalties on gun owners who allow children access to their guns.

And we ought to take stronger measures to prevent easy access to guns. Closing the gun show loophole which allows criminals to purchase firearms without a background check will help. Let me give a graphic example why we cannot afford to wait any longer to do this.

Every year, several gun shows are held in Portland, OR at the Expo Center. The Expo Center is managed by a commission established by the local government, the Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission, called Metro for short. Metro officials were concerned about possible criminal activity at gun shows, so they looked at police records and put together a report. Here is what they found:

Investigative reports from the Portland Police Bureau demonstrate a continuing pattern of frequent significant criminal activity

associated with the Rose City gun shows at the Expo Center.

And the report gives examples of that criminal activity. Here is an example:

Three subjects were observed in the gun show wearing gang attire. The three subjects were looking for dealers who do not do background checks. One of the subjects attempted to purchase a Glock pistol without any paperwork. The subjects bought 4 high capacity magazines and exited the show. Officers contacted the subjects and found one subject all in red to be 12 years old. The second subject all in blue had a warrant for his arrest. The last subject was found to be an ex-felon. The two adults were arrested and transported to NE precinct. At the NE precinct officers found marijuana packaged for sale and $1,150 in the last subject's shoe. He was charged with delivery of a controlled substance.

So we have gang members—drug dealers—using a gun show as a convenience store for guns. These gang members were looking for gun sellers who were not required to do criminal background checks.

And this testimony is similar to what we heard from Robyn Anderson when she testified before the Colorado legislature. She is the young woman who went with Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold to the Tanner Gun Show in Adams County, Colorado.

She testified that Harris and Klebold went from table to table at the gun show, looking for gun sellers who were not required to complete a background check.

With her help, Harris and Klebold bought two shotguns and a rifle without a criminal background check. And everybody knows what happened after that. They used those guns to murder fellow students and a teacher at Columbine High School. How much more do we need to know before we do the sensible thing and close this loophole?

Gang members and teenagers bent on committing murder know they can go to a gun show and get a firearm if they want, without a background check. Is there anyone around here who actually thinks that is all right? Good friends on the other side, good friends on both sides will sometimes defend gun ownership blindly. But we should all agree that you should not be able to buy a gun without identifying yourself and having a criminal background check.

The gun lobby says we do not need a new law, all we need to do is enforce the current law. But that completely misses the point. There is a loophole in the law, so when you try to enforce it, criminals simply slip through the loophole. This hole in our gun laws is leaking human lives and we ought to plug it before someone else is killed with a pistol or shotgun purchased at a gun show without a background check. People ought to identify themselves when they buy a gun. Why not?

Some of our colleagues who argue against closing this loophole are the same people who go on and on about the need to get tough on crime. But when it comes to this gaping loophole in our gun laws, they are strangely quiet. All of us know why. Those tough-on-crime Members do not hear the huge majority of the people. Ninety percent of the people in this country, according to a recent poll, are calling for us to close this loophole. They do not hear the cries, see the tears of those who have lost a child, a friend, a relative. But what do they hear? They hear the NRA making deposits to their campaign accounts. They hear the NRA saying: Do nothing and we will keep these campaign contributions coming.

I have been fighting this battle for a long time, almost a year now on this specific issue. Back on May 20, 9 months ago, the Senate passed my amendment to close the gun show loophole. It passed 51–50, with a huge struggle. But the Congress has yet to finish the job because the NRA has been putting its money to work making sure my amendment stays bottled up in a conference committee.

Let's do the right thing and set this legislation free. Let's not allow extremists in the gun lobby to prevail over the families across this country who want to stop the gun violence.

April 20 will mark 1 year since the terrible tragedy at Columbine High School. On that day, people across this country will ask, What has Congress done? What have you done to stop gun violence in this country? What have you done to protect my child, my grandchild, my brother, my sister, my parents from this mad gun violence? It is not too late to give the public the answer they want, the answer they deserve. It is not too late to show them that common sense can prevail in this distinguished place.

AWARDING JOHN CARDINAL O'CONNOR THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I rise today to thank my distinguished Senate colleagues for their support, help, consideration, and, hopefully, passage of S. 2076, legislation which will bestow upon John Cardinal O'Connor the Congressional Medal of Honor.

I, along with Senators MOYNIHAN, SPECTER, and SANTORUM, introduced this bill last week. We believe now is the perfect time for Congress to publicly thank His Eminence for his 50 years of service to America, the Catholic Church, and for his numerous contributions as an ambassador of peace, freedom, and humanitarianism around the world.

Since being ordained 54 years ago, John Cardinal O'Connor has humbly captured the hearts of millions with a message of caring and compassion for all people. He has dutifully served the Church in Philadelphia, the Diocese of Scranton, and now from the steps of the treasured St. Patrick's Cathedral serves as the spiritual guiding force for the 10-county New York Archdiocese and its more than 2.3 million Catholic members.

He is loved in New York and by Catholics across the country. He has touched the hearts of millions whose spiritual life is richer from the words and deeds of our cardinal.

Since being named by the Pope as successor to the late Cardinal Terence Cook in 1984, Cardinal O'Connor has sought to reinforce the traditional teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church while putting a human face on the problems faced not only by Catholics but all New Yorkers.

He has advocated for an increase in the minimum wage. He has advocated for farm workers. He has advocated for working people throughout New York and throughout the world.

He has worked hard to improve relationships between Catholics and Jews, knowing that is so important to the future of the area he represents and to all Americans.

He has advocated relentlessly for fairness and justice. And even while reaffirming the Church's teachings on homosexuality, he set up AIDS clinics and volunteered anonymously in them.

I have not always agreed with Cardinal O'Connor. For example, he is a strong, vocal, and impassioned voice in opposition to abortion. I have respectfully disagreed with his position. But in some instances you earn an even greater respect for someone by the way they disagree with you, how they fight for their beliefs: With vigor, passion, and conviction, but also with humility and grace.

He is a man of immense conviction. He has been unyielding in his commitment to reaffirm the priorities of the Church and his faith.

I am left with nothing but respect and admiration for the way in which Cardinal O'Connor has advocated on behalf of his beliefs.

John Cardinal O'Connor's life of spiritual service began decades ago. He had 20-plus years of distinguished service in the Armed Forces. He heeded our Nation's call in 1952, joining the ranks of the military chaplaincy during the Korean war, and provided spiritual leadership for members of the Navy and Marine Corps during Vietnam. His career continued on as chaplain to the United States Naval Academy.

Eventually he rose with distinction to become Navy chief chaplain. He served in that capacity until 1979, upon which he retired from military service with the distinguished rank of rear admiral. An international ambassador for humanity, Cardinal O'Connor has traveled the world over—Israel, Jordan, Haiti, Bosnia, and Russia—and he also accompanied Pope John Paul II on his visit to Cuba.

He has called on governments to work for social development, provide international peace, and implored governments to provide their citizens with the freedom and ability to exercise their religious beliefs.

His work in volatile 1980s Central America helped clear the way for clergy members to be allowed to visit political prisoners and also helped end

the expulsion of foreign missionaries. He has, with great resolve, worked to strengthen the human spirit whenever war, oppression, and poverty have threatened to weaken it, as a servant of the Roman Catholic Church and a compassionate American citizen.

Now the cardinal is ailing. We all pray and wish for his recovery. But there is no time more appropriate than now for the Congressional Gold Medal to be bestowed upon Cardinal O'Connor. It is not often that this gold medal is issued. But given the cardinal's service, given the cardinal's ability to reach out to so many different kinds of people, no one is more deserving of the Congressional Gold Medal. The medal is an expression of public gratitude reserved exclusively for those who have distinguished themselves through their achievements and contributions to our great Nation. From his spiritual guidance to the members of the Armed Forces 50 years ago to his commitment to justice and holiness as head of the archdiocese in New York today, John Cardinal O'Connor has earned this rare and distinguished congressional honor.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAGEL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFFORDABLE EDUCATION ACT OF 1999—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 2844

(Purpose: To make permanent the special coordination rule between qualified tuition programs and the Hope and Lifetime Learning credits)

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Graham amendment No. 2844 be called up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Florida [Mr. GRAHAM] proposes an amendment numbered 2844.

The amendment is as follows:

Beginning on page 15, line 16, strike all through page 16, line 17, and insert:

''(iv) COORDINATION WITH HOPE AND LIFETIME LEARNING CREDITS.—The total amount of qualified higher education expenses otherwise taken into account under clause (i) with respect to an individual for any taxable year shall be reduced (after the application of the reduction provided in section 25A(g)(2)) by the amount of such expenses which were taken into account in determining the credit allowed to the taxpayer or any other person under section 25A with respect to such expenses.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table. This is not the amendment the Senator from Florida described earlier and has been vetted to the Finance Committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2844) was agreed to.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak as in morning business for no more than 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire pertaining to the introduction of S. Con. Res. 87 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

RECESS

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 2 p.m. today.

There being no objection, at 1:08 p.m., the Senate recessed until 2:02 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BUNNING).

AFFORDABLE EDUCATION ACT OF 1999—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 2825

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent, with respect to the series of stacked votes that are about to begin, there be 2 minutes equally divided prior to each vote for closing remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. It is my understanding the first vote we are about to proceed to is the Abraham amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct. The yeas and nays have not been asked for.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, very briefly, this amendment would essentially expand the tax deductibility and create a tax credit for the donation of used computer equipment to schools in this country.

It enjoys strong bipartisan support, both in the freestanding bill as well as this amendment. What this will help us to do is address the problem of the digital divide by providing more hardware and software and other computer services and equipment to the public schools of this country to help improve the ratio of computers to students in our public school system.

We look forward to continuing to work on this digital divide challenge, but this legislation will move us in the right direction. I encourage my colleagues to support the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). Who seeks recognition?

Mr. REID. We yield back our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2825. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 2, as follows:

Rollcall Vote No. 18 Leg.]

YEAS—96

Abraham	Feingold	Lott
Akaka	Feinstein	Lugar
Allard	Fitzgerald	Mack
Ashcroft	Frist	McConnell
Baucus	Gorton	Mikulski
Bayh	Graham	Moynihan
Bennett	Gramm	Murkowski
Biden	Grams	Murray
Bingaman	Grassley	Reed
Boxer	Gregg	Reid
Breaux	Hagel	Robb
Brownback	Harkin	Roberts
Bryan	Hatch	Rockefeller
Bunning	Helms	Roth
Burns	Hollings	Santorum
Byrd	Hutchinson	Sarbanes
Campbell	Hutchison	Schumer
Chafee, L.	Inhofe	Sessions
Cleland	Inouye	Shelby
Cochran	Jeffords	Smith (NH)
Collins	Johnson	Smith (OR)
Coverdell	Kennedy	Snowe
Craig	Kerrey	Specter
Crapo	Kerry	Stevens
Daschle	Kohl	Thomas
DeWine	Kyl	Thompson
Dodd	Landrieu	Thurmond
Domenici	Lautenberg	Torricelli
Dorgan	Leahy	Voinovich
Durbin	Levin	Warner
Edwards	Lieberman	Wellstone
Enzi	Lincoln	Wyden

NAYS—2

Conrad	Nickles

NOT VOTING—2

Bond	McCain

The amendment (No. 2825) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there are now 2 minutes equally divided prior to the vote on the Bingaman amendment.

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the remaining votes in this series be limited to 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I support Senator BINGAMAN's amendment

to ensure greater accountability by Title I schools that are low-performing. The Coverdell bill does nothing to help improve public schools that need assistance. Instead it diverts scarce resources to wealthy families in private schools, when 90 percent of the nation's students attend public schools.

Stronger accountability in the nation's education system is essential. Effective accountability measures—what business leaders call quality control—can make sure that investments in schools are used wisely and produce better results for children. Accountability is especially important in schools with high concentrations of disadvantaged students, so that all students will have the opportunity to meet high standards of achievement.

Despite concerted efforts by states, school districts, and schools, accountability provisions in title I have not been adequately implemented due to insufficient resources. In 1998, only 8 states reported that school support teams have been able to serve the majority of schools that need improvement. Less than half of the schools identified as in need of improvement in 1997–98 reported that they received additional professional development assistance or technical assistance.

We cannot afford to let low-performing public schools slip through the cracks. Schools and school districts need additional support and resources to remedy weaknesses as soon as they are identified. We should act now to make our schools more accountable for the benefit of the nation's disadvantaged students. These students have already spent too much time in low-performing schools, and they deserve better, much better. The time is now to take action to fix these schools. The nation's children deserve no less. I urge the Senate to support the Bingaman amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 2863

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, the amendment that is to be voted on next is one I offered which takes the $275 million per year that is the estimated cost of this underlying bill with the tax provisions and it devotes that $275 million to assisting States to hold local school districts accountable to upgrade standards.

It is an accountability amendment. Presently, most of the States in the country have established performance standards for their schools and their students but we have no accountability provisions that are adequate for them to meet those standards. This amendment tries to solve that. It gives the resources to the States so they can solve that. I believe it is a very good amendment and it is something we all ought to support.

I urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, at the heart of my opposition to the amendment is that it strikes the education savings account, the core of the legislation that came from the Finance Committee. It is a killer amendment.

The amendment allocates only 70 cents of every dollar to local school districts. We have been striving to get to 95 cents of every Federal dollar. The amendment not only neuters education savings accounts but it also goes to core issues about how title I funds should be distributed to help local school districts under ESEA.

This is an issue being debated at the committee's markup today. Senator JEFFORDS, chairman of the committee, opposes this amendment because he believes it violates the jurisdiction of the committee.

I move to table the amendment and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to table amendment No. 2863. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 58, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 19 Leg.]

YEAS—58

Abraham	Frist	Murkowski
Allard	Gorton	Nickles
Ashcroft	Graham	Roberts
Bennett	Gramm	Roth
Biden	Grams	Santorum
Breaux	Grassley	Sessions
Brownback	Gregg	Shelby
Bunning	Hagel	Smith (NH)
Burns	Hatch	Smith (OR)
Byrd	Helms	Snowe
Campbell	Hutchinson	Specter
Cochran	Hutchison	Stevens
Collins	Inhofe	Thomas
Coverdell	Jeffords	Thompson
Craig	Kyl	Thurmond
Crapo	Lieberman	Torricelli
DeWine	Lott	Voinovich
Domenici	Lugar	Warner
Enzi	Mack	
Fitzgerald	McConnell	

NAYS—40

Akaka	Feingold	Lincoln
Baucus	Feinstein	Mikulski
Bayh	Harkin	Moynihan
Bingaman	Hollings	Murray
Boxer	Inouye	Reed
Bryan	Johnson	Reid
Chafee, L.	Kennedy	Robb
Cleland	Kerrey	Rockefeller
Conrad	Kerry	Sarbanes
Daschle	Kohl	Schumer
Dodd	Landrieu	Wellstone
Dorgan	Lautenberg	Wyden
Durbin	Leahy	
Edwards	Levin	

NOT VOTING—2

Bond	McCain

The motion was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2864

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On the next amendment, the Graham amendment No. 2864, there are 2 minutes equally divided.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator LINCOLN and Senator FEINSTEIN be added as cosponsors. I have no further comments to make on behalf of this amendment. I believe both sides have agreed to accept it. I ask for a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

All time has been yielded back. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2864.

The amendment (No. 2864) was agreed to.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AWARDING CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR TO JOHN CARDINAL O'CONNOR

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Banking Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3557 and the Senate now proceed to its immediate consideration under the following limitations: There be 10 minutes of debate equally divided between Senators SANTORUM and SCHUMER, and no amendments or motions be in order to the bill. Finally, I ask unanimous consent that following the use or yielding back of debate time, the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3557) to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York, in recognition of his accomplishments as a priest, a chaplain, and a humanitarian.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, it is with an enormous amount of pride and respect that I rise in support of this bill. Senator SCHUMER from New York spoke on this matter earlier today. I strongly endorse and support his words of support for this resolution.

I stand with a tremendous amount of pride to speak in favor of my favorite son. John Cardinal O'Connor is a Philadelphian, someone who has left his mark not only on the country but on Pennsylvania, where he served as Bishop of Scranton—I see Senator BIDEN who is a Scrantonian—where he served a brief time—less than a year—but with distinction and, prior to that gave tremendous service to this country as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy, serving during the Korean conflict and during Vietnam.

He was appointed Chief of Chaplains of the Navy with the grade of rear admiral and served for over 25 years in the capacity of a chaplain in the military.

From that, he came into civilian life to Scranton, PA, and served there for less than a year until he was picked by Pope John Paul II to be the Archbishop of the Catholic Diocese of New York, and then shortly thereafter was elevated to the rank of cardinal in May of 1985.

He has served as Cardinal O'Connor in the Diocese of New York and, as the leader of the Diocese of New York, also as the titular head of the Catholic Church in this country. He has provided tremendous leadership on a variety of humanitarian and moral causes, always standing up for the weakest among us and shepherding his flock in an extraordinary way with great principle, dignity, and character.

It is sad that as we speak today, Cardinal O'Connor is suffering from cancer and is gravely ill. Senator SCHUMER and I worked very hard to make sure this Congressional Gold Medal would be awarded to Cardinal O'Connor so he could be aware of it during this very difficult time in his life and know that the Senate, the Congress, and certainly all of us in Washington extend our best wishes to him and want him to know how much we appreciate the tremendous outstanding service he has given to the Catholic Church and to the people in the United States of America.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GREGG). The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I will continue the remarks I made earlier about Cardinal O'Connor.

First, I thank Senator SANTORUM of Pennsylvania, as well as my colleague, Senator MOYNIHAN, and his colleague, Senator SPECTER. The four of us have worked hard on this bill.

As I mentioned earlier, Cardinal O'Connor, of course, has had a distinguished career. He has had a distinguished career as a Catholic, rising to one of the great positions of the Catholic Church in America.

He also has had a distinguished career as an American, having served for many years in the Armed Forces. He served 20 years in the Armed Forces. In 1952, he joined the ranks of the military chaplaincy. During the Korean war, he provided spiritual leadership for the Navy and Marine Corps. He was Chaplain of the Naval Academy, became Navy Chief Chaplain, and left the Armed Forces with the rank of rear admiral.

I want to say, as someone of the Jewish faith, that the cardinal has been particularly effective in moving out to the people of the Jewish community and doing a great deal to bridge the gaps—which fortunately now are relatively small and minor—between the Catholic community and the Jewish community. He went out of his way to do this, which I greatly respect.

He has always been seen doing things for the poor. He has worked hard on making working conditions better for people. He cares about the plight of the farm workers. He is dedicated to protecting the rights of immigrants and, in fact, announced at his Labor Day mass as recently as September, his first public appearance after his surgery, a new archdiocesan program of aid to immigrants. He reached out to the poor.

His views on homosexuality are known, but he has spent time anonymously working with people with AIDS. I do not agree with his views, but I sure respect the fact that, without any fanfare, he has been able to do those things.

Of course, now he is ill, and that is one of the reasons I thank every one of my colleagues for moving this bill with alacrity because my State of New York and this entire Nation owe a debt of gratitude to Cardinal O'Connor. There is no more fitting way than presenting him with the gold medal.

For his compassion, for his strength of argument—which I agreed with many times; disagreed with sometimes—for his intelligence, and for his commitment to New York and to faith, very few would be more deserving of this medal than Cardinal O'Connor.

I again thank my colleagues. I thank this body for taking the time, in the middle of this bill, to honor the cardinal in a very fitting way. Our hopes and prayers are for his health, and our thanks are for the great job he has done for New York's Catholics, for all New Yorkers, and for all Americans.

With that, I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from New York for his heartfelt comments.

I want to relate a small personal story. I had an opportunity, with my wife Karen, to meet and talk with the cardinal a few years ago when we were in New York. I had never had a chance to meet him, and he was someone whom I respected very much and followed his leadership. I had wanted the opportunity to meet with him.

We went by his residence and were hoping for about 5 minutes. An hour later, after a wonderful discussion of issues that I was working on and that he was interested in, and things he was working on that I was interested in, he gave me a tremendous amount of encouragement for work in public service.

He understood the importance of public service in his work as a chaplain and, obviously, in his work as the Cardinal of New York. That was, indeed, public service, also.

Senator SCHUMER mentioned many things he did outside the archdiocese and work that reached out into the community. He gave me great encouragement to continue to work, to fulfill what Catholic social teaching is, to care particularly for the poor and the most vulnerable in our society.

He gave me a lot of inspiration. He gave my wife a lot of inspiration. For that I will always remember and always thank him, and for the blessing and the prayers that he gave me that night.

Senator SCHUMER said—and I said earlier—he is gravely ill right now. But I know, as he spends these last few days on Earth, that many of us who know him and admire him will long remember him. Certainly, the comment, ''Well done, my good and faithful servant,'' will apply to John Cardinal O'Connor.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be able to proceed for 1 minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, as the Senator from Pennsylvania, I have known Cardinal O'Connor for a long time. I am a cosponsor of this bill. That is not the reason I stand.

I stand today to say I hope there is a lesson drawn from what is being done here. The primary cosponsor of this amendment is a man from New York of a different faith, who disagrees vehemently with the cardinal on some very important items that mean a lot to him in terms of the rights of homosexuals and the issue of choice. Yet he has come forward to acknowledge, along with his friend from Pennsylvania, that this man should be recognized for the special features he has possessed and the courage and the commitment he has shown.

I hope we all take a lesson from this. I hope we all understand that in every one of us in this country there is a lot of good—those who have strong political positions that are diametrically opposed to us—and yet we are able to see the good as well as the disagreement. I hope this is an object lesson for everyone.

I thank the Senator from New York for having the good grace to understand how we should run all of our affairs in this country. You can disagree without being disagreeable. You can have strong views and still recognize, in this instance, the saintly side of a great man.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the bill (H.R. 3557) is read the third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

AFFORDABLE EDUCATION ACT OF 1999—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the manager of this bill, the Senator from Georgia, has agreed that we would go out of the order we have had and allow Senator BIDEN to go forward for 10 minutes with his amendment. Following that, under the regular order that has already been agreed to, Senator WELLSTONE will be up next as part of the unanimous consent agreement. According to the unanimous consent

agreement, on his amendment there are 2 hours set aside equally divided. Following that on our side, after the Republicans offer their amendment, Senator MURRAY would then offer her amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. What is the request, again?

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that Senator BIDEN be allowed to precede for 10 minutes to offer his amendment, and following that, the Senator from Minnesota be recognized to offer his amendment, and then following the Republicans offering an amendment, Senator MURRAY be recognized to offer her amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I may not take the 10 minutes.

I can assure my colleagues that in order to accommodate the number of Senators who asked about my amendment, I am not going to, at this moment, force a vote on that amendment.

What I rise today for is to speak about an amendment I have submitted to this bill. What we have before us today is fundamentally a tax bill to help middle-class parents give their children the best education possible at elementary and secondary levels, as well as higher education.

I, with a few on my side of the aisle, happen to support the Senator from Georgia in his effort. The proposals in this bill are not new. In fact, I have supported many of them in their various incarnations in the past.

Several of these proposals were included as part of a so-called GET AHEAD Act—Growing the Economy for Tomorrow: Assuring Higher Education is Affordable and Dependable—an act which I introduced in 1997. Although this bill never came before the Congress for a vote, many of its provisions were included in the 1997 tax bill.

In 1998, I was one of only a handful of Democrats who supported the legislation to expand the existing education savings accounts, more commonly referred to as educational IRAs. Currently, $500 a year may be contributed to these education IRAs, and the money in these accounts may only be used for higher education. However, under the 1998 proposal, as well as the bill we have before us today, these accounts would be expanded so the parents could contribute up to $2,000 per year, and the savings in the accounts could be used to pay for elementary and secondary education costs, as well as the costs associated with higher education.

I find no principal rationale why I should be able to use a $2,000 IRA to have sent my child to Georgetown University and not use it to send my child to Archmere Academy, which is a Catholic institution as well but a high school.

During my time in the Senate, I have consistently supported reasonable, appropriate, and constitutional measures to help middle-class and low-income families choose an alternative to public schools. I believe the bill achieves part of this goal.

There is no tax deduction for the money put into these education IRAs. There is no tax deduction for the entire cost of a private or parochial education. This is not a voucher proposal.

The thing I would most want to speak to today is the idea that we have to do more than we are now to accommodate parents sending their kids to college. As helpful as this initiative is, it does not go very far. We all know firsthand how difficult it is for American families to afford college.

In 1997, we took some important steps towards making college education more affordable with the enactment of several tax credits for students and their families. So-called HOPE scholarships allow families a tax credit of up to $1,500 for tuition and fees for the first 2 years of college. The Lifetime Learning credit currently allows families a 20-percent tax credit on up to $5,000 for educational expenses through the year 2002, and up to $10,000 for educational expenses thereafter.

Additionally, the 1997 tax bill allows students to deduct a portion of the interest paid on student loans during the first 60 months of repayment. The bill before us today proposes to eliminate that 60-month limit on student loan interest deductions and allow students to deduct the interest paid on their student loans for the duration of their repayment.

While this is another step in the right direction, I believe there is still more we can do to help our Nation's college students. That is why I am offering an amendment today to allow an additional tax relief for millions of families who are struggling to put their kids through college. My amendment builds upon the proposal contained in the legislation introduced in 1997.

My amendment would offer families the option of either a tax deduction of a 28-percent tax credit on up to $5,000 of educational expenses during 2001 and 2002 and up to $10,000 of educational expenses during 2003 and thereafter. Further, there is no limit on the number of years the family could claim this tax credit. So a student could claim a deduction or credit for every year he or she is enrolled in an institution of higher learning as either an undergraduate or a graduate student.

Additionally, this educational tax deduction contains higher income thresholds. I would allow this to be taken for up to $120,000 for joint filers, thus allowing more families and more students to take advantage of the tax benefits in this proposal.

Things have changed a great deal since I arrived in the Senate in 1973. In 1973, there was still the myth that all a student needed was a good high school education to have a clear shot at being able to make it. The statistics and the numbers and the story has been told over the last 28 years that a college education is essentially becoming a prerequisite for having a clear shot at the middle-class dream of being able to own a home, afford a good education for your children, and to live with some degree of financial certitude.

I will not take more time today, although when I do introduce this formally to a piece of legislation, I will speak much longer and in much more detail.

To summarize, I think it is the most noble of social purposes to seek to encourage families to spend money on educating their children and, particularly at this stage, on higher education. People say to me: JOE, $120,000 is an awful lot of money for you to allow someone to have a tax advantage. You can have them make up to $120,000 and they still get a benefit here.

The answer is yes. My inclination is to go higher. Try sending a kid to a private institution today and college. Try sending a kid to a school that is not a State public institution. There are phenomenal State public institutions. I am not suggesting there aren't.

Take my alma mater, the University of Delaware. As an in-State student, you can get it done for somewhere around $13,000 room, board, and tuition. Send that same kid to the school my son attended, the University of Pennsylvania and it is $35,000. Send them to Gettysburg College and it is $30,000 room, board, and tuition. The cost of education is astronomical.

What I don't like to see happen, when you think about the incredible cost of education today and what we are developing, is basically a two-tiered education system. One of the greatest bills that ever passed was the GI bill. The GI bill meant that Irish Catholic kids and inner-city kids and farm boys could go to Harvard and Yale and Princeton and to the great ''universities'' out there. But now to go to those schools and every other school, many of which we haven't heard the names of, there is very little possibility. The only choice a student has in a middle-class family is to be able to go to the State institution.

I went to the State institution. I am proud of having gone to the State institution. My wife graduated from the State institution. My whole family went to the University of Delaware. I take a back seat to no one at any other university in terms of the education I received, but I don't want to be in a position where, in fact, the only choice middle-class people have of sending their kids to college is at a State university. I don't want this two-tiered system to reemerge.

If you get into one of the great universities, the prestige universities, they are endowed enough that if you have no money, you are likely to be able to get help. You will be able to get some aid packages to go. The people who get crunched are the people in the middle.

I am delighted and pleased and I applaud the Georgetowns and the Dukes and the Princetons and the Stanfords and the great universities out there that are the named universities for providing for the education of moderate- and low-income people who otherwise qualify to get in. Very few get turned away because of that. The problem comes with the quintessential middle-class family who makes what appears to be a good income, has three kids going to college, and they lose that option. I don't think they should.

Mr. President, rather than take the time of the Senate, I will withhold sending my amendment to the desk because I am not going to ask for a vote on it now. I will speak to this in more detail later.

I thank the manager of the bill for allowing me the opportunity. I particularly thank Senator WELLSTONE, who was here before me, for allowing me to precede him.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

AMENDMENT NO. 2865

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to report to Congress on the extent and severity of child poverty)

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Minnesota [Mr. WELLSTONE] proposes an amendment numbered 2865.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place add the following:

SEC. . REPORT TO CONGRESS REGARDING EXTENT AND SEVERITY OF CHILD POVERTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than June 1, 2001 and prior to any reauthorization of the temporary assistance to needy families program under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) for any fiscal year after fiscal year 2002, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the ''Secretary'') shall report to Congress on the extent and severity of child poverty in the United States. Such report shall, at a minimum—

(1) determine for the period since the enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–193; 110 Stat. 2105)—

(A) whether the rate of child poverty in the United States has increased;

(B) whether the children who live in poverty in the United States have gotten poorer; and

(C) how changes in the availability of cash and non-cash benefits to poor families have affected child poverty in the United States;

(2) identify alternative methods for defining child poverty that are based on consideration of factors other than family income and resources, including consideration of a family's work-related expenses; and

(3) contain multiple measures of child poverty in the United States that may include the child poverty gap and the extreme poverty rate.

(b) LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL.—If the Secretary determines that during the period since the enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–193; 110 Stat. 2105) the extent or severity of child poverty in the United States has increased to any extent, the Secretary shall include with the report to Congress required under subsection (a) a legislative proposal addressing the factors that led to such increase.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, the purpose of this amendment—and I hope there will be a very strong vote for the amendment—is to call on the Secretary of Health and Human Services to report to the Congress on the extent and severity of child poverty in our country. I will make the connection to education in a moment.

We need to have some critical information about the welfare bill before reauthorization. That is what this amendment says. We ask the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide this Congress with critical information. The Congress has consented so far to allow welfare reform to continue without an honest accounting of how our actions impact our Nation's children. Before we reauthorize this bill, we need to know what has happened.

There is one missing ingredient when we talk about welfare, and that missing ingredient is information. Let me quote from some of the most knowledgeable people who are doing research in this area. The National Academy of Sciences convened a panel of leading researchers to evaluate the data and methods for measuring the effects of welfare reform. This is basically a quote from their report:

The gaps in the data infrastructure for determining the effects of welfare reform are numerous.

''Numerous gaps in the data''—what does that mean? It means we have no understanding of what the effects of this legislation on the lives of people in our country—poor people, mainly women and children. The information is simply not collected, and we don't know because we don't ask.

The purpose of this amendment is to understand the effect of this legislation on child poverty before we reauthorize it. We need to know whether or not it is true, as has been reported in the data, that actually we are seeing an increase in the poverty of the poorest of the poor children—those children in households with less than half of the officially defined poverty income. We need to know what the gap is between the welfare bill and families working, and whether or not they are above the poverty level income, because the whole goal was to move people to economic self-sufficiency. We need to know what, in fact, is going on with programs such as the earned-income tax credit, or food stamp assistance, or Medicaid, and how that has affected the lives of poor children in America.

We need to do some policy evaluation. Too many people—Republicans and Democrats and the administration—brag about the fact that the rolls have been slashed by 50 percent since 1994. But how can anyone in good conscience use that as a measure of success alone? Reducing the rolls is easy. You just push people off the rolls, you close their cases, and you wish them good luck.

Reducing the rolls by half doesn't indicate whether or not we have reduced the poverty. The goal is to reduce the poverty of women and poor children in America. The question is whether or not people who have been pushed off the rolls are working and at what kinds of jobs. Are they living-wage jobs? And the question is, What kind of child care do they have for their children? Do they still have medical assistance, or are they worse off because they have been cut off of medical assistance? The question is, What about the additional services for those families where maybe the single parent struggles with addiction, or maybe she has been battered over and over again and there needs to be additional support before this woman and her family can move to employment and decent wages. Are the support services being provided?

I think we have created a whole new class of working poor people in this country. We have created a whole new class—unless we call for a policy evaluation—of the ''disappeared.'' We don't know what is happening. We have been unwilling to do any serious policy evaluation. Gunnar Myrdal, the Swedish sociologist, once wrote that ignorance is never random. We don't know what we don't want to do. Before we reauthorize the welfare bill and as we move forward on an education piece of legislation, I would ask the Senate to go on record calling for an evaluation as to the effect of this legislation on poor children in our country.

Some would say: What are you doing, Senator WELLSTONE, calling for an evaluation on a welfare bill? This doesn't belong on an education bill.

If a child is living in poverty—and I try to stay very close to this question, as I care a great deal about what happens to poor children in America—the preliminary reports I have seen indicate we now have more children living in households below the poverty level of income. We see a deepening of poverty in children in our country.

I argue that if a child is sick, if a family has been cut off medical assistance—and please remember that Families USA, 6 months ago or so, issued a report that there are 670,000 people in our country today who no longer have medical assistance because of the welfare bill—I argue that children don't do well in school when they do not receive adequate care, when they are sick, when they have an illness, or when they have tooth decay or an abscessed tooth. It is very hard for children to do well in school under those circumstances. I think we are sleep-walking in the Senate if we don't see any connection between how well children do in school and the economic circumstances of their lives.

We had a wonderful coalition gathering yesterday. Senators KENNEDY and SPECTER are introducing antihunger legislation, of which I am proud to be an original cosponsor. If we have 30 million citizens in our country today with a booming economy who are ''food insecure,'' and if too high a percentage of those citizens are children, and if, in fact, we have seen a dramatic decline in food stamp participation—and I will marshal the evidence for this in a moment—and the Food Stamp Program was the major safety net for children in this country, you had better believe I have this amendment on this bill, because when children are hungry, they don't do well in school.

May I repeat that. When children are hungry, they don't do well in school. May I repeat the fact that we have dramatically slashed the food stamp rolls and that many children who should be receiving food stamp assistance today are not receiving food stamp assistance. That is an important fact. We ought to do the policy evaluation. We ought to have the courage to evaluate the impact of this welfare bill on poor children in America today.

In my State there is no longer any affordable rental housing. It is absolutely unbelievable. Children are the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population in our country today, and they end up having to move four or five times during the school year. In many of the schools I visit in our State of Minnesota, especially in our cities, and I visit one every 2 weeks, the teachers tell me it is hard for a third-grader to do well when she is moved four times during a year because the family can't find affordable housing. Don't tell me that doesn't have any impact on how well a child performs in school. This is an education bill being debated, so I have an amendment that deals with the poverty of children in our country.

I argue that today, with an economy booming and an affluent country, we have one out of every five children growing up poor in our country. Under the age of 3, I believe it is closer to one out of every four; and under the age of 3, it is about 50 percent of children of color growing up poor in our country today, which is a national disgrace. I argue that poverty has everything in the world to do with education and whether or not each and every child in America has the same opportunity to reach her full potential and his full potential, which is the goodness of our country.

Challenging Senators today to vote for a policy of evaluation on the welfare bill, so we can assess what is happening to poor children, is the right thing to do on an education bill.

If we blindly accept the argument that the welfare ''reform'' is a great success because we have eliminated the rolls by 50 percent, we are guilty of turning our backs on the most vulnerable citizens in our country—poor children. And if we will not address the underlying problems that deal with race—yes, race—and gender, and poverty, and inequality, and social injustice in our country today, it is all too predictable which children will come to kindergarten way behind and which children will fall even further behind, and, yes, which children will fail these standardized high-stakes tests we give to show how tough we are and how rigorous we are, and which children will be held back, and which children will drop out of school, and which children will wind up incarcerated in America today.

Don't move to table this amendment arguing that it has nothing to do with education. No Senator should say, ''Senator WELLSTONE, I am going to table your amendment because your amendment deals with race, gender, and poverty of children in this country and that has nothing to do with education.'' Today, 13 million children are growing up poor in our country with a booming economy.

I ask my colleagues to consider my amendment before we reauthorize this welfare bill which will impact on children and the poverty of children.

Let me now discuss some recent studies.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Bob Greenstein, director, received the McArthur Foundation grant—I think one of the genius grants—for the impeccable research he directs. More than two-thirds of our States impose full-family sanctions, stopping aid to children as well as parents. Nearly half of these States impose a full-family sanction at the first instance of noncompliance. More than one-fourth of all case closures in a number of States have been the result of sanctions.

In other words, half of the people are off the welfare rolls. In many cases, the families have been sanctioned. That doesn't mean they are working. It doesn't mean they have good wages or are doing well. They have just been sanctioned. Then the question becomes, If in a lot of States you have these sanctions, are the sanctions justified?

A recent Utah study found that three-quarters of the sanctioned families had three or more barriers to employment, including a health or medical problem, lack of transportation, or lack of skills.

A Minnesota study concluded that sanctioned families were four times as likely as the caseload as a whole to report chemical dependency, three times as likely to report a family health problem, and twice as likely to report a mental health problem or domestic violence.

We should be worried about this. We should want to know what is going on.

Finally, quite often the families who are subject to the sanctions may have the greatest difficulty understanding the program, rules, and expectations. Recent studies from South Carolina and Delaware document that sanction rates are highest for those people with the least amount of education. The Delaware study also found that sanctioned individuals were more likely to have trouble comprehending TANF rules and did not understand the consequences of noncompliance.

As a result of the welfare bill, more than 2.5 million poor families have lost their benefits. That is a decline in the rolls of 50 percent. But the number of people living in poverty in our country has held close to the study. Many of these families have gone from being poor to getting poorer, and most of the welfare recipients are children.

This is why I challenge Senators today. I do not know how any of you can vote against this, colleagues. I am saying, before we do any reauthorization of this welfare bill, we ought to evaluate the impact of poverty on children.

Don't table this amendment because you cannot separate whether children are hungry, homeless, or whether there has been decent child care before they get to kindergarten.

One study I cite should trouble Senator REID and every Senator. It was released by researchers at UC-Berkeley and Yale. They found that about a million additional toddlers and preschoolers are now in child care because of the changes in the welfare law. Mothers work. They are single parents. But these children, unfortunately, are in low-quality child care, and therefore they end up lagging behind other children their age in developmental measures.

There was a study of nearly 1,000 single mothers moving from welfare to work, and they found that many of these children had been placed in child care settings where they watched hours of television or wandered aimlessly and had little interaction with their caregivers.

The result: These toddlers showed developmental delays. When asked to point to one of three different pictures in a book, fewer than two out of five of the toddlers in the study pointed to the right picture compared to the national norm of four out of five children.

One of the study's authors is quoted as saying, ''We know that high-quality child care can help children and that poor children can benefit the most. So we hope this will be a wake-up call to do something about the quality of child care in this country. The quality of day-care centers is not great for middle-class families, but it is surprising and distressing to see the extent to which welfare families' quality was even lower.''

Colleagues, we ought to know what is going on with this bill. If we are telling these mothers they have to work, that we are not looking at the child care picture, and their children are in dangerous and inadequate child care centers and falling further behind developmentally, shouldn't we know that? Don't we want to know the impact? Can any Senator tell me that is of no consequence as to how well these children do in school? Of course it is.

I also want to point out that many of these families have been stigmatized. We have an additional problem. Again, I would like to see an analysis of this. But all too often, too many families don't even enter TANF. They do not know they have the right to receive assistance at the beginning, and, therefore, in this affluent economy we see a rise in the use of food banks and shelters. It is amazing. Everybody is claiming success.

The 50-percent reduction in the welfare rolls has hardly reduced poverty. In many cases, children are poorer now than they were before. In all too many cases families don't even know they are eligible to receive this assistance, and they don't.

I will save some of my time in case there is a response to the debate. But I want to talk about a report released yesterday by the National Campaign for Jobs and Income. It is a new coalition of antipoverty groups.

They found a couple of results that are very distressing. In too many cases families are eligible still for medical assistance and food stamp assistance when they move from welfare to work, but at the local county level they are not told they are eligible. That is incredible. That is absolutely incredible.

Let me talk about Medicaid and what is happening under welfare reform.

Despite the creation of the State Child Health Insurance Program, CHIPS, which provide resources to States, the total number of low-income children enrolled in Medicaid in the State CHIP program combined has actually decreased in the 12 States with the largest number of uninsured children between 1996 and 1998.

A study in the January issue of Health Fairs found that 41 percent of the women surveyed lacked health insurance one year after leaving welfare. Forty-one percent of these women no longer have any coverage. Their families don't have coverage. Only 36 percent of the women had been able to retain their Medicaid coverage. The same study found that 23 percent of the women with children were also uninsured. Some were about to keep their insurance. But 23 percent were uninsured one year after losing welfare benefits.

I ask you to vote for an amendment that says we ought to do an evaluation of the impact of their welfare bill on the poverty of children. If 23 percent of the children one year after their mothers leave welfare no longer are covered and no longer have any health insurance coverage, that is a serious consequence. We ought to understand that.

According to Families USA, two-thirds of a million low-income people—approximately 675,000—lost their Medicaid coverage and became uninsured as a result of the welfare bill.

Families are losing Medicaid coverage under welfare reform because: No. 1, they are basically not being told they are entitled to it at the local level.

No. 2, you have these complex rules, and it is very difficult for people to know their rights. Legal immigrants, in particular, are especially confused.

No. 3, antiquated computer systems. Most States rely on computer systems that were designed for welfare programs, not Medicaid. As a result, these systems produce letters that are technical and difficult to understand. When families are pushed off welfare right away they don't even know they are entitled to medical assistance.

Now for the second set of disturbing facts. Sometimes facts make Members uncomfortable—or they should make Members uncomfortable. According to the USDA, 30 million people live in a ''food insecure'' house; 40 percent of them are children; 12.5 million children are ''food insecure''—that is another way of saying going hungry or malnourished.

I have talked about all of the people who have been pushed off welfare. According to a study by the USDA, more than one-third of those eligible for the Food Stamp Program are not receiving the benefits. A General Accounting Office report released last year found food stamp participation dropped faster than related indicators would predict.

Furthermore, GAO points out there is a growing gap between the number of children living in poverty, an important indicator of children's need for food assistance and the number of children receiving food assistance. That food stamp participation dropped faster than related economic indicators would indicate simply means we have hardly made a dent in reducing poverty. We have many poor children in the country. The Food Stamp Program was the major safety net program for poor children in America and we have seen a dramatic decline in participation. Probably as many as 33 percent of the children should be receiving the help, and they are not. Therefore, they are hungry, they are malnourished, and therefore they can't do as well in school. And no Senator's child could do well in school if their child went to school malnourished or if their child was hungry.

These are not my opinions but that of good researchers. The Urban Institute report found two-thirds of the families who left the Food Stamp Program were still eligible for food stamps.

What is going on? We need a policy evaluation. A July 1999 report, prepared for USDA by Mathematics Policy Research, identified ''lack of client information'' as the barrier to participation and pointed out that many of these people who were not participating were not aware they were eligible.

At the local level they are not being told. We have created such a stigma, we have done so much stereotyping and bashing of these poor women and children and the poor in America today, that it has filtered down to the local level. Basically, at the local level people don't even know they have the right to get this assistance.

Much of this is happening at the same time the States are now sitting on a $7 billion surplus of TANF money. Colleagues who were for the welfare bill should be as concerned about this as I am. There were a number of States—Minnesota was one last year; not this year, I am happy to say—that through a little of bit of accounting and juggling, used the TANF money for a tax rebate.

This is what we have: Families who are not being told they are eligible for medical assistance, and they are; we have families not being told they are eligible for food stamp assistance, and they are; we have a rise in the use of food shelters; we have hungry children in America; we have many families who no longer receive medical assistance 1 year after the welfare bill; we have the vast majority of the women no longer on welfare and still don't make even poverty wages; and we have a whole group of other recipients and women who have severely disabled children or they had children when they were children, who do not have the skills development or have struggled with addiction, or we have, unfortunately, a central issue of violence in the home, women who have been battered over and over again. They need to have the support services so they can move from welfare to work and be able to support their children in this prosperous economy.

The Governors came here and said, several years ago: Trust us, trust us, trust us.

Some States are doing good work. The Chair was a Governor of New Hampshire. Some States are doing good work.

I can't believe they are sitting on $7 billion in TANF money, some of which could go into training, some of which could go into education, some of which could go into the support services. That is what this was all about.

There is reason to be concerned. Not later than June 1, 2001, and prior to the reauthorization of this bill, let's call upon the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make a report on the poverty of children in America and in particular on the welfare bill and how it has affected the economic status of the children in these families.

The reason I offered this amendment is manyfold, but let me make it twofold. First, there is disturbing evidence based upon reports that we are now seeing an increase of children who are among the poorest of poor in America. Second, there is disturbing evidence that very few of these families have actually moved from welfare to escape poverty. There is clear evidence that many of the families have now lost their medical assistance and are worse off. In addition, there is clear evidence that many of these children and many of these families are eligible for food stamp assistance, which is particularly

important in making sure that children don't go hungry, and they are not being told about it.

The second reason I bring this amendment to the floor is I think there should be an up-or-down vote. Members can't argue that this is irrelevant to the discussion at hand. The Yale-Berkeley study sends chills down my spine. There has also been a national report. I know there was a New York Times article about it. What has happened with many of these families is the mothers work, but all too often they have to leave at 6 by bus. It takes them 2 hours. There is not adequate transportation. They don't have a car or they may live in a rural area. They don't get home until 8 o'clock at night. The child care situation is frightening. A lot of the child care for these children is dangerous and inadequate, at best. These children should be valued as much as our children.

Colleagues, I wait for a response.

How much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 28½ minutes remaining.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I ask my colleague from Georgia whether there is any response.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I did not hear the Senator's question.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I say to the Senator from Georgia, I reserve the remainder of my time. I have tried to make the following arguments. I have tried to say there is disturbing evidence, outside reports that all may not be right with what is happening. Before we reauthorize this bill, we ought to have a policy evaluation of the impact on poor children. Then I went on and tried to give examples. I can repeat them if my colleague wants me to. It is in my head and my heart.

My second point has been I certainly hope this amendment will not be tabled because I think it has everything to do with education. I think it is terribly important.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, how much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 59 minutes. The Senator from Minnesota has 28 minutes.

Mr. COVERDELL. It might be helpful to the Senator from Minnesota to know I do not believe there will be a rebuttal to his amendment. It is my intention to yield back our time at the appropriate moment.

I am unaware of anybody who has expressed to me an interest in debating his amendment. If the Senator wanted to use the remainder of his time, this would be the time to do it.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I gather from what my colleague said that means if there is not a rebuttal, there is going to be a good strong vote for this amendment? Is that what my colleague is saying? That would please me.

Mr. COVERDELL. Anybody who predicts the legislative process is probably the same person who gets his own attorney.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Is my colleague going to move to table?

Mr. COVERDELL. Yes, I am.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Georgia. Here is what I am concerned about now. I want to say this to the Senator from Georgia.

The background of this is, I have for the last 2 years, off and on, been trying to get a policy evaluation of the bill. This time I focused on the poverty of children because I thought it was so important, so relevant to education. I believe that. I think my colleague from Georgia does.

I say to the Senator, he does not have to respond. We will see what the House does. It is a tax bill. It may go to the President, and it could very well be vetoed. If that happens, then I have to come back with this amendment on another vehicle, but I certainly hope if we go to conference committee this amendment will not be dropped.

I am going to call for a record vote because I want everybody on record. What has happened in the past is I will come out and then it will get dropped. First, we lost on a vote, a slightly different amendment. Then the next one was dropped.

I know I speak with emotion about this, but I really do think it makes sense before we reauthorize by 2001—before we reauthorize in 2002, we ought to know what the impact is. I have presented a lot of studies that should trouble all of us. I think it is terribly relevant to how well our children do.

I thank the Senator from Georgia because he could have come out and tried to give this the back of his hand and tabled it. I appreciate the fact he did not. I do not think Senators should vote against this amendment. What I hope is it will stay in conference committee. I make that request to my colleague.

I have been on votes that have been 99–1, where I am the 1. Obviously, I have not persuaded too many people. And then I have been involved in votes that are closer. If this is almost a unanimous vote or a unanimous vote, I would like Senators to know: You are on record. When we vote we are on record. I want Senators to know when you vote you are on record saying it is important we have a thorough policy evaluation done of the effect of the welfare bill on children. We want to know if there has been a rise in the poorest of the poor children. We want to know what the gap is between those families who are working and poverty-level income. Are they moving to economic self-sufficiency? We want to know what has happened with other programs such as food stamp programs and why there has been such a drop in food stamp participation, way below the drop in poverty. We want to know what is going on. We want to know what is going on with child care. I am troubled by all these reports about the dangers due to inadequate child care for these children.

The way I look at it, I say to Senator COVERDELL, the evidence is irrefutable that probably the most important thing any of us could do is try to make sure prekindergarten kids get the developmental child care from parents—or whoever, if the parents work—so they come to kindergarten ready to learn and not way behind.

I want all Senators to know you are on record supporting this policy evaluation. I have been trying to do this for several years. I appreciate the support. It is not a small question. Children who are hungry do not do well in school. Children who receive no health care coverage or dental care where they have an abscessed tooth and infection do not do well in school. Children who have been in inferior prekindergarten situations, inadequate child care, do not do well in school. Children who are homeless do not do well in school. And children who are among the poorest of the poorest of the poor citizens of this country, living in households at less than half the poverty-level income, do not do well in school.

I think it is important we get a handle on what it means that in the most affluent country in the world, with an economy booming and record surpluses, we have 12.5 million children who are ''food insecure.''

We can do better, and we will do better when we are willing to do an honest evaluation as to what is happening.

I thank my colleague from Georgia. I take his support not as a sort of effort to trivialize this but as sincere support. It means a lot to me.

Before I yield the floor, I ask my colleague, I would like to have the vote. I would like to have everybody on record. When would we be scheduling this vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, it is not a precise science we are dealing with here, but it is contemplated that we will move from the Senator's amendment to an amendment by Senator HUTCHISON of Texas, to an amendment by Senator MURRAY of Washington, and perhaps one other which is being discussed from Senator ROTH, which is a managers' amendment. Then all those would be voted on back to back. My guess is, if that is the general plan and it occurs that way—as the Senator knows, these things are sometimes subject to some modification—I think that is a pretty good description of what is likely to happen and that would probably happen around 5:30 or 6 o'clock. It is contemplated the Senator wants a vote on his amendment. It will be in that stacked series of votes.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I say to my colleague from Georgia, what would be best for Senators' schedules would be stacked votes, either later today or early tomorrow morning; is that correct?

Mr. COVERDELL. Yes. The purpose for that is we are trying to facilitate people offering amendments, trying to keep it as near on time as we were doing with the presentation of the Senator so people can keep their schedules.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank my colleague from Georgia. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator yield back his time?

Mr. COVERDELL. Is the Senator from Minnesota prepared to yield back his time? I am prepared to yield back our time on the amendment.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I yield back our time.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I yield back our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLARD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2860

(Purpose: To establish the Careers to Classrooms Program)

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 2860.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas [Mrs. HUTCHISON] proposes an amendment numbered 2860.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Amendments Submitted.'')

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, this amendment adds flexibility to our school systems. I am working with Senator JEFFORDS and his committee, and Senator LEAHY as well, on the ESEA reauthorization.

I wish to lay down the marker with this amendment because I think it is the key to what we are talking about. We are trying to give parents more options for their children to make the choices that are best for each child.

One of the problems we have in high-needs schools across our country is that we do not have qualified teachers to teach subjects that will benefit young people all over our country. It may be computer courses. It may be language courses. Yet we have people who have had careers—people in the military, people in corporations and businesses—who may be proficient in French and they may live in an area where the school is not able to teach French because they do not have a qualified teacher. This would be a big benefit to the young people in that school system if they had that as an option. It may be the Russian language or the Chinese language. It may be computer skills. It may be chemistry or biology classes. There are so many areas, but they just are not teacher qualified.

My bill, which is called Careers to Classrooms, is being offered as an amendment to give more flexibility to the States by allowing them to go to a high-needs school and give priority in that high-needs school to recruiting teachers.

My amendment also encourages a certification process that will bring the teacher up to speed quickly. It is an expedited certification process so the teacher will not have to wait a whole year to go into the classroom but can go through an expedited certification process by that State.

It is important we replicate the programs that have succeeded. My Careers to Classrooms amendment replicates the Troops to Teachers Program that has been in place and has been very successful. It uses retired military people who have experience in the military which they can transfer to the classroom and enrich educational opportunities for our young people. This allows people in the private sector to do the same.

This is similar, but not the same, as the Graham amendment. The Graham amendment goes toward the universities being able to have programs. Mine is for the States to put these programs in place.

I urge the adoption of my amendment. I think it adds an enriching experience for the classrooms, particularly in high-needs schools, whether it be in an urban community that does not have access to teachers or in our rural areas.

I happen to know of a case involving a woman who was a French major in college. She had taught French in private schools. She moved to a small town in Texas where they wanted to offer French in the high school. She wanted to teach it, but she could not because she did not have the teacher certification.

This is made to order for this situation. This is a French language major who taught French in private schools and who wants to give this opportunity to a small Texas high school. I want her to be able to do that because we know those students will be enriched by having that option.

I urge the adoption of my amendment. I hope we can offer this kind of enrichment to schools all over our country by giving the States this option.

Mr. President, I ask the distinguished manager of the bill if I can ask approval of my amendment. Does he want a voice vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, if the Senator from Texas has completed her presentation on the amendment, my suggestion is that we set it aside and move to other matters. We are trying to determine the sequence of amendments. Perhaps we can deal with the amendment either on a recorded vote or perhaps we can secure a voice vote in the back-to-back management of this current series of amendments.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I am happy to accommodate whatever works. Is my amendment the pending amendment?

Mr. COVERDELL. It is at the moment.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, does the Senator want me to set it aside?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we may be able to clear this. We do not know. I have to check with the Finance Committee as to how they feel about this. It may be better to put this in the normal course of amendments. If we can do this by voice vote, that will be great.

Mr. COVERDELL. What we are saying is we have not decided that yet. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be set aside for the moment. We will proceed with business and return to it at the appropriate time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I am going to propound a unanimous consent in just a moment. I see my colleague is wishing to make a remark or two, so I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to my friend from Georgia, there are a number of meetings taking place tonight, one at the White House. What we are trying to do is get things arranged so we can have votes completed in time for Senators to go to the White House for a bipartisan meeting. What we are trying to do is have Senator MURRAY take the floor for her amendment at about 20 until 5. The majority will respond to that. We will then begin a series of two and possibly three votes, two recorded votes, maybe one voice vote. If we can't do the one by voice, that will be put over until tomorrow, so Members have an idea of what we are trying to do.

Mr. COVERDELL. I appreciate the remarks of the Senator from Nevada. They very appropriately characterize what is being attempted at this point.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time in relation to the Murray amendment on class size be divided with Senator MURRAY in control of 20 minutes and Senator COVERDELL control of 10 minutes. I further ask consent that at 5:05 p.m. today the Senate proceed to a vote in relation to the Wellstone amendment No. 2865, to be followed by a vote in relation to the Murray amendment regarding class size. I further ask consent that no amendment be in order to the amendments prior to the votes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, my only modification would be that the vote will be at approximately 5:05. It may not be exactly at that time because the time doesn't add up.

Mr. COVERDELL. I so modify the request to say approximately 5:05 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. For the information of all Members, this agreement would provide for the disposition of two additional amendments. It is hoped that the Hutchison amendment will be agreed to by a voice vote; therefore, Members can expect two or three votes beginning at approximately 5:05 p.m. today.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, while we are waiting for the Senator from Washington to present her amendment, I thought I would take a couple of minutes to talk about a certain section of this longstanding debate.

The day before yesterday, the discussion of the core policy of this piece of legislation was that we would leave and not tax the interest buildup on education savings accounts so that they would compound themselves more quickly as an incentive for people to open the accounts. We are told it will probably result in 14 million people opening an account of this nature, and it will bear the parents of 20 million children, which is a little over a third of the entire population of children attending kindergarten through high school.

So the reach of the legislation we are debating and amending is very large. But in the discussion, Senator KERRY of Massachusetts referred to the fact that when you leave, you don't collect a tax. In his mind, that is an expenditure; we didn't appropriate it necessarily, but by not collecting that revenue we, in a sense, are appropriating money.

I find that a flawed theory. Under that context, every dime we do not take from a working family or an individual belongs to the Government, and only by the grace of the Government have we allowed it to stay in the family's checking account.

I won't say that is a convoluted theory, but it is certainly foreign, I believe, to the genesis of American liberty which envisioned the proceeds of the wages that are earned by families and individuals in our country as belonging to them—the people who earned it. Thomas Jefferson warned us of Government's propensity to take too much from the laborer who produced the wealth or the income.

So I thought I would take a minute or two to say that this Senator is among those who believe the wealth, the income, the paycheck belongs to the person who earned it, and Government should only, by the most urgent necessity, tax and remove that resource and thereby lessen the ability of that family or that individual to pursue their dreams and care for their family and its vision.

This theory, which essentially is the view that everything that everybody produces belongs to us up here in Washington unless we just happen to gracefully leave it in the family's checking account, is not a healthy idea. And it has come up two or three times in the debate over these education savings accounts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I think under the previous order we would hear from Senator MURRAY on her amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 2821

(Purpose: To provide for class size reduction programs)

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) proposes an amendment numbered 2821.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Amendments Submitted.'')

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, the Senate is currently considering the Republican education agenda. I have listened carefully to the debate over the last several days.

It seems to me the difference between the Democratic and Republican approaches couldn't be more clear. Democrats want to invest in policies that really make a difference for today's young people. On the other side, we are hearing the same old song and dance about tax cuts, vouchers, block grants, and savings accounts. I fear those policies will really weaken our public schools instead of strengthening them.

The education savings account bill we are considering today would only help a very few wealthy families at the expense of everyone else. I urge my colleagues to reject it.

We should be spending our limited time on the policies that parents and teachers know work—things such as smaller classes taught by fully qualified teachers. Those are the policies that time and time again have produced real results for our students—not tax schemes, not funding gimmicks, not policies that will drain money away from our public schools.

That is why I am here this afternoon to introduce my class size amendment which will provide real help for students across the country.

These education savings accounts will only help a few people with very high incomes. Unfortunately, families who aren't well off need more incentives to save for education. And this bill doesn't offer them any. For the 90 percent of Americans whose children attend public schools, this bill offers peanuts.

The Joint Tax Committee found that the average benefit per child in public school would be between $3 and $7 per year over a 4-year period. This program is a backdoor voucher which will drain money away from our public schools and take scarce resources from students who need them most. All the while, this bill will do nothing to improve the quality of public education.

I know I am not the only person in America who thinks we should be investing in the things that we know work in education. A recent poll was conducted for the National Education Association by two bipartisan research firms—a Democratic research firm and a Republican research firm. It found that Americans want specific policies—policies such as providing additional support for students with special needs, policies such as helping school districts attract quality teachers, and policies such as hiring 100,000 new, fully qualified teachers to reduce class sizes in our country. Those are some of the specific, concrete policies on which the American people want us to focus.

In the same poll, the American public chose education as its No. 1 priority over tax cuts by a margin of two to one.

The bill on the floor today ignores the priorities the American people are asking us to address.

As a former school board member, let me give my colleagues a real-life opportunity to test this poll's funding.

Monday night, for many districts, is ''School Board Meeting Night'' across the country. If my colleagues want to know what the education priorities are at home, all they have to do is attend a local school board meeting. Senators will have the ability to see locally-

elected officials, respected community activists, parents, and students gather to discuss priorities and real problems.

School boards all across the country face very tough issues. I know what service on a school board is. I know what school boards are dealing with. They are grappling with class size, hiring quality teachers, deteriorating facilities, textbooks, curricula, and other issues.

I know what school boards are not dealing with. School boards are not debating tax cuts and vouchers. School boards are not considering diverting revenues from public schools to private schools. But that is what this bill would do.

This is the wrong education debate for our country. The right education debate gives our students the tools and the support they need to reach their full potential. Every child in America deserves a well-trained teacher and a small class size. When a student's hand goes up in the classroom, she should get the help she needs and the attention she needs. That is why this Senate should pass this class-size amendment.

I am offering this amendment for one reason—to continue the progress we have made in classrooms across America for the last 2 years. As a former teacher, I can tell you, it makes a difference if you have 18 kids in your classroom instead of 35. Parents know it, teachers know it, and students know it. By working together over the past 2 years, we have been able to bring real results to students.

This year, 1.7 million students across the country are learning in classrooms that are less crowded than the year before; 1.7 million students are in classrooms where teachers can spend more time teaching and less time dealing with discipline problems; and 1.7 million students are in classrooms where they can get the individual attention they need and where they will learn the basics.

That is progress. But it is not enough. There are still too many students in overcrowded classrooms. So far, we have hired 29,000 new fully qualified teachers. My class size amendment will continue our progress.

I recently visited a classroom in Takoma, WA, where they have taken our class size money and put it into their first grade classrooms. Now 67 classrooms in that district have 15 students in the first grade. The teachers will say they know this is the first year they will be able to say at the end of the year that every child in their first grade classroom will be able to read. There will be direct results from this program we have passed the last 2 years. They could not make those promises with 30 kids in the classroom. They now can as a result of the work we have done.

I wish to take a moment to go through the specifics of my amendment. This amendment uses $1.2 billion to reduce class size, particularly in the early grades, first through third, using highly qualified teachers to improve educational achievement for regular and special needs children.

This amendment targets the money where it is needed within the States. Within States, 100 percent of the funds go directly to local school districts on a formula which is 80 percent need-based and 20 percent enrollment based. Small school districts that alone may not generate enough Federal funding to pay for a new teacher may join together to generate enough funds to pay for a new teacher or to institute a top-notch recruiting program.

This amendment ensures local decisionmaking. Each local school district board makes the decisions about hiring and training their new teachers. The school district must use at least 75 percent of the funds to hire new certified teachers.

This amendment promotes teacher quality. Up to 25 percent of the funds may be used to test new teachers or to provide professional development to new and current teachers or of regular and special needs children. The program ensures that all teachers are fully qualified. Under the amendment, school districts hire State-certified teachers so every student will learn from a highly trained professional.

This amendment is flexible. Any school district that has already reduced class sizes in early grades, to 18 or fewer children, may then use the funds to further reduce class sizes in the early grades, to reduce class size in kindergarten or other grades, or carry out activities to improve teacher quality, including professional development.

The class size program is simple and efficient. School districts fill out a one-page form which is available online. The Department of Education sends them the money to hire the new teachers based on need and enrollment.

Let me add that teachers have told me they have never seen money move as quickly from Congress to the classrooms as they have under our class size bill.

Finally, this amendment ensures accountability. The amendment clarifies that the funds are supplementary and cannot replace current spending on teachers or teacher salaries. School districts fill out no new forms to get the funding, they just add a description of their class size reduction plan to a current form. Accountability is assured by requiring school districts to send a report card in plain English to their local community, including information about how achievement has improved as a result of reducing class size.

Those are the specifics of my amendment. I know this amendment will help my students. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. REID. Before the Senator from Washington leaves the floor, I say to her and Members of the Senate how much I appreciate her leadership on this issue. She has been the voice speaking out on this issue time and time again. I think we in the Senate should listen to someone with experience. She served in the school boards we hear so much about. Why do we not do what the school boards want? That is what we are trying to do. We are doing that through the voice of someone who has served on a school board, who taught in preschool, who has been a voice on education.

On behalf of the people of the State of Nevada, I express my appreciation to Senator MURRAY for leading the Senate down this road of talking about the important matters that affect public education. That is what the debate should be: What can we do to provide a better education for the more than 90 percent of children in America today who go to public schools.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. L. CHAFEE). The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. I rise in opposition to the amendment. I wish to make several points. The first point is the Senator from Washington characterizes the education savings account as something that would only benefit a handful of people who are wealthy. I believe that is pretty close to what she said.

According to the Joint Tax Committee, 70 percent of those who would utilize the education savings account make $75,000 or less. This is not something for anybody driving around in a black limousine. It is wrong to characterize it otherwise.

The second point: the criteria for these educational savings accounts are identical to the President's criteria for the higher education savings account. The same folks who use these savings accounts are the ones who were applauded by that side of the aisle when they created a higher education savings account. There is no difference. Every ''t'' is crossed and every ''i'' is dotted exactly the way it was done on the other side of the aisle. We cannot have it both ways. If they are not rich over here, they are not rich over here. The point is, the vast majority of accounts are utilized by middle-class folks and low-income people.

No. 2, this is the fourth attempt from the other side of the aisle to gut the creation of the education savings account. Who do they leave behind? The 14 million American families, 20 million American children who would save on their own $12 billion that would go to help education. By simply cutting out the funds as the amendment of the Senator does, $1.2 billion, she robs the Nation of $12 billion in resources that would come freely from families investing in these accounts utilizing their own money. It is bad economic policy to leave $12 billion sitting on the table.

The Senator in her amendment strikes the provision that allows 1 million students in college to receive prepaid tuition in the 43 States that do that, including her State, from their prepaid tuition being taxed when they get it. We are trying to leave the resource there so it can be used for the

college education. The amendment guts it.

Last, the proponents of the amendment, as is so often the case, say we will do something for you. But read the language under ''use of the funds.'' They are mandatory uses. It is a long series. If you want to play ball with the Federal Government, you have to hopscotch through every hurdle, every loophole, every this, every that, page after page, reports, qualifications—mandatory.

It is reinforcement of the entire concept of oversight by the big principal in Washington. That is not what America wants. It wants its schools governed at home.

Time is limited; we have 5 minutes remaining in our time. I see Senator GREGG of New Hampshire, and I yield the remainder of our time to Senator GREGG of New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. How much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 5 minutes 40 seconds.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Georgia. I appreciate his hard work on this bill. He has certainly outlined most eloquently the importance of these savings accounts to education and how the dollars that will be going into the savings accounts will have a multilayer effect and grow radically, thus increasing the opportunity for more and more kids and more and more families to experience the American dream of going to college. They are using these dollars for other educational activities.

I wish to speak specifically to the amendment of the Senator from Washington State. This amendment is misdirected. It has come to the floor on a number of other occasions and it has been misdirected every time it came to the floor. It has been put forward by the administration as basically a polling amendment. I mean they went out and polled the term and then they concluded that term polled well so they came forward with a program based on that term.

It does not have anything to do with quality education. Study after study has shown the issue of quality education is not tied directly to class size. It is tied to the quality of the teacher in the classroom. In fact, there was a recent study done which studied all the other studies; 300 studies were looked at by Eric Hanushek of the University of Rochester. His conclusion was this, looking at 300 different studies on this specific issue: Class size reduction has not worked; the quality of the teacher is much more important than class size.

Equally important to that issue is the fact this is a straw dog amendment; 43 of the States in this country already are below what the President wants in class size ratio, 18–1. So the amendment really is not for the purpose of reducing class size; it is for the purpose of putting out a political statement.

Let's do something about education. That is what the Republican side of this aisle wants to do. So we have come forward with something called the Teacher Empowerment Act. Rather than having Washington put a straitjacket on the communities where they have to use this money for one thing and one thing only, which is to hire new teachers—many school systems not needing new teachers; what they really need is keep the good teachers they already have and they are having trouble doing that—rather than having this straitjacket from Washington delivered by the Clinton administration and the Members on the other side of the aisle, we said: Let's give the local communities the opportunity to give them what they need, the Teacher Empowerment Act.

It says we will take the funds suggested by the Senator from Washington and put them in the proper vehicle, which happens to be the Elementary and Secondary School Act, which is being marked up today, and we will allow those funds to be used by local communities to assist in addressing their teacher needs. They can use it for teacher education; they can use it for paying good teachers more money to keep them there in the school system; they can use it to send teachers out to get better qualifications and more certification or, if they want, they can use it to hire teachers to reduce class size.

We give the local school system a series of options, which is exactly what should happen. We in Washington should not be saying to every school system in America that in order to get these funds it has to add another teacher because that may not be what the local school system needs. There are numerous school systems in this country that have great teachers that they are losing because the tremendous demand of the marketplace is taking those teachers out of the school system and putting them in the private sector, especially in the math and science areas. So what that school system needs is the ability to pay them a differential, pay them a little more money. This gives them that option.

The Republican proposal is a logical proposal. It is a proposal that addresses the needs of the school systems, the needs of the principals in the school systems, the needs of the superintendents in the school systems and, most important, the needs of the teachers in the school systems and the needs of the parents whose children those teachers teach, rather than addressing some polling data that happens to make a nice political statement but ends up straitjacketing the local communities and the parents and teachers in those local communities.

That is the difference. To begin with, the Coverdell bill is the wrong place for this amendment. The amendment is bad to begin with, as I just noted, and I noted why it is bad, but it has no place in this bill. We are in the process of marking this specific issue up in committee. In fact, today we heard from the Senator from Washington; we heard from the Senator from Massachusetts as to how class size was going to be one of the two essential issues they intended to raise in the committee as we marked up the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. That is very appropriate. That is where the debate should occur.

In that bill already is the TEA bill, the Teacher Empowerment Act. They don't like it because it gives freedom to local school districts and they want to keep control in Washington. I can understand that is their political philosophy, but that debate should occur in the committee of jurisdiction on the bill appropriate to the issue. It should not occur on this bill, which is a bill to expand and empower parents and kids so they can go to college, so they can pursue other types of educational excellence activities.

The Coverdell idea is a superb idea and it certainly should not be mucked up, the water should not be discolored as a result of putting out what is basically a proposal that has no relevance to this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington has 9 minutes remaining.

Mrs. MURRAY. How much time is left on the other side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mrs. MURRAY. I will just take a few minutes to wrap up and then I can yield my time. A number of Senators want to vote. They have other business to do.

Let me respond to the Senators from Georgia and New Hampshire. The Senator from New Hampshire is correct. We are in markup on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in committee. Unfortunately, we just gave political speeches this morning and were not able to offer our amendments and go through that process. I know the committee intends to do that, but the majority decided what was going to be on the floor today—their education policy. This is what we are debating. This is our opportunity as Democrats to say what we believe is important.

We believe clearly that we have a choice. We can take very important Federal resources and offer them to families who are wealthy enough to put $2,000 away and get $3 to $7 back in a tax cut, or we can use that money for programs that we know work.

The Senator from New Hampshire indicated he did not believe class size reduction worked. Let me tell you two things, Mr. President. First of all, a very important study that was completed, a STAR study from Tennessee, that followed kids in the early grades, first through third grade, in small classes, and then watched their progress until they graduated a year ago, clearly found students in small classes, as we are asking this money to go for, had fewer discipline problems, graduated with higher scores in math

and English, and in much greater numbers went on to college.

What Member of this Senate has not been out here to say those are goals every one of us has: Better discipline and higher scores in math and English and higher rates of students going on to college? That is clearly a goal for all of us in public education. It is the STAR study and other studies that have shown it works.

We are saying if we want to provide this money, we should do it for programs that work for kids. The mandatory provision the Senator from Georgia spoke to in the bill is, I believe, 13 lines long and merely says what this money goes for is for class size reduction with a quality teacher in every classroom. It provides some of those funds for training those teachers because that is a critical issue. I absolutely agree.

Finally, let me say from a personal perspective, having been in a classroom as a teacher with a large class and a small class, I can tell you what the difference is. The difference between the large class and small class is the difference between crowd control and teaching; having the time to work individually with students, to understand what their needs are, to help them get through the difficult processes of learning in the early grades: Reading, writing and math. Those are very basic skills that a child needs to have.

It is very clear to me we have a choice between a few families in this country who can afford to put away several thousand dollars a year and only get $3 to $7 back—a very few families—or we can use this money in a way that absolutely makes a difference in early grades for our children.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and ask them to seriously consider what education policies we believe are important for families across this country. I believe reducing class size, providing quality teachers, making sure our schools are safe, are important criteria and a responsibility for us at the Federal level, to work in partnerships with our State and local school boards to make sure every child in this country—every child, not just a few—is able to learn to read and write and be a success.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I support Senator MURRAY's amendment to provide $1.2 billion dollars to help reduce class size in the early grades by hiring 100,000 new teachers. The Coverdell bill does nothing to help improve public schools that need assistance. Instead it diverts scare resources to wealthy families in private schools, when 90% of the nation's students attend public schools.

Research has documented what parents and teachers have always known intuitively—smaller classes improve student achievement. In small classes, students receive more individual attention and instruction. Students with learning disabilities are identified earlier, and their needs can be met without placing them in costly special education. In small classes, teachers are better able to maintain discipline. Parents and teachers can work together more effectively to support children's education. We also know that overcrowded classrooms undermine discipline and decrease student morale.

Project STAR studied 7,000 students in 80 schools in Tennessee. Students in small classes performed better than students in large classes in each grade from kindergarten through third grade. Follow-up studies show that the gains lasted through at least eighth grade, and the gains were larger for minority students.

STAR students were less likely to drop out of high school, and more likely to graduate in the top 25% of their classes. Research also shows that STAR students in smaller classes in grades K–3 were between 6 and 13 months ahead of their regular-class peers in math, reading, and science in grades 4, 6, and 8. Michigan, California, Nevada, Florida, Texas, Utah, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Oklahoma, Iowa, Minnesota, Massachusetts, South Carolina, and Wisconsin have initiated or considered STAR-like class size reduction efforts.

In Wisconsin, the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education program is helping to reduce class size in grades K–3 in low-income communities. A study found that students in the smaller classes had significantly greater improvements in reading, math, and language tests than students in bigger classes. The largest achievement gains were among African-American boys.

In Flint, Michigan, efforts over the last three years to reduce class size in grades K–3 have produced a 44% increase in reading scores and an 18% increase in math scores.

Because of the Class Size Reduction Act, 1.7 million children are benefitting from smaller classes this year. 29,000 were hired with fiscal year 1999 funds. 1,247 are teaching in the first grade, reducing class sizes from 23 to 17. 6,670 are teaching in the second grade, reducing class size from 23 to 18. 6,960 are teaching in the third grade, reducing class size from 24 to 18. 2,900 are in grades 4–12. 290 special education teachers have been hired. And, on average, 7% of the funds are being used for professional development for these new teachers.

The Boston School District received $3.5 million this year to reduce class size. As a result, Boston was able to hire 40 new teachers, reducing class size from 28 students to 25 in the first and second grades.

In Mississippi, Jackson Public Schools used its $1.3 million federal grant to hire 20 new teachers to reduce class size in 1st grade classrooms from 21 to 15, and in 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms from 21 to 18.

In New Hampshire, the Manchester School District received $634,000 and was able to hire 19 new teachers in grades 1–3, particularly in its English as a Second Language and special education programs, reducing the average class size from 28 students to 18.

In Ohio, the Columbus Public School District has hired 58 fully certified teachers with funds from the class size reduction program, and placed these teachers in 14 high-poverty, low-performing schools, reducing class size in grades 1 to 3 from 25 to 15. Along with proven-effective reading programs such as Success for All, class size reduction is a central part of efforts by the City of Columbus to improve low-performing schools.

Senator MURRAY's amendment is an important amendment which deserves the Senate's consideration, and I urge the Senate to approve it. The nation's children and the nation's future deserve no less.

AMENDMENT NO. 2865

Mr. COVERDELL. By a previous unanimous consent agreement, I believe the order of business is to move to the Wellstone amendment for a vote. Have the yeas and nays been ordered?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They have.

Mr. COVERDELL. I assume we will proceed to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2865. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 9, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 20 Leg.]

YEAS—89

Abraham	Edwards	Lincoln
Akaka	Feingold	Lott
Allard	Feinstein	Lugar
Ashcroft	Fitzgerald	Mack
Baucus	Frist	McConnell
Bayh	Gorton	Mikulski
Bennett	Graham	Moynihan
Biden	Grams	Murkowski
Bingaman	Grassley	Murray
Boxer	Gregg	Reed
Breaux	Hagel	Reid
Brownback	Harkin	Robb
Bryan	Hatch	Roberts
Bunning	Helms	Rockefeller
Burns	Hollings	Roth
Byrd	Hutchinson	Santorum
Campbell	Hutchison	Sarbanes
Chafee, L.	Inonye	Schumer
Cleland	Jeffords	Sessions
Cochran	Johnson	Shelby
Collins	Kennedy	Smith (OR)
Conrad	Kerrey	Snowe
Coverdell	Kerry	Specter
Crapo	Kohl	Stevens
Daschle	Kyl	Thurmond
DeWine	Landrien	Torricelli
Dodd	Lautenberg	Warner
Domenici	Leahy	Wellstone
Dorgan	Levin	Wyden
Durbin	Lieberman	

NAYS—9

Craig	Inhofe	Thomas
Enzi	Nickles	Thompson
Gramm	Smith (NH)	Voinovich

NOT VOTING—2

Bond	McCain

The amendment (No. 2865) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2821

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on the Murray amendment.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the next vote in this series be limited to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, have the yeas and nays been called for?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They have not been ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The Senator from Washington yields back her time. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2821. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Missouri Mr. BOND) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 42, nays 56, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 21 Leg.]

YEAS—42

Akaka	Edwards	Leahy
Baucus	Feingold	Levin
Bayh	Feinstein	Lincoln
Biden	Graham	Mikulski
Bingaman	Harkin	Moynihan
Boxer	Hollings	Murray
Breaux	Inouye	Reed
Bryan	Johnson	Reid
Cleland	Kennedy	Robb
Conrad	Kerrey	Rockefeller
Daschle	Kerry	Sarbanes
Dodd	Kohl	Schumer
Dorgan	Landrieu	Wellstone
Durbin	Lautenberg	Wyden

NAYS—56

Abraham	Frist	Murkowski
Allard	Gorton	Nickles
Ashcroft	Gramm	Roberts
Bennett	Grams	Roth
Brownback	Grassley	Santorum
Bunning	Gregg	Sessions
Burns	Hagel	Shelby
Byrd	Hatch	Smith (NH)
Campbell	Helms	Smith (OR)
Chafee, L.	Hutchinson	Snowe
Cochran	Hutchison	Specter
Collins	Inhofe	Stevens
Coverdell	Jeffords	Thomas
Craig	Kyl	Thompson
Crapo	Lieberman	Thurmond
DeWine	Lott	Torricelli
Domenici	Lugar	Voinovich
Enzi	Mack	Warner
Fitzgerald	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—2

Bond	McCain

The amendment (No. 2821) was rejected.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2860

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I believe the next order of business is the Hutchison amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Hutchison amendment.

The amendment (No. 2860) was agreed to.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the Mack-Hatch amendment No. 2827 and that following the reporting by the clerk, the Senate proceed to a period for morning business with Members permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

I further ask consent that the Senate resume the pending bill at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday and that there be 30 minutes equally divided in the usual form, to be followed by a vote in relation to the Mack-Hatch amendment. I ask that no second-degree amendments be in order prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. In light of this agreement, there will be no further votes this evening and the first vote tomorrow will occur at 10 a.m.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for information purposes, it is my understanding in the morning we will do the Hatch amendment. It is my further understanding after that we will move to the Roth amendment.

Mr. COVERDELL. Yes, I have the consent request I will read.

Mr. REID. That is fine.

Mr. COVERDELL. I further ask consent that following the disposition of the Hatch amendment, Senator ROTH or his designee be recognized in order to call up the Roth amendment. I also ask consent that immediately upon reporting of the amendment, Senator GRAHAM of Florida be recognized in order to offer a second-degree amendment relating to offsets.

I ask unanimous consent that there be a total of 30 minutes equally divided in the usual form with respect to both amendments. Finally, I ask that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to a vote on or in relation to the Graham amendment, to be followed by a vote on or in relation to the Roth amendment, as amended, if amended.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I ask that there be a number assigned to the Roth amendment. Do we have a number on that? Is this the one that is going to be offered for the purpose of substituting original text? We want to make sure if, in fact, the Roth amendment is adopted the legislation remains amendable.

Mr. COVERDELL. There is no intent to alter that plan.

Mr. REID. My only other suggestion is that the time be 1 hour equally divided. We believe we can do it more quickly, but at this time, there is a request for more time.

Mr. COVERDELL. It says 30 minutes for each amendment. Does the Senator want to make it an hour for each one?

Mr. REID. I believe 30 minutes for each amendment will be adequate, but let's cover the phone call we just received.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I modify the unanimous consent request to read according to the request of the Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Also, Mr. President, we will have no objection, but for the information of Senators, especially those on my side, following the disposition of the Roth amendment, as amended by Graham, we are going to move to the Boxer amendment, the Feinstein-Sessions amendment, and thereafter, we will probably move to either the amendment of Senator DORGAN or Senator KENNEDY or Senator SCHUMER. We have their amendments lined up. The first two will be Boxer and Feinstein. We should be able to move through the next amendments in the next day or two.

Mr. COVERDELL. In conjunction with the Senator's question about the Roth amendment, I think this language will clarify it. And with respect to the Roth amendment, if agreed to, it will be considered as original text for the purpose of further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2827

(Purpose: To eliminate the marriage penalty in the reduction in permitted contributions to education individual retirement accounts)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Georgia [Mr. COVERDELL], for Mr. MACK, for himself and Mr. HATCH, proposes an amendment numbered 2827.

The amendment is as follows:

In subsection (a) of section 101, add at the end the following:

(4) ELIMINATION OF THE MARRIAGE PENALTY IN THE REDUCTION IN PERMITTED CONTRIBUTIONS.—Section 530(c)(1) (relating to reduction in permitted contributions based on adjusted gross income) is amended—

(A) by striking ''$150,000'' in subparagraph (A)(ii) and inserting ''$190,000'', and

(B) by striking ''$10,000'' in subparagraph (B) and inserting ''$30,000''.

BUELL ELEMENTARY SHOOTING

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am saddened to come to the floor this afternoon to speak about a tragedy that occurred yesterday in my home State of Michigan.

Yesterday morning, in room No. 6 at Buell Elementary School in Mount Morris Township near Flint, a first-grade student allegedly shot and killed his young classmate, Kayla Rolland.

We don't yet know all the facts about how the first-grader gained access to the handgun or whether the shooting was accidental or intentional. We do know, however, that one girl lost her young life in this tragedy and the children at Buell Elementary are scared

and confused and their parents deeply concerned.

Although grief counselors and social workers are at the elementary school now and will work their hardest to help these children understand and cope with the trauma, there is really no amount of counseling that can replace the innocence these children have lost.

The class of 22 students who witnessed the shooting is looking for answers and so are most of the rest of us. How can we make sense of this tragedy and the apparent relative ease with which a 6-year-old brought a 32-caliber semiautomatic handgun to school?

It is impossible to come to terms with this or any of the other shooting tragedies in this country that claim the lives of 12 children on the average each day. Yet always after a tragedy such as this one, we ask ourselves if it could have been prevented. The answer is a resounding yes. Congress can and must work to keep guns out of the hands of children.

It has now been almost 1 year since the deadly shooting at Columbine and still Congress has done nothing to help prevent these school shootings.

Lori Mizzi-Spillane, a Michigan coordinator of the Million Mom March, an organization advocating for stricter Federal firearms laws, asks in her words, ''What is it going to take now for people to wake up?''

What will it take for us to ''wake up'' and pass legislation requiring firearms to be sold or transferred with storage or safety devices? What will it take for us to ''wake up'' and pass child access prevention legislation which would require that adults store firearms safely and securely in places that are reasonably inaccessible to children? Together, both Houses must enact these and other commonsense gun safety reforms that will keep our young people alive.

We should also note that the semiautomatic handgun that was reportedly used by the 6-year-old is a Saturday-night special, or junk gun, manufactured by one of the same companies that recently filed for bankruptcy protection to evade claims for damages caused by their product.

Earlier this year, I offered an amendment to the Bankruptcy Reform Act to prevent gun manufacturers from tactically using bankruptcy laws to evade accountability. That amendment would have held those companies responsible if they produced unsafe products and distributed those products negligently. The amendment did not pass, and the gun industry continues to be the only industry explicitly exempted from Federal health and safety regulations. As a result, many of the guns manufactured today lack even the most basic kind of safety devices. We should repeal this privileged position of gun manufacturers and also require that all firearms are personalized or child-proofed so they cannot be fired by unauthorized users.

I extend my thoughts and my prayers to Kayla's family, and I know I do on behalf of every Member of the Senate. No family should have to suffer what this family has suffered in the last 2 days and what they will continue to suffer as long as they live. We will work ever harder to reduce the toll of gun violence for all the children of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

CONSERVATION AND REINVESTMENT ACT

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, most certainly I hope the cameras can get a great shot of this beautiful poster. It says: Parks and recreation: The benefits are endless. This is a picture of a Little League team. I do not exactly know from which State they hail, but it is from one of our great States. This is a team; and you can tell they are having a lot of fun.

To me and many of us who are working on a very important environmental bill, this poster represents something that is absolutely essential for our country today and is something that has been a joy to work on in this Congress and something on which we are making such progress.

Besides a great education for kids, we also have to give them a place to grow up and ball teams to belong to. It builds character and it teaches them how to work together and how to be productive.

Really, life is a lot about teamwork. We learn that in the Senate. We learn it in classrooms. We also learn it on ball fields all over this great country and around the world.

I want to take a moment, if I can, to say a couple words about a bill introduced last night by a group of us. I thank Senators TRENT LOTT, FRANK MURKOWSKI, JOHN BREAUX, and DIANNE FEINSTEIN for being cosponsors. Senator EVAN BAYH indicated to me a few minutes ago he is anxious to join with us; and also Senator CAMPBELL mentioned his interest. I am sure there will be many who support us as the word gets out about this particular bill. It is S. 2123 that was filed. It is the exact version of a bill that was worked out in a great compromise in the House about the ways we should reinvest our oil and gas revenues to provide for the expansion and full funding of our land, water, and conservation funds, which would fund thousands of opportunities such as this for the children I just mentioned.

It would fund significantly our wildlife conservation programs in this country, not necessarily dictated from Washington but actually decisions made at the State and local levels where, with regard to game and nongame species, special methods can be used; one size doesn't fit all.

Significant to my State of Louisiana as a producing State, this particular bill would provide some significant resources to address the great coastal needs of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Texas, but also of New Jersey, California, Washington, and all of our coastal States, including our Great Lakes States. Whether we drill or not—and there are no incentives for drilling—it will be a great resource to help restore our coastlines, help stop the erosion, and help preserve wetlands in this Nation and our State of Louisiana, which represents over 60 percent of the coastal wetlands in the United States, and 40 percent of the commercial fisheries, the habitat of which rests in these wetlands. So it is a tremendous treasure.

This bill was introduced along with others we have before our Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. I thank the growing number of Senators who have stepped up to the plate to try to help us pass what is arguably the most important conservation and environmental bill in the last 100 years.

To my friends who are concerned about more acquisition of Federal land, I will share a few thoughts from DON YOUNG, who has been the leader on the House committee, who has been a champion of private property rights, a champion of the outdoors. They joked earlier today that he carries a knife. I guess it is OK in the House because he has one. If worse comes to worst, he may use it to help get this bill passed. I think that is probably going too far. But trust me, he is an outdoorsman from Alaska; he knows about private property rights.

He says the bill we are debating, S. 25, and also this new bill, S. 2123, which reflects the compromise he and Congressman MILLER from California worked out, would actually improve the position of Western States that are concerned that perhaps this bill gives even more money to purchase land because, in fact, any administration can do that, and right now some administrations have done it without much oversight from Congress.

This bill provides the proper partnership and balance between the administration and Congress. This bill gives the appropriators and the authorizing committee the authority and encourages them to actually make the decisions about what lands will be purchased. In addition, what I think is so right about what Chairman DON YOUNG says, is that our environmental efforts need to be about much more than just acquiring more land; we have to take care of the land we already own. I think the Chair would agree with that. That is what the bill does.

I reach out to my colleagues from Western States, many of whom have supported this effort, many of whom have other concerns and have hesitated so far with their endorsement, to ask them to really look at western values within the Conservation and Reinvestment Act piece that is being circulated and really look at what an improvement this bill offers over the current status quo.

My last point is actually a word to the White House and to the President,

first to thank the President for his leadership in lands legacy. He has a tremendous idea about trying to leave a great legacy. Of course, he has done many good things in his time as President for these 8 years. He has been a leader in the environmental effort. I so appreciate that; many of us do.

I thank him for laying down a mark on lands legacy but urge him to consider that this piece of legislation is permanent in nature. It is broader than the vision he has outlined. And it is an improvement. It brings in the East and the West, the North and the South. It helps urban areas and rural areas because we have added urban parks and historic preservation. There have been some great improvements demonstrated through the development of this piece of legislation.

I thank him for his great leadership, acknowledge the work of many people in the White House, but urge them to embrace the concept that is now supported by over 300 Members in the House. We have a growing number of Members in the Senate to pass this bill now.

Some people think we can't afford it. If we can't afford to take $2 billion, which our bill is calling for, out of arguably a $3 trillion surplus—if you want to take Social Security completely off the plate, which I want to do, and give very conservative estimates, it leaves us with about $800 billion to allocate. We can do it through some tax cuts, which I support, reasonable and targeted. We can do strategic investments in education. But there is one investment I know, besides education, the American people want us to make. That is preserving land that is lost every hour and every minute, preserving parks for these children, preserving opportunities to hunt and fish, to take your grandchildren to the pond outside of your farm or down the road or across the State line to spend a weekend in the woods.

I am positive people in Louisiana and all over America want us to act now. Ten years is too late. Next year is too late. My question is, if we can't afford to take this money now, which in my opinion should not be going into the Federal Treasury because it is taxes from a resource that is depleting—we should not be using it in our operating expenses anyway because one day, probably in my lifetime, these oil and gas wells will be dried up—why do we not take this opportunity in the dawn of this new century to take some of this money and give it back to our kids and our grandkids in ways that are responsible and meaningful and for something that is permanent.

In conclusion, I know many people will thank us for passing this bill, but the most important group will be our grandchildren. We will be proud that we did it.

I look forward to working with all of my colleagues, Republican and Democrat, to get this bill out of committee, passed on the floor, and be there for the signing when the President will enthusiastically embrace what we have done to improve his lands legacy approach to provide security for Western Senators, to provide urban help to our urban areas, and to do it in a way that is very fair to all parts of the country.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print a document in the RECORD entitled ''Western Values Within the Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 1999.''

There being no objection, the document was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

WESTERN VALUES WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 1999 (CARA)

BACKGROUND

For decades, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has made $900 million available for state and federal land acquisition. State acquisitions are driven by a state planning process and states and local governments are responsible for their own plans and receive direct funding (matched 50/50) based upon a formula. Since fiscal year 1995, the states have not received funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

For federal acquisitions, any amount (up to $900 million) may be spent on Federal land acquisition as appropriated through the annual Congressional appropriations process. There are virtually no restrictions with this process and almost $300 million has been historically appropriated to purchase new federal lands. In a recent year, nearly $700 million was used to buy private lands.

HOW DOES CARA CHANGE THIS PROCESS TO PROTECT WESTERN VALUES?

1. By making permanent and dividing (between the state and federal portions) the $900 million within the Land and Water Conservation Fund, we require the federal government to share half of the LWCF funds with the states to be spent on locally selected projects.

2. Each year the Administration must transmit a list to Congress requesting specific approval for each tract of land to be acquired.

3. Congress must specifically approve each project.

4. The Administration must seek to consolidate federal land holdings in states with checkerboard Federal land ownership patterns.

5. The Administration must seek to use exchanges and conservation easements as an alternative to acquisition.

6. The Administration must notify Congress (within the annual request required by CARA) if tracts are identified for acquisition from non-willing sellers.

7. Transactions will be carried out with willing sellers, because CARA prohibits the government from using adverse condemnation to acquire lands—unless specifically authorized by Congress.

8. The Administration must demonstrate, to Congress, its authority to carry out the federal acquisition.

9. 30 days after the submission of the LWCF acquisition request (new CARA requirement), the Congressional representatives, the Governor, and local government official must be notified.

10. 30 days after the submission of the LWCF acquisition request (new CARA requirement), the local public must be notified in a newspaper that is widely distributed to the area in which the proposed acquisition is to take place.

11. Prior to the federal purchase of lands, all actions required under Federal law must be completed.

12. Prior to the federal purchase of lands, a copy of the final NEPA documents must be given to Congress and the Congressional representatives, the Governor, and local government officials must be notified that the environment work is complete and the documents are available.

13. CARA requires just compensation for the taking of private property, as provided within the Constitution.

14. CARA protects State water rights.

15. CARA provides $200 million annually for maintenance.

16. CARA provides up to $200 million in additional funding for PILT and Refuge Revenue Sharing.

17. CARA will provide the necessary funds to reduce the $10 billion backlog of willing sellers stuck within an inholding.

18. Restricts the federal governments regulatory ability over all private lands.

19. CARA prohibits funding for wildlife law enforcement.

20. If revenues for CARA fall, all titles and programs are reduced proportionally.

BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the extremely generous and thoughtful gift for the education of our nation's children that was announced today by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Although relatively young, the Foundation already has a track record of making significant contributions for the sharing of new technologies and improving the educational opportunities of all our children. For example, in 1999, Bill and Melinda Gates provided $1 billion to establish the Gates Millennium Scholars program, which will provide scholarships for academically talented minority students who would otherwise not have the financial resources to attend college.

Today, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will announce a new gift of approximately $350 million, and more than $200 million of this gift will be directed to Washington state schools and districts. This gift is comprised of a series of grants that are designed to raise academic standards and help all students meet those standards.

The grants are broken into two elements. The first is a series of grants for the development state, district, school and classroom leadership. Our educators are doing an outstanding job teaching our children. This funding, however, will give our teachers even more support and enhance their education which will in turn improve the education of our students. This series of grants consists of $100 million for state challenge grants for Leadership Development, $45 million for the Teacher Leadership Project, and $25 million for national teacher training and teacher quality initiatives.

The second series of grants will encourage the development of model schools and districts. Throughout our state, educators and school administrators have hundreds of innovative and creative ideas to improve education. With this funding, educators can turn

their ideas into reality and implement new solutions and ways to teach. This series of grants consist of the $30 million Washington State School Grant Program which will serve approximately 140 schools, and the $150 million School District Grant Program which includes $50 million for 10–11 districts in Washington State.

Finally, the Foundation is providing the Seattle School District with a $26 million grant that will assist the district in its use of technology to help students meet Washington state's challenging academic standards.

I'm sure my colleagues join me in thanking Bill and Melinda Gates for their significant and considerate contribution to education. I know that current and future generations of students will benefit greatly from this gift. The education of our children is the key to the success of our country and the Gateses have given all of our students an even greater chance of succeeding.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I want to share with my colleagues some great education news for schools in Washington state and around the country. Today, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced a nationwide commitment to provide $350 million over three years to help students succeed in the classroom.

As a former educator in Washington state, I'm especially pleased that more than $200 million dollars will go to Washington state classrooms. This generous contribution will put money where we know it will make a difference: helping all students achieve by developing strong leadership skills in our teachers and administrators.

As we work here in the Senate on our national education policy, today's announcement is a reminder that educating our children is a team effort—and there are important roles for federal, state, and local officials, as well as businesses, nonprofit organizations, and individuals.

For years, the people I represent have seen first-hand the generosity and sense of community that Bill and Melinda Gates possess. Their foundation has worked to vaccinate poor children against diseases, to bring computers to libraries across the country, and to provide scholarships to talented minority students. We in Washington state have known about it since the beginning, and I'm proud that today, the whole nation gets to see it—and benefit from it.

I couldn't be more proud of the Gates Foundation on this special occasion and can't wait to see the many ways this will improve education for millions of students.

As we begin our work to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, I hope that this major announcement serves to remind us that local school districts—on their own—don't have all the resources they need. Individuals have a role to play as mentors, volunteers and coaches. Charitable foundations have a role to play, and the federal government also has a role to play.

I hope the Senate will follow the important and thoughtful example set by the Gates Foundation to do our best to give all students the resources and the tools they need to reach their potential.

RECOGNITION OF THE ''FROM THE TOP'' PROGRAM

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I would like to announce the winner of my 33rd Innovation in Education Award. This award goes to a national group sponsored by Boston Public Radio titled ''From the Top.'' I learned about this program when I attended a ''From the Top'' performance in Spokane on January 29th. Two students from Washington state, Stephen Beus of Othello and Justin Mackewich of Vancouver, participated in the concert and I was amazed by their technique and their immense talent. I was delighted to see such outstanding students excelling in the arts and am pleased to award Stephen and Justin and recognize this exceptional program.

Both Stephen and Justin are very gifted musicians. I was amazed by Stephen's skill at the piano and the Four Seasons Quartet that Justin played in was astounding. I hope to attend more of their concerts in the future.

''From the Top'' consists of a series of public radio performances, taped in front of live audiences. These performances have been given across the country in places like Boston, New York City, Sarasota, Florida, and St. Paul, Minnesota. The concept for ''From the Top'' is to highlight the performances of exceptional, pre-college age, classical musicians. Indeed, their performances make a ''From the Top'' concert a remarkable experience.

An additional positive impact of ''From the Top'' is that it provides an arena for people of all ages to enjoy classical music. In today's modern world, we must take the time to enjoy the classics and encourage our youth to value the great symphonies and music from the past. ''From the Top'' is an excellent source for all ages and walks of life to learn more about classical music.

Each week, I give an ''Innovation in Education'' Award to individuals or groups within the education system who make outstanding contributions to the education of our children. I believe that ''From the Top'' gives our students exposure to the arts that provides an invaluable enrichment to any child's upbringing. I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing the great contributions of ''From the Top''.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, in honor of Leap Day, which was yesterday, I am going to vary my regular format.

It is estimated that 200,000 people in the United States were born on February 29th. While these individuals may not share their birthdays with their families and loved ones every year, they do share—every year—in the less than desirable Federal debt like the rest of us.

Since 1970, the Federal debt has leapt remarkably—reaching $5,735,333,348,132.58 (Five trillion, seven hundred thirty-five billion, three hundred thirty-three million, three hundred forty-eight thousand, one hundred thirty-two dollars and fifty-eight cents) at the close of business yesterday, February 29, 2000.

The previous Leap Day, February 29, 1996, the Federal debt stood at $5,016,041,000,000 (Five trillion, sixteen billion, forty-one million) which reflects a debt increase of more than $700 billion—$719,292,348,132.58 (Seven hundred nineteen billion, two hundred ninety-two million, three hundred forty-eight thousand, one hundred thirty-two dollars and fifty-eight cents) during the past four years.

Today, Mr. President, each citizen's share of the Federal debt is $20,727.13. Translating this figure into the amount that Leap Day citizens owe, the figure becomes $4,145,426,000.00 (Four billion, one hundred forty-five million, four hundred twenty-six thousand). This amount may not seem like a lot, but it is when you consider it is only enough to pay down four days worth of the interest on the Federal debt.

Mr. President, I wish my Senate colleagues to note how tragic it is that our country's debt leaps with more frequency than the years do.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO VETERANS OF THE U.S. NAVY ASIATIC FLEET

• Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the heroism and sacrifices of the sailors and marines who served in the U.S. Navy's Asiatic Fleet.

The Asiatic Fleet established itself as one of the premier assets of the United States Navy during its years of operation. Officially commissioned by the Navy in 1910, The Asiatic Fleet's origins can be traced back to 1845, when the United States first established a naval presence in the Far East. The United States established the Asiatic Fleet to protect American interests in the western Pacific. The sailors and marines of the Asiatic Fleet ensured the safety of United States citizens and foreign nationals and provided humanitarian assistance in that region during the Chinese civil war, the Yangtze Flood of 1931, and the outbreak of Sino-Japanese hostilities. The increasing risks faced by U.S. military personnel serving in this region were highlighted by the accidental bombings and sinking of a U.S. Navy gunboat belonging to the Asiatic Fleet, the U.S.S. *Panay,* in international waters by Japanese aircraft in 1937—four years before the U.S. entered World War II.

Following the declaration of war against Japan, the warships, submarines, and aircraft of the Asiatic Fleet singly or in task forces courageously fought many naval battles against a superior Japanese armada. General Douglas MacArthur evacuated most U.S. military personnel and equipment from the region to prevent them from being destroyed by Japan's military forces, leaving the Asiatic Fleet alone, without reinforcement, to do what it could to obstruct the Japanese advance. During these battles, the men of the Fleet discovered that much of their equipment was defective. It has been estimated that one in three of the Asiatic Fleet's torpedoes, and one fifth of its anti-aircraft ammunition, were duds. Forced to rely on World War I-era equipment, the Asiatic Fleet directly suffered the loss of 22 ships, 1,826 men killed or missing in action, and 518 men captured and imprisoned under the worst of conditions. Many of those who survived later died while being held as prisoners of war. The Asiatic Fleet ceased to exist as a cohesive fighting force on March 1, 1942, when its flagship, the U.S.S. *Houston,* was sunk by the Japanese near Indonesia.

Unfortunately, the heroism of the sailors and marines of the Asiatic Fleet are largely unknown to the American public. Today, March 1, 2000, the 58th anniversary of the *Houston's* sinking, I want to commend the bravery, resourcefulness and sacrifices of all who served in the United States Navy Asiatic Fleet from 1910 to 1942, especially those sailors and marines who put their lives in harm's way during the first few months of America's participation in World War II. No words can adequately express our nation's debt to its veterans, and it is essential that we provide them with the thanks and recognition they have earned. The American people should always remember the courage and determination displayed by the personnel of the Asiatic Fleet, honoring the sacrifices they made in defense of the United States.●

HONORING THE U.S. COAST GUARD'S ROLE IN THE SUCCESS OF GREAT LAKES SHIPPING

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the men and women of our U.S. Coast Guard. In particular, I salute the crew of the USCGC *Mackinaw* for their work, which ensures the full utilization of the navigation season in my state, and the Great Lakes region as a whole.

Mr. President, the ice that forms on the Great Lakes rivals that found anywhere in the continental United States. Even in a normal winter, ice six to eight feet thick will develop in the connecting channels. Windrows, chunks of ice piled atop one another by the wind, easily can reach 15 feet in height. Navigation under such conditions has been possible only because the Coast Guard's icebreaking forces are led by the *Mackinaw*. The icebreaker is capable of generating 10,000 shaft horsepower, and is wide enough—75 feet—to clear a track for Great Lakes vessels. Furthermore, the *Mackinaw* is crewed sufficiently to stay on station for days on end.

Annually, more than 10 million tons of iron ore, 4 million tons of coal, 1.5 million tons of stone, and 500,000 tons of cement are shipped across the Great Lakes. The iron ore, coal, stone, and Seaway trades generated nearly 14 billion tons of cargo during the 20th century. That commerce could not have been accomplished as safely and efficiently as it was without the assistance of the U.S. Coast Guard, and especially, the *Mackinaw*.●

INTERNATIONAL ABOLITION DAY

● Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, today I rise to mark International Abolition Day. This day marks the occasion in 1847 when the state of Michigan became the first English-speaking territory in the world to abolish capital punishment. As one of the first acts following conferral of statehood on Michigan, the Michigan legislature abolished the death penalty for all crimes except treason. I note, with tongue and cheek and with all due respect to my distinguished colleagues from Michigan, that the date marking International Abolition Day probably should be 1853, when my great state, the state of Wisconsin, became the first state to abolish the death penalty for all crimes. Wisconsin has been death penalty-free for nearly 150 years. It is clear that the people of the Midwestern states have shown great courage and leadership on this issue since almost the birth of our great Nation.

Mr. President, International Abolition Day is a day to remember the victims and survivors of violent crimes perpetrated by individual criminals. But it is also a day to remember those killed by state-sponsored executions. And it is a day for education and discussion of alternatives to the death penalty.

Just as the people of Michigan over 150 years ago learned the painful reality of the fallibility of our criminal justice system and confronted the death penalty's main use, as a tool of vengeance, people throughout the United States today are beginning to question their longstanding support for the death penalty. On January 31, Governor Ryan effectively imposed a moratorium on executions in Illinois until a state panel can examine the administration of the death penalty and why so many innocents have sat on Illinois' death row. In a recent Gallup poll, even though a majority of Americans still support the death penalty, support for the death penalty is at a 19-year low. And when asked whether Americans prefer the death penalty or life imprisonment without the possibility of parole, support for the death penalty drops even further.

These are just some of the many positive developments that have nurtured the reawakening of the American conscience to the great responsibility and stain that state-sponsored executions place on our society. I look forward to the day when our federal government and the 38 states with the death penalty will recognize the adequacy of sentencing alternatives and abolish this barbaric punishment for all time.●

SPARKMAN HIGH SCHOOL PARTICIPATION IN THE ''WE THE PEOPLE . . . THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION'' PROGRAM

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, on May 6–8, 2000 more than 1200 students from across the United States will be in Washington, D.C. to compete in the national finals of the ''We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution'' program. I am proud to announce that a class from Sparkman High School from the city of Harvest will represent my home state of Alabama in this national event. These young scholars have worked diligently to reach the national finals and through their experience have gained a deep knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and values of our constitutional democracy.

The ''We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution'' program is the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The three-day national competition is modeled after hearings in the United States Congress. These hearings consist of oral presentations by high school students before a panel of adult judges. The students testify as constitutional experts before a congressional committee, that is, the panel of judges representing various regions of the country and a variety of appropriate professional fields. The student testimony is followed by a period of questioning during which the judges probe students for their depth of understanding and ability to apply their constitutional knowledge. Columnist David Broder described the national finals as ''the place to have your faith in the younger generation restored.''

The student team from Sparkman High School is currently conducting research and preparing for the upcoming national competition in Washington, DC. I am extremely proud of the students and teacher and wish them the best of luck at ''We the People'' national finals. I look forward to greeting them when they visit Capitol Hill.●

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT MICHAEL SULLIVAN

● Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and say farewell to an outstanding Naval Officer and fellow Arizona citizen, Lieutenant Michael Sullivan, who has served with distinction for the past eighteen months in the Navy's Office of Legislative Affairs. It is a privilege for me to

recognize his many outstanding achievements and to commend him for the superb service he has provided to the U.S. Senate and to our great Nation as a whole.

Lieutenant Sullivan is a graduate of my alma mater, the United States Naval Academy. I had the great honor of addressing his class at his graduation in May 1993. Similar to myself, academic honors had eluded him but the standards at the Naval Academy are such that simply surviving the four years reflects great credit upon his ability and dedication. When it was his turn to walk across the stage, he shook my hand and exclaimed, ''Go Navy and Go Arizona!'' I shared in his enthusiasm and we embraced in a bear hug as I handed him his diploma.

Lieutenant Sullivan proceeded to Surface Warfare Officer School in Newport, Rhode Island, before reporting to the U.S.S. *Fife* (DD–991) which was forward deployed to the U.S. Seventh Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan. On Fife be served as the Auxiliaries Officer and Fire Control/Strike Missile Systems Officer. Following that arduous tour, he reported to the U.S.S. *Antietam* (CG–54) as the Combat Information Systems Officer. Among his notable accomplishments, he distinguished himself in 1997 by being named a Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Junior Officer Shiphandler of the Year. In July 1998, Lieutenant Sullivan joined the Navy's Senate Liaison team and helped the Senate ensure that our Navy remained the best trained, best equipped, and best prepared Naval force in the world.

Mr. President, Lieutenant Sullivan represents the very best of America's most precious resource—her youth. With being a commissioned officer come responsibilities so immense and so important that the lives of all Americans and the welfare of much of the world will be directly affected by how well they discharge them. I have every confidence that Lieutenant Sullivan will continue to acquit himself with distinction. As he now departs for the next of many more tours at sea, I call upon my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to wish him fair winds and following seas.●

● Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and say farewell to an outstanding Naval Officer and fellow Arizonian, Lieutenant Michael Sullivan, who has served with distinction for the past year and a half years in the Navy's Senate Liaison Office on Capitol Hill. It is a privilege for me to recognize his many outstanding achievements and to commend him for the superb service he has provided this legislative body, the Navy, and our great Nation.

Lieutenant Sullivan comes from a patriotic family. His grandfather was a submariner during World War II and his father is a Navy veteran of the Riverine Force in Vietnam. The Sullivan Family lived in the Bronx, New York before moving to the great state of Arizona. Lieutenant Sullivan attended elementary and middle public schools in Scottsdale and ultimately graduated from Saguaro High School. He was attending the University of Arizona, and I was still a Member of the House of Representatives, when he applied for the most privileged of responsibilities I have as a Member of Congress—making a nomination for appointments to the U.S. Service Academies. It was with great pride that I had submitted his name to attend the United States Naval Academy where he graduated and earned his commission in 1993.

Lieutenant Sullivan joined the Navy's Senate Liaison team in July 1998, following successful sea tours on board the U.S.S. *Fife* (DD–991) and the U.S.S. *Antietam* (CG–54). During his service as a Navy Liaison Officer he provided members of the Senate and our personal staffs with timely support and accurate information on Navy plans, programs, and constituent casework. He has helped us maintain the best trained, best equipped, and best prepared Navy in the world.

Mr. President, Lieutenant Sullivan has served proudly with a dedication and enthusiasm that only comes from our Nation's best and brightest. Lieutenant Sullivan is a great credit to both our Navy and our country. As he now departs for Department Head School and his next sea tour, I call upon my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to wish him the best for a continued brilliant Navy career.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:44 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1749. An act to designate Wilson Creek in Avery and Caldwell Counties, North Carolina, as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

H.R. 2484. An act to provide that land which is owned by the Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota but which is not held in trust by the United States for the Community may be leased or transferred by the Community without further approval by the United States.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 613. An act to encourage Indian economic development, to provide for the disclosure of Indian tribal sovereign immunity in contracts involving Indian tribes, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1749. An act to designate Wilson Creek in Avery and Caldwell Counties, North Carolina, as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 2484. An act to provide that land which is owned by the Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota but which is not held in trust by the United States for the Community may be leased or transferred by the Community without further approval by the United States; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC–7818. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting, the report of a retirement; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–7819. A communication from the Under Secretary, Acquisition and Technology, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report for fiscal year 1999 of the test and evaluation activities of the Foreign Comparative Testing Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–7820. A communication from the Managing Director, Federal Housing Finance Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of 2000 base salary structures for Executive and graded employees; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–7821. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility; 65 FR 8664; 02/22/2000'', received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–7822. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''List of Communities Eligible; 65 FR 8662; 02/22/2000'', received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–7823. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulation of Short-Term Natural Gas Transportation Services; Regulation of Interstate Natural Gas Transportation Services'' (Order No. 637, Docket Nos. RM98–10–000 and RM98–12–000, 90 FERC Paragraph 61,109 (Issued 2/9/00)), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–7824. A communication from the Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Termination of Designation of the State of Minnesota with Respect to the Inspection of Poultry and Poultry Products'', received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–7825. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fenpropathrin, Pesticide Tolerance'' (FRL # 6492–6), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–7826. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Imidacloprid; Time-Limited Pesticide Tolerance'' (FRL # 6493–2), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–7827. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments'', received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC–7828. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Corrections Program Office's Interpretation of Eligibility Requirements for Truth-in-Sentencing Incentive Grants under 42 USC 13704(a)(2)'' (RIN1121–ZB92), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–7829. A communication from the Deputy Executive Secretary, Health Care Financing Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (Tribal TANF) and Native Employment Works (NEW) Program'' (RIN0970–AB78), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–7830. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Prevailing Rate Systems; Abolishment of the Lebanon, PA, Nonappropriated Fund Wage Area'' (RIN3206–AJ01), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC–7831. A communication from the Executive Director, Committee for Purchase from People who are Blind or Severely Disabled, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to additions to the Procurement List, received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC–7832. A communication from the Regulations Officer, Social Security Administration transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income for the Aged, Blind and Disabled; Evaluating Opinion Evidence'' (RIN0960–AE56), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–7833. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Commonwealth of Kentucky; Approval of Revisions to the Kentucky State Implementation Plan'' (FRL # 6545–5), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7834. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Reasonably Available Control Technology for Major Stationary Sources of Nitrogen Oxides for the Houston/Galveston and Beaumont/Port Arthur Ozone Nonattainment Areas'' (FRL # 6543–1), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7835. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Delegation of National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Source Categories; State of Arizona; Arizona Department of Environmental Quality; Maricopa County Environmental Services Department'' (FRL # 6545–2), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7836. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, a report entitled ''Letter to Mr. John M. Daniel, Jr.''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7837. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, a report entitled ''National Emission Standards for Pesticide active Ingredient Production (40 CFR Part 63 Subpart MMM)—Applicability to new and Existing Sources''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7838. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, a report entitled ''Letter to Union Carbide Corporation''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7839. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, a report entitled ''Pretreatment Annual Report for the 1999 Reporting Year''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7840. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, a report entitled ''Procuring Information to Conduct Initial Determinations and Verifications for Region VIII Facilities Under the CERCLA Offsite Rule''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7841. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, a report entitled ''40 CFR Part 63 Subpart DD–NESHAP for Off-site Waste and Recovery Operations''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7842. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Simpson v. United States'', received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–7843. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2000 Census Count'' (Notice 2000–13), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–7844. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Section 1275.—Other Definitions and Special Rules'' (Rev. Rul. 2000–12), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–7845. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Weighted Average Interest Rate Update'' (Notice 2000–2), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–7846. A communication from the Acting Deputy Associate Administrator, Acquisition Policy, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''General Services Administration Acquisition Regulation: Reissuance of 48 CFR Chapter 5 and Clarification on the Use of Selection Criteria for Architect Engineer Procurements'' (RIN3090–AE90/AH07), received February 28, 2000; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC–7847. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Connecticut and Rhode Island; Clean Fuel Fleets (Region 1)'' (FRL # 6542–3), received February 29, 2000; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7848. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Polyvinyl Acetate, Carboxyl Modified Sodium Salt; Tolerance Exemption'' (FRL # 6389–8), received February 29, 2000; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first time and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. GRAMS (for himself and Mr. ALLARD):

S. 2126. A bill to ensure that the fiscal year 2000 on-budget surplus is used to reduce publicly held debt; to the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Governmental Affairs, jointly, pursuant to the order of August 4, 1977, with instructions that if one Committee reports, the other Committee have thirty days to report or be discharged.

By Mr. BROWNBACK:

S. 2127. A bill to exempt agreements relating to voluntary guidelines governing telecast material, movies, video games, Internet content, and music lyrics from the applicability of the antitrust laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 2128. A bill to amend the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to clarify the classification of certain toys; to the Committee on Finance.

S. 2129. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on HIV/AIDS drugs; to the Committee on Finance.

S. 2130. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on HIV/AIDS drugs; to the Committee on Finance.

S. 2131. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Rhinovirus Drugs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mr. FRIST, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2132. A bill to create incentives for private sector research related to developing vaccines against widespread diseases and ensure that such vaccines are affordable and widely distributed; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. REED:

S. 2133. A bill to temporarily suspend the duty on Solvent Blue 124; to the Committee on Finance.

S. 2134. A bill to temporarily suspend the duty on Solvent Blue 104; to the Committee on Finance.

S. 2135. A bill to temporarily suspend the duty on Pigment Red 176; to the Committee on Finance.

S. 2136. A bill to temporarily suspend the duty on benzenesulfonamide,4-amino-2,5-dimethyoxy-N-phenyl; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. DEWINE, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, and Mr. WELLSTONE):

S. 2137. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to educational organizations to carry out educational programs about the Holocaust; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire (for himself, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. HELMS, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. COVERDELL, and Mr. BROWNBACK):

S. Con. Res. 87. A concurrent resolution commending the Holy See for making significant contributions to international peace and human rights, and objecting to efforts to expel the Holy See from the United Nations by removing the Holy See's Permanent Observer status in the United Nations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. GRAMS (for himself and Mr. ALLARD):

S. 2126. A bill to ensure that the fiscal year 2000 on-budget surplus is used to reduce publicly held debt; to the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Governmental Affairs, jointly, pursuant to the order of August 4, 1977, with instructions that if one Committee reports, the other Committee have thirty days to report or be discharged.

SAVE OUR SURPLUS FOR DEBT REDUCTION ACT OF 2000

• Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2126

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Save Our Surplus for Debt Reduction Act of 2000''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Congressional Budget Office currently estimates that the Government will have a $23,000,000,000 nonsocial security surplus (on-budget surplus) in fiscal year 2000;

(2) Government spending in fiscal year 2000 will increase faster than the rate of inflation for a total of over $1,750,000,000,000;

(3) Government publicly held debt in fiscal year 2000 will be reduced by over $150,000,000,000, yet debt held by the public will remain in excess of $3,450,000,000,000 and cost over $200,000,000,000 in annual interest payments;

(4) Government revenues in fiscal year 2000 will be 20.3 percent of the Gross Domestic Product, which is the highest level since World War II; and

(5) nearly 40,000,000 citizens currently rely on social security and medicare, yet as more Americans retire over the next decade, these programs will begin running deficits and jeopardize their retirement.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act to ensure that the fiscal year 2000 on-budget surplus is used to reduce publicly held debt.

SEC. 3. REDUCTION OF PUBLICLY HELD DEBT.

(a) POINT OF ORDER AGAINST CERTAIN LEGISLATION.—Except as provided by subsection (b), it shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report if—

(1) the enactment of that bill or resolution as reported;

(2) the adoption and enactment of that amendment; or

(3) the enactment of that bill or resolution in the form recommended in that conference report;

would cause a decrease in the on-budget surplus for fiscal year 2000.

(b) EXCEPTION.—The point of order set forth in subsection (a) shall not apply to a bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report if it—

(1) reduces revenues;

(2) implements structural social security reform; or

(3) implements structural medicare reform.

(c) WAIVERS AND APPEALS IN THE SENATE.—

(1) WAIVERS.—Subsection (a) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(2) APPEALS.—

(A) LIMITATIONS.—Appeals in the Senate from the decisions of the Chair relating to subsection (a) shall be limited to 1 hour, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the mover and the manager of the bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report, as the case may be.

(B) SUPERMAJORITY.—An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required in the Senate to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (a).

SEC. 4. SUNSET PROVISION.

The provisions of this Act shall cease to have any force or effect on October 1, 2000.•

By Mr. BROWNBACK:

S. 2127. A bill to exempt agreements relating to voluntary guidelines governing telecast material, movies, video games, Internet content, and music lyrics from the applicability of the antitrust laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CHILDREN'S PROTECTION ACT OF 2000

• Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2127

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Children's Protection Act of 2000''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Television is seen and heard in nearly every United States home and is a uniquely pervasive presence in the daily lives of Americans. The average American home has 2.5 televisions, and a television is turned on in the average American home 7 hours every day.

(2) Television plays a particularly significant role in the lives of children. Figures provided by Nielsen Research show that children between the ages of 2 years and 11 years spend an average of 21 hours in front of a television each week.

(3) Television has an enormous capability to influence perceptions, especially those of children, of the values and behaviors that are common and acceptable in society.

(4) The influence of television is so great that its images and messages often can be harmful to the development of children. Social science research amply documents a strong correlation between the exposure of children to televised violence and a number of behavioral and psychological problems.

(5) Hundreds of studies have proven conclusively that children who are consistently exposed to violence on television have a higher tendency to exhibit violent and aggressive behavior, both as children and later in life.

(6) Such studies also show that repeated exposure to violent programming causes children to become desensitized to and more accepting of real-life violence and to grow more fearful and less trusting of their surroundings.

(7) A growing body of social science research indicates that sexual content on television can also have a significant influence on the attitudes and behaviors of young viewers. This research suggests that heavy exposure to programming with strong sexual content contributes to the early commencement of sexual activity among teenagers.

(8) Members of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) adhered for many years to a comprehensive code of conduct that was based on an understanding of the influence exerted by television and on a widely held sense of responsibility for using that influence carefully.

(9) This code of conduct, the Television Code of the National Association of Broadcasters, articulated this sense of responsibility as follows:

(A) ''In selecting program subjects and themes, great care must be exercised to be sure that the treatment and presentation are made in good faith and not for the purpose of sensationalism or to shock or exploit the audience or appeal to prurient interests or morbid curiosity.''.

(B) ''Broadcasters have a special responsibility toward children. Programs designed primarily for children should take into account the range of interests and needs of children, from instructional and cultural material to a wide variety of entertainment material. In their totality, programs should contribute to the sound, balanced development of children to help them achieve a sense of the world at large and informed adjustments to their society.''.

(C) ''Violence, physical, or psychological, may only be projected in responsibly handled contexts, not used exploitatively. Programs involving violence present the consequences of it to its victims and perpetrators. Presentation of the details of violence should avoid the excessive, the gratuitous and the instructional.''.

(D) ''The presentation of marriage, family, and similarly important human relationships, and material with sexual connotations, shall not be treated exploitatively or irresponsibly, but with sensitivity.''.

(E) ''Above and beyond the requirements of the law, broadcasters must consider the family atmosphere in which many of their programs are viewed. There shall be no graphic portrayal of sexual acts by sight or sound. The portrayal of implied sexual acts must be essential to the plot and presented in a responsible and tasteful manner.''.

(10) The National Association of Broadcasters abandoned the code of conduct in 1983 after three provisions of the code restricting the sale of advertising were challenged by the Department of Justice on antitrust grounds and a Federal district court issued a summary judgment against the National Association of Broadcasters regarding one of the provisions on those grounds. However, none of the programming standards of the code were challenged.

(11) While the code of conduct was in effect, its programming standards were never found to have violated any antitrust law.

(12) Since the National Association of Broadcasters abandoned the code of conduct, programming standards on broadcast and cable television have deteriorated dramatically.

(13) In the absence of effective programming standards, public concern about the impact of television on children, and on society as a whole, has risen substantially. Polls routinely show that more than 80 percent of Americans are worried by the increasingly graphic nature of sex, violence, and vulgarity on television and by the amount of programming that openly sanctions or glorifies criminal, antisocial, and degrading behavior.

(14) At the urging of Congress, the television industry has taken some steps to respond to public concerns about programming standards and content. The broadcast television industry agreed in 1992 to adopt a set of voluntary guidelines designed to ''proscribe gratuitous or excessive portrayals of violence''. Shortly thereafter, both the broadcast and cable television industries agreed to conduct independent studies of the violent content in their programming and make those reports public.

(15) In 1996, the television industry as a whole made a commitment to develop a comprehensive rating system to label programming that may be harmful or inappropriate for children. That system was implemented at the beginning of 1999.

(16) Despite these efforts to respond to public concern about the impact of television on children, millions of Americans, especially parents with young children, remain angry and frustrated at the sinking standards of television programming, the reluctance of the industry to police itself, and the harmful influence of television on the well-being of the children and the values of the United States.

(17) The Department of Justice issued a ruling in 1993 indicating that additional efforts by the television industry to develop and implement voluntary programming guidelines would not violate the antitrust laws. The ruling states that ''such activities may be likened to traditional standard setting efforts that do not necessarily restrain competition and may have significant procompetitive benefits... Such guidelines could serve to disseminate valuable information on program content to both advertisers and television viewers. Accurate information can enhance the demand for, and increase the output of, an industry's products or services.''.

(18) The Children's Television Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–437) states that television broadcasters in the United States have a clear obligation to meet the educational and informational needs of children.

(19) Several independent analyses have demonstrated that the television broadcasters in the United States have not fulfilled their obligations under the Children's Television Act of 1990 and have not noticeably expanded the amount of educational and informational programming directed at young viewers since the enactment of that Act.

(20) The popularity of video and personal computer (PC) games is growing steadily among children. Although most popular video and personal computer games are educational or harmless in nature, many of the most popular are extremely violent. One recent study by Strategic Record Research found that 64 percent of teenagers played video or personal computer games on a regular basis. Other surveys of children as young as elementary school age found that almost half of them list violent computer games among their favorites.

(21) Violent video games often present violence in a glamorized light. Game players are often cast in the role of shooter, with points scored for each ''kill''. Similarly, advertising for such games often touts violent content as a selling point—the more graphic and extreme, the better.

(22) As the popularity and graphic nature of such video games grows, so do their potential to negatively influence impressionable children.

(23) Music is another extremely pervasive and popular form of entertainment. American children and teenagers listen to music more than any other demographic group. The Journal of American Medicine reported that between the 7th and 12th grades the average teenager listens to 10,500 hours of rock or rap music, just slightly less than the entire number of hours spent in the classroom from kindergarten through high school.

(24) Teens are among the heaviest purchasers of music, and are most likely to favor music genres that depict, and often appear to glamorize violence.

(25) Music has a powerful ability to influence perceptions, attitudes, and emotional state. The use of music as therapy indicates its potential to increase emotional, psychological. and physical health. That influence can be used for ill as well.

SEC. 3. PURPOSES; CONSTRUCTION.

(a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are to permit the entertainment industry—

(1) to work collaboratively to respond to growing public concern about television programming, movies, video games, Internet content, and music lyrics, and the harmful influence of such programming, movies, games, content, and lyrics on children;

(2) to develop a set of voluntary programming guidelines similar to those contained in the Television Code of the National Association of Broadcasters; and

(3) to implement the guidelines in a manner that alleviates the negative impact of television programming, movies, video games, Internet content, and music lyrics on the development of children in the United States and stimulates the development and broadcast of educational and informational programming for such children.

(b) CONSTRUCTION.—This Act may not be construed as—

(1) providing the Federal Government with any authority to restrict television programming, movies, video games, Internet content, or music lyrics that is in addition to the authority to restrict such programming, movies, games, content, or lyrics under law as of the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) approving any action of the Federal Government to restrict such programming, movies, games, content, or lyrics that is in addition to any actions undertaken for that purpose by the Federal Government under law as of such date.

SEC. 4. EXEMPTION OF VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS ON GUIDELINES FOR CERTAIN ENTERTAINMENT MATERIAL FROM APPLICABILITY OF ANTITRUST LAWS.

(a) EXEMPTION.—Subject to subsection (b), the antitrust laws shall not apply to any joint discussion, consideration, review, action, or agreement by or among persons in the entertainment industry for the purpose of developing and disseminating voluntary guidelines designed—

(1) to alleviate the negative impact of telecast material, movies, video games, Internet content, and music lyrics containing violence, sexual content, criminal behavior, or other subjects that are not appropriate for children; or

(2) to promote telecast material that is educational, informational, or otherwise beneficial to the development of children.

(b) LIMITATION.—The exemption provided in subsection (a) shall not apply to any joint discussion, consideration, review, action, or agreement which—

(1) results in a boycott of any person; or

(2) concerns the purchase or sale of advertising, including (without limitation) restrictions on the number of products that may be advertised in a commercial, the number of times a program may be interrupted for commercials, and the number of consecutive commercials permitted within each interruption.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ANTITRUST LAWS.—The term ''antitrust laws'' has the meaning given such term in the first section of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 12) and includes section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 45).

(2) INTERNET.—The term ''Internet'' means the combination of computer facilities and electromagnetic transmission media, and related equipment and software, comprising the interconnected worldwide network of computer networks that employ the Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol or any successor protocol to transmit information.

(3) MOVIES.—The term ''movies'' means theatrical motion pictures.

(4) PERSON IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY.—The term ''person in the entertainment industry'' means a television network, any entity which produces or distributes television programming (including theatrical motion pictures), the National Cable Television Association, the Association of Independent Television Stations, Incorporated, the National Association of Broadcasters, the Motion Picture Association of America, each of the affiliate organizations of the television networks, the Interactive Digital Software Association, any entity which produces or distributes video games, the Recording Industry Association of America, and any entity which produces or distributes music, and includes any individual acting on behalf of such person.

(5) TELECAST.—The term ''telecast'' means any program broadcast by a television broadcast station or transmitted by a cable television system.●

By Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mr. FRIST, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2132. A bill to create incentives for private sector research related to developing vaccines against widespread diseases and ensure that such vaccines are affordable and widely distributed; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

VACCINES FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM ACT OF 2000

● Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today I am pleased to introduce the Vaccines for the New Millennium Act of 2000. I have the honor of being joined by the distinguished chairman of the Africa Subcommittee, Senator FRIST, and my friend, the Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY. This bill addresses a catastrophic problem that needs our immediate attention.

The proportions of the AIDS calamity in Africa are stupefying. More than 33 million people are infected with HIV—95 percent of them in sub-Saharan Africa. This disease will kill more than 2.5 million this year. It has already orphaned 11 million children, and it will orphan 40 million by 2010. These numbers are incomprehensible. To put in perspective, nearly 60 people will become infected with HIV in the time it takes me to testify today.

In addition, tuberculosis will kill close to 2 million this year, and a person dies from malaria every thirty seconds. No nation—but particularly ours—as rich as we are in talent, technology and money—can fail to help turn this around.

We should remember: borders do not matter when you are dealing with contagion.

These epidemics are out of control. And if we are to reverse this death spiral, we need to institute bold new measures. We must provide new global health infrastructures which look at long-term solutions for disease eradication. And, until they are established, we must provide much-needed short-term financing for disease prevention and treatment.

Mr. President, a number of my colleagues have shown great leadership in trying to find a solution to the health emergencies in the developing countries.

I applaud the work of my friend, Senator DURBIN with whom I have joined on a number of bills this year. I also recognize and support the efforts of Senator BOXER and Senator SMITH for their work on the Global AIDS Plan. Senator MOYNIHAN and Senator FEINGOLD also have an important plan to prevent vertical transmission of HIV from mother to child. I have supported all these plans.

Mr. President, I think we need to acknowledge the scope of this epidemic requires a bold response which looks beyond just preventing and treating this disease. The epidemiology of this disease dictates lifetime adherence to preventive measures. I am fully supportive of prevention programs—I have seen their very positive effect in the AIDS Action Committee in Boston and in AIDS Project Worcester. The Outer Cape also has a tremendous program which I support every year in Provincetown and these are echoed in small towns across Massachusetts which have accessed CDC grants and instituted the absolute best of community-based programs. I have also been an early and consistent supporter of the Ryan White program which comes up for reauthorization this year.

But, Mr. President, we need a vaccine—for the United States and for the developing world.

Vaccines are the most cost-effective weapon in the arsenal of modern medicine to stop the spread of contagious disease, and they offer a relatively inexpensive means of lowering a society's overall cost of medical care. Prime examples of the success are the three million children whose lives are saved each year as a result of early childhood immunizations against diphtheria, polio, pertussis, tetanus, measles, and tuberculosis.

Mr. President, consider the alternatives we have now. Pharmaceutical products, like the highly touted antiviral ''cocktail'' for treating AIDS patients can cost, on average, as much as $15,000 a year. That is a princely sum for even wealthy countries but clearly, for nations with per capita incomes of $700 or $800 like Malawi, such treatments and drugs are nowhere in the real of affordability. They also require enormous infrastructure investments and medical compliance which is difficult to adhere to in this country let alone developing societies.

For these nations, finding an affordable vaccine for AIDS is really the only option that offers them an opportunity for gaining control over the AIDS epidemic.

Unfortunately, of the $2.4 billion or so spent on overall AIDS research last year, only a fraction was spent on AIDS vaccine research.

The World Bank estimates that perhaps between $280 million and $350 million was spend worldwide on finding a vaccine for AIDS in 1999, or somewhere between 10 and 15 percent of the total amount spent on AIDS research.

Furthermore, of the $300 million or so spent on HIV vaccine research, less than $50 million came from private sector research and development budgets. Simply put, our biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries do not believe that investing in AIDS vaccine research is a good investment.

So, Mr. President, we have a responsibility, an obligation, to change this perception. Investing in an AIDS vaccine is one of the best investments we as a nation can make. And for Africa, it is the only hope for survival.

And while continued and expanded investments in our research engines are vitally important—I am referring to AIDS research at the National Institutes of Health—the time has come for us to explore additional strategies for stimulating private sector AIDS vaccine research and development.

We must look for innovative financing mechanisms. We must instill the financial incentives for our pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors to engage in areas that have previously ignored.

Mr. President, I was amazed to learn that of the $56 billion a year spent globally on health research, well over 90 percent is spent on research into health problems that concern only 10 percent of the world's population.

Amazingly, of the 1,200 new drugs commercialized between 1975 and 1997, only 13 were for tropical diseases—diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis which combined kill close to 3 million people a year.

Why is it that pharmaceutical companies don't invest in these diseases? Because there is no hope for finding a vaccine for malaria? No hope for finding an affordable vaccine for tuberculosis or HIV? Is the science just insurmountable?

Absolutely not.

Companies don't invest in these diseases because they don't foresee a profit. A malaria vaccine, while offering the potential to save millions of lives, does not offer the same return to shareholders as the return from Viagra, Lipitor, Prozac, or other blockbusters here in the United States. I don't blame the pharmaceutical industry for concern about their shareholders, but I believe it is morally imperative to jumpstart research into vaccines as quickly as possible.

What then, is the answer? Should we turn our back on these diseases as a casualty of the way free markets function? Should we dump billions into new government bureaucracies to tackle these problems? The answer on both counts is no. We as a nation, and as a responsible member of the international community, should create the market incentives to encourage our pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, the best and brightest companies in the world, to invest in those diseases which are a scourge to the world.

What we need to do is give pharmaceutical companies the financial incentives to achieve what we know is possible and let them work their magic—these are the same engines of growth and technological progress which have helped extend life expectancy beyond what was imaginable at the turn of the century. Now, let's help them turn their attention to those diseases which kill millions upon millions in developing countries.

I think this type of public-private partnership is the most efficient means of addressing the world's growing health care pandemics. How would it world specifically?

The legislation I introduce today, the ''Vaccines for the New Millennium Act,'' provides a number of market incentives to encourage private sector investment in lifesaving vaccines. These incentives can be classified in one of two ways. Some of them provide a ''push'' mechanism—lowering the cost of R&D at the front end. Others provide a ''pull'' mechanism, demonstrating that a market will exist if the pharmaceutical companies provide the product.

On the push side, first, the bill expands on the research and development tax credit by increasing the credit rate from 20 percent to 50 percent for research related to developing vaccines for AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, or any infectious disease which kills over 1 million people a year. The tax credit is incremental such that the credit applies to research spending which exceeds a base amount. In effect, the credit rewards incremental increases in lifesaving vaccine research—thus giving our drug companies an incentive for more focus on lifesaving vaccines.

Second, the bill allows small biotechnology companies which do not have tax liability to pass a smaller tax credit through to investors. Firms with assets under $50 million may choose to pass through a 25 percent tax credit to investors who provide financing for research and development on one of the priority vaccines. The credit would apply to stock issued after the date of enactment and used within 18 months to pay for qualified vaccine research expenses.

Both of these proposals have been endorsed by a combination of public health advocacy groups and industry—including AIDS Action Council, the Global Health Council, the American Public Health Association and the AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition.

Third, the bill authorizes voluntary contributions to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations and the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative. The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations is an international partnership recently established to expand and improve access to existing safe and cost-effective vaccines. It is being supported by a number of nations and international donors, including an incredibly generous founding gift by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. A similar provision was included in the President's budget. By working to improve the delivery of existing vaccines, the Global Alliance not only offers the opportunity to save lives, it will improve health delivery systems for the distribution of future vaccines.

Fourth, the bill authorizes voluntary contributions to the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative. In effect, the initiative provides financing to industry in return for international access to the vaccine. For example, under a typical IAVI/industry agreement, IAVI will provide financing in exchange for an agreement with the manufacturer to sell the vaccine to developing countries at very reasonable prices. Once again, the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation provides a large portion of IAVI's funding.

To further accelerate the invention and production of lifesaving vaccines, the bill includes a tax credit proposed in the President's budget. Under the proposal, every dollar paid by a qualifying organization to buy a lifesaving vaccine would be matched by a dollar of tax credits—thereby doubling the purchasing power of nonprofit organizations and others that purchase vaccines for developing countries. The credit only applies to vaccines not yet developed, thus demonstrating the existence of a market if drug companies fill the void. The credit would apply to vaccines for AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, or any other disease which kills over 1 million people annually.

The bill also establishes a Lifesaving Vaccine Purchase Fund. This approach has been advocated most prominently by Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs, a witness on the third panel.

Under my proposal, Congress would authorize and advance appropriate $100 million a year, over ten years, to a fund for the purchase and distribution of newly-developed vaccines for AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis. The first appropriation would not occur until a vaccine has been licensed and approved. In effect, by establishing a guaranteed market, the proposal would provide a real incentive for additional private sector research. However, the money would not be spent until the vaccine was developed, thus postponing any cost to the government.

Finally, the bill directs the Administration to initiate negotiations with officials of foreign governments for the establishment of an international vaccine purchase fund that would purchase and distribute in developing countries vaccines for malaria, tuberculosis, HIV, or any infectious disease which kills over 1 million people. It is assumed that if such an agreement is reached, the domestic fund described above would be integrated into the multilateral agreement.

This is a comprehensive plan, Mr. President, which I have worked on for two years. This past weekend, it was endorsed as a positive step by academics, pharmaceutical executives and governmental leaders at a high-level conference convened by the University of California at San Francisco, World Bank and the Global Forum for Health Research.

Congresswoman NANCY PELOSI will introduce identical companion legislation in the House and it is my hope that our colleagues will give it equally serious attention.●

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. DEWINE, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, and Mr. WELLSTONE):

S. 2137. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to educational organizations to carry out educational programs about the Holocaust; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT

● Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today Senator DEWINE and I are introducing a bill to provide funds to educational organizations to teach the history of the Holocaust. It is entitled the Holocaust Education Assistance Act. Cosponsoring the bill are Senators SMITH of Oregon, MOYNIHAN, LAUTENBERG, SCHUMER, BOXER, WELLSTONE, and DURBIN.

This bill authorizes $2 million each year for fiscal years 2001–2005 for a competitive grant program under which schools, museums and other nonprofit organizations could compete for grants to train teachers, conduct seminars and develop educational materials on the Holocaust. It is the companion bill to H.R. 3105, introduced by Representatives MALONEY, HORN, WAXMAN, and others.

The Holocaust is one of the most horrific events in human history. In the 1930s and 1940s, the German Nazi regime systematically slaughtered more than 6,000,000 Jews and other minorities under the guise of achieving a ''racially pure'' society. Hopefully, this bill can help ensure that the next generation of Americans learns some of the crucial lessons of the Holocaust. The most fundamental of these lessons is that racial and ethnic-based hatred endangers each of us, and that the violation of one person's rights threatens the freedom of all of us.

Five states mandate that the Holocaust be taught in schools. They are California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey and New York. Eleven others recommend or encourage teaching the Holocaust in school. They are Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington. The bill is needed because most teachers have little training and few resources to teach the history of the Holocaust. This bill does not mandate anything, but it does create a funding source for schools and communities that choose to teach youngsters about this horrible chapter of human history.

In my state, the following groups support the bill:

Holocaust Center of Northern California.
Los Angeles City Human Relations Commission.
Simon Wiesenthal Museum of Tolerance.
The Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California.

The following national organizations support the Holocaust Education Assistance Act:

Agudath Israel of America.
American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors.
American Jewish Committee.
American Society for Yad Vashem, Inc.
Anti-Defamation League.
Association of Holocaust Organizations.
Braun Holocaust Institute.
Facing History and Ourselves.
Hatikvah Holocaust Education Resource Center.
Institute for Public Affairs of the Orthodox Union.
Museum of Jewish Heritage.
National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education.
Rabbinical Council of America.
Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism.
Simon Wiesenthal Center Museum of Tolerance.
United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.
World Jewish Congress.

The following regional organizations support the Holocaust Education Assistance Act:

Florida Holocaust Museum.
Hawaii Holocaust Center.
Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois.
Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Central Florida.
Holocaust Resource Center & Archives, Queensboro Community College.
Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Philadelphia.
Jewish Community Relations Council of New York.
New Mexico Holocaust and Intolerance Museum and Study Center.

Tennessee Holocaust Commission.
Tennessee Jewish Federation.
West Virginia Holocaust Education Commission.

As we enter the new century, we must remain vigilant to ensure that we do not forget the lessons of the last century. The admonition that ''those who forget history are doomed to repeat it'' is as true today as ever. After the Holocaust, survivors and others vowed not to let another such tragedy go unchallenged. Rallying behind the cry: ''Never again!'', Holocaust survivors made a promise to the memories of their mothers, fathers, husbands, wives and children. This bill provides a way for us to join with Holocaust survivors in keeping that promise. It ensures that future generations of Americans will remember that bigotry against any group poses a menace to society at large, and that the violation of an individual's rights places every person's freedom in peril.

I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.●

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 26

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. BREAUX) was added as a cosponsor of S. 26, a bill entitled the ''Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 1999.''

S. 279

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 279, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age.

S. 408

At the request of Mr. BRYAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 408, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey a former Bureau of Land Management administrative site to the City of Carson City, Nevada, for use as a senior center.

S. 693

At the request of Mr. HELMS, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 693, a bill to assist in the enhancement of the security of Taiwan, and for other purposes.

S. 936

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 936, a bill to prevent children from having access to firearms.

S. 1036

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1036, a bill to amend parts A and D of title IV of the Social Security Act to give States the option to pass through directly to a family receiving assistance under the temporary assistance to needy families program all child support collected by the State and the option to disregard any child support that the family receives in determining a family's eligibility for, or amount of, assistance under that program.

S. 1144

At the request of Mr. VOINOVICH, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1144, a bill to provide increased flexibility in use of highway funding, and for other purposes.

S. 1322

At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1322, a bill to prohibit health insurance and employment discrimination against individuals and their family members on the basis of predictive genetic information or genetic services.

S. 1361

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1361, a bill to amend the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 to provide for an expanded Federal program of hazard mitigation, relief, and insurance against the risk of catastrophic natural disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, and for other purposes.

S. 1419

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) were added as cosponsors of S. 1419, a bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to designate May as ''National Military Appreciation Month.''

S. 1458

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1458, a bill to provide for a reduction in the rate of adolescent pregnancy through the evaluation of public and private prevention programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1464

At the request of Mr. HAGEL, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1464, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to establish certain requirements regarding the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996, and for other purposes.

S. 1563

At the request of Mr. ABRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. WELLSTONE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1563, a bill to establish the Immigration Affairs Agency within the Department of Justice, and for other purposes.

S. 1592

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. WELLSTONE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1592, a bill to amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act to provide to certain nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of status under that Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1700

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. WELLSTONE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1700, a bill to amend the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure to allow a defendant to make a motion for forensic testing not available at trial regarding actual innocence.

S. 1717

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1717, a bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of pregnancy-related assistance for targeted low-income pregnant women.

S. 1810

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1810, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify and improve veterans' claims and appellate procedures.

S. 1921

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1921, a bill to authorize the placement within the site of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial of a plaque to honor Vietnam veterans who died after their service in the Vietnam war, but as a direct result of that service.

S. 1952

At the request of Mr. ABRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1952, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a simplified method for determining a partner's share of items of a partnership which is a qualified investment club.

S. 1966

At the request of Mr. HAGEL, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1966, a bill to provide for the immediate review by the Immigration and Naturalization Service of new employees hired by employers subject to Operation Vanguard or similar programs, and for other purposes.

S. 2003

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2003, a bill to restore health care coverage to retired members of the uniformed services.

S. 2021

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. L. CHAFEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2021 , a bill to prohibit high school and college sports gambling in all States including States where such gambling was permitted prior to 1991.

S. 2042

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr.

MURKOWSKI), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. HELMS), and the Senator from Texas (Mr. GRAMM) were added as cosponsors of S. 2042, a bill to reform the process by which the Office of the Pardon Attorney investigates and reviews potential exercises of executive clemency.

S. 2044

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2044, a bill to allow postal patrons to contribute to funding for domestic violence programs through the voluntary purchase of specially issued postage stamps.

S. 2068

At the request of Mr. GREGG, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2068, a bill to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from establishing rules authorizing the operation of new, low power FM radio stations.

S. 2074

At the request of Mr. ASHCROFT, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2074, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the social security earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age.

S. 2076

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. BREAUX), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG), the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. THOMPSON), the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. DASCHLE), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. FITZGERALD), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. ASHCROFT), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. COVERDELL), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI), the Senator from Florida (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. KERREY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG), the Senator from Washington (Mr. GORTON), the Senator from Texas (Mr. GRAMM), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL), the Senator from Florida (Mr. MACK), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ROBB), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. WELLSTONE), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SMITH), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. THURMOND), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2076, a bill to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York, in recognition of his accomplishments as a priest, a chaplain, and a humanitarian.

S. 2097

At the request of Mr. GRAMM, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2097, a bill to authorize loan guarantees in order to facilitate access to local television broadcast signals in unserved and underserved areas, and for other purposes.

S. 2123

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG) were added as cosponsors of S. 2123, a bill to provide Outer Continental Shelf Impact assistance to State and local governments, to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act of 1978, and the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (commonly referred to as the Pittman-Robertson Act) to establish a fund to meet the outdoor conservation and recreation needs of the American people, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 60

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 60, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that a commemorative postage stamp should be issued in honor of the U.S.S. *Wisconsin* and all those who served aboard her.

S.J. RES. 38

At the request of Mr. VOINOVICH, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. COVERDELL) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 38, a joint resolution to provide for a Balanced Budget Constitutional Amendment that prohibits the use of Social Security surpluses to achieve compliance.

S.J. RES. 39

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CLELAND), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SMITH), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SANTORUM), the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. GRAMM), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. L. CHAFEE), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. KERREY), the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) were added as cosponsors of S.J .Res. 39, a joint resolution recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Korean war and the service by members of the Armed Forces during such war, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 87

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 87, a resolution commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the International Visitors Program.

S. RES. 128

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE), and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 128, a resolution designating March 2000, as ''Arts Education Month''.

S. RES. 237

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES), and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. TORRICELLI) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 237, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations should hold hearings and the Senate should act on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

S. RES. 257

At the request of Mr. CRAIG, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SMITH), and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 257, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the responsibility of the United States to ensure that the Panama Canal will remain open and secure to vessels of all nations.

S. RES. 260

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 260, a resolution to express the sense of the Senate that the Federal investment in programs that provide health care services to uninsured and low-income individuals in medically under served areas be increased in order to double access to care over the next 5 years.

AMENDMENT NO. 2825

At the request of Mr. ABRAHAM, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. DASCHLE), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. TORRICELLI), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2825 proposed to S. 1134, an original bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax-free expenditures from education individual retirement accounts for elementary and secondary school expenses, to increase the maximum annual amount of contributions to such accounts, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. FITZGERALD, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2825 proposed to S. 1134, an original bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax-free expenditures from education individual retirement accounts for elementary and secondary school expenses, to increase the maximum annual amount of contributions to such accounts, and for other purposes.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 87—COMMENDING THE HOLY SEE FOR MAKING SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS, AND OBJECTING TO EFFORTS TO EXPEL THE HOLY SEE FROM THE UNITED NATIONS BY REMOVING THE HOLY SEE'S PERMANENT OBSERVER STATUS IN THE UNITED NATIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire (for himself, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. HELMS, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. COVERDELL, and Mr. BROWNBACK) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

S. CON. RES. 87

Whereas the Holy See is the governing authority of the sovereign State of Vatican City;

Whereas the Holy See has an internationally recognized legal personality, which allows it to enter into treaties as the juridical equal of a state and to send and receive diplomatic representatives;

Whereas the diplomatic history of the Holy See began over 1,600 years ago, during the 4th century A.D., and the Holy See currently has formal diplomatic relations with 169 nations, including the United States, and maintains 179 permanent diplomatic missions abroad;

Whereas, although the Holy See was an active participant in a wide range of United Nations activities since 1946, and was eligible to become a member state of the United Nations, it chose instead to become a nonmember state with Permanent Observer status over 36 years ago, in 1964;

Whereas, unlike other geographically small countries such as Monaco, Nauru, San Marino, and Liechtenstein, the Holy See does not possess a vote in the General Assembly of the United Nations;

Whereas, according to a July 1998 assessment by the United States Department of State, ''(t)he United States values the Holy See's significant contributions to international peace and human rights'';

Whereas during the past year, certain organizations that oppose the views of the Holy See regarding abortion and the sanctity of human life have initiated an organized effort to pressure the United Nations to remove the Permanent Observer status of the Holy See; and

Whereas the removal of the Holy See's Permanent Observer status would constitute an expulsion of the Holy See from the United Nations as a state participant: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress

(1) commends the Holy See for its unique contributions to a thoughtful and robust dialogue in issues of international concern during its 36 years as a Permanent Observer at the United Nations;

(2) strongly objects to any effort to expel the Holy See from the United Nations as a state participant by removing its status as a nonmember state Permanent Observer;

(3) believes that any degradation of the status accorded to the Holy See at the United Nations would seriously damage the credibility of the United Nations by demonstrating that its rules of participation are manipulable for ideological reasons rather than being rooted in neutral principles and objective facts of sovereignty; and

(4) contends that any degradation of the status of the Holy See will damage relations between the United States and the United Nations.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise for the purpose of submitting a Senate concurrent resolution objecting to any efforts to expel or degrade the Holy See's current status as a nonmember permanent observer to the United Nations. It is hard to believe there are people in the world—indeed, in our own country—who wish to take away that status.

Throughout my tenure in the Senate and the House, I have worked to uphold the sovereignty of the United States, perhaps as much as anyone in the body. Recently, it has come to my attention that the sovereignty of the Holy See, the institution that represents the State of the Vatican City internationally, is being attacked by up to 400 nongovernmental organizations in a movement called ''See Change.'' That is S-e-e.

See Change is comprised of extremist groups, pro-choice groups, some extreme environmental organizations, and antireligious, atheist groups who want to take away this permanent status of the Holy See.

Specifically, the agenda of See Change is to pressure U.N. Secretary General Annan into revoking the Holy See's nonmember Permanent Observer status by attacking its status as the legal and diplomatic body that represents the sovereign country of the State of the Vatican City.

What an outrage. See Change believes it can use the smokescreen of the Holy See's unique sovereignty to silence its undisputed legal rights as a sovereign entity to voice its views on the sanctity of human life at the U.N. That is what this is about. It is about an attack on the sanctity of human life. It is an attack on the Pope for his views on the sanctity of human life.

Since the U.N. rules by the consensus of all members, See Change is attempting to pressure and intimidate the Holy See, the Secretary General, and other member countries of the U.N. to silence any opposition to what really is a pro-abortion agenda.

Currently, the Holy See is recognized by almost every nation in the world. Furthermore, the Holy See has sent and received diplomats since the 4th century and has possessed a permanent diplomatic mission since the 15th century.

As I stated before, a central argument that these nongovernmental organizations use is the issue of the Holy See's legally recognized authority to represent the citizens of Vatican City and the worldwide Catholic Church.

According to international law, sovereignty in its simplest form can be defined by a people, territorial entity, and a government with institutions that are recognized by the international community of nations. Without any doubt—since the 4th century—the Holy See acts as the legal and internationally recognized body that represents the people of Vatican City and Catholics around the world. The Holy See meets all those criteria. The Vatican State has a population of approximately 900 citizens, has a defined territory, and has institutions of government.

The sovereignty issue was irrefutably settled in 1929, when the Holy See and Italy signed and ratified the Lateran Treaty, which brought the Vatican City State into existence. Article 12 of this treaty states:

Diplomatic relations with the Holy See are governed by the rules of International Law.

All states have equal standing under international law. I believe the Senate needs to send a strong, positive message to reaffirm the concept of state sovereignty. If we cannot do that in this body, then I do not know what we can do. I would like to remind Secretary General Kofi Annan about his duty to uphold the principle the United Nations considers most important in its charter—the legal equality of nations, which is Article 2(1).

Furthermore, this legal principle says all states are not similar in their

characteristics. For example, China contains about one-quarter of the human race while the State of the Vatican City contains a little fewer than 1,000 citizens.

Moreover, this Nation, the United States, is exponentially larger in physical size and political stature than, say, Bangladesh; however, both nations have equal status under international law.

Frances Kissling, president of Catholics for a Free Choice, said the Holy See sitting at the U.N. was like ''Euro-Disney sitting on the Security Council.'' Can you imagine? Surely, any person, American or not, would recoil at the irreverence of this statement and the ignorance, frankly, of the invaluable work the Holy See has undertaken to foster peace between fellow nations.

Highly respected U.N. leaders, such as Dag Hammarskjold, have, in fact, recognized the unique sovereign status of the State of the Vatican City and insisted on the presence of the Holy See at the U.N. In addition, U.N. Secretary General U Thant attempted to establish an increased stability of relations between the Holy See and the U.N.

Catholics for a Free Choice—I use that term loosely—a leading organization in the movement to remove the Holy See from the U.N., has set forth the following statement in their own web site:

> What place does a religious body—claiming to possess the universal ''objective truth'' and speak infallibly on moral matters—have in an intergovernmental institution like the United Nations?

I would like to point out that above the doors of the U.S. House Chamber are the reliefs of great lawmakers who had a profound impact on the moral and legal origins of this Nation. The most important lawmaker is Moses; his relief is placed higher, in the center of the Chamber, facing the Chair.

Why didn't anyone question the sovereignty of the Soviet Union and its Politburo, with the Communist ideology that it espoused, and the manner in which it imposed its will upon the satellite states of Eastern Europe under its control? I did not hear any criticism of them.

Should theocracies, such as Iran or even Israel, be threatened in the same manner if some extremist organization, opposed to their religious and social views, came forth?

The elected head of the Catholic Church, Pope John Paul II, has recently made trips to Cuba and Angola, where he was received by multitudes, millions of people, supporting his message of peace, the rule of law, and freedom represented by the Catholic Church and, indeed, by many other citizens, as well.

I am proud to say, in submitting this resolution, that as original cosponsors I have Senators COVERDELL, SANTORUM, LANDRIEU, HELMS, ASHCROFT, INHOFE, MCCAIN, STEVENS, and BROWNBACK. A bipartisan group has become original cosponsors. I urge my colleagues, in the name of what is right, to join with us in sponsoring this legislation.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED

THE AFFORDABLE EDUCATION ACT OF 1999

BINGAMAN AMENDMENT NO. 2863

Mr. BINGAMAN proposed an amendment to the bill (S. 1134) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax-free expenditures from education individual retirement accounts for elementary and secondary school expenses, to increase the maximum annual amount of contributions to such accounts, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike section 101 and insert the following:

''SEC. 101 FUNDS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.

''(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated $275,000,000 for fiscal year 2001 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the succeeding fiscal years.

''(b) NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—From the amount appropriated for any fiscal year under subsection (a), the Secretary of Education ('the Secretary') may reserve not more than 3 percent to conduct evaluations and studies, collect data, and carry out other activities relevant to sections 1116 and 1117 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (hereafter in this section referred to as ''the ESEA''). .

''(c) ALLOCATIONS TO STATES.—The Secretary shall allocate the amount appropriated for any fiscal year under subsection (a) and not reserved under subsection (b) among the States in the same proportion in which funds are allocated among the States under part A of title I of the ESEA.

''(d) STATE USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State educational agency shall use funds received under subsection (c) to—

''(A) make allotments under paragraph (2); and

''(B) carry out its responsibilities under sections 1116 and 1117 of the ESEA, including establishing and supporting the State educational agency's statewide system of technical assistance and support for local educational agencies.

''(2) ALLOTMENTS TO LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Each State educational agency shall allot at least 70 percent of the amount received under this section to local educational agencies in the State.

''(B) PRIORITIES.—In making allotments under this paragraph, the State educational agency shall—

''(i) give first priority to schools and local educational agencies with schools identified for corrective action under section 1116(c)(5) of the ESEA; and

''(ii) give second priority to schools and local educational agencies with other schools identified for school improvement under section 1116(c)(1) of the ESEA.

''(e) LOCAL USE OF FUNDS.—.

''(1) CORRECTIVE ACTION.—Each local educational agency receiving an allotment under subsection (d)(2)(B)(i) shall use the allotment to carry out effective corrective action in the schools identified for corrective action.

''(2) SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.—Each local educational agency receiving an allotment under subsection (d)(2)(B)(ii) shall use the allotment to achieve substantial improvement in the performance of the schools identified for school improvement.''

GRAHAM (AND OTHERS) AMENDMENT NO. 2864

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. ROBB, and Mr. BINGMAN) proposed an amendment to the bill, S. 1134, supra; as follows:

At the appropriate place, add the following:

TITLE —TRANSITION TO TEACHING

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Transition to Teaching Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) School districts will need to hire more than 2,000,000 teachers in the next decade. The need for teachers in the areas of mathematics, science, foreign languages, special education, and bilingual education, and for those able to teach in high-poverty school districts will be particularly high. To meet this need, talented Americans of all ages should be recruited to become successful, qualified teachers.

(2) Nearly 28 percent of teachers of academic subjects have neither an undergraduate major nor minor in their main assignment fields. This problem is more acute in high-poverty schools, where the out-of-field percentage is 39 percent.

(3) The Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) ranked United States high school seniors last among 16 countries in physics and next to last in mathematics. It is also evident, mainly from the TIMSS data, that based on academic scores, a stronger emphasis needs to be placed on the academic preparation of our children in mathematics and science.

(4) One-fourth of high-poverty schools find it very difficult to fill bilingual teaching positions, and nearly half of public school teachers have students in their classrooms for whom English is a second language.

(5) Many career-changing professionals with strong content-area skills are interested in a teaching career, but need assistance in getting the appropriate pedagogical training and classroom experience.

(6) The Troops to Teachers model has been highly successful in linking high-quality teachers to teach in high-poverty districts.

SEC. 3. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this title is to address the need of high-poverty school districts for highly qualified teachers in particular subject areas, such as mathematics, science, foreign languages, bilingual education, and special education, needed by those school districts, by recruiting, preparing, placing, and supporting career-changing professionals who have knowledge and experience that will help them become such teachers.

SEC. 4. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.

(a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary is authorized to use funds appropriated under subsection (b) for each fiscal year to award grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to institutions of higher education and public and private nonprofit agencies or organizations to carry out programs authorized by this title.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out this title, there are authorized to be appropriated $25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2006.

SEC. 5. APPLICATION.

Each applicant that desires an award under section 4(a) shall submit an application

to the Secretary containing such information as the Secretary requires, including—

(1) a description of the target group of career-changing professionals upon which the applicant will focus in carrying out its program under this title, including a description of the characteristics of that target group that shows how the knowledge and experience of its members are relevant to meeting the purpose of this title;

(2) a description of how the applicant will identify and recruit program participants;

(3) a description of the training that program participants will receive and how that training will relate to their certification as teachers;

(4) a description of how the applicant will ensure that program participants are placed and teach in high-poverty local educational agencies;

(5) a description of the teacher induction services (which may be provided through existing induction programs) the program participants will receive throughout at least their first year of teaching;

(6) a description of how the applicant will collaborate, as needed, with other institutions, agencies, or organizations to recruit, train, place, and support program participants under this title, including evidence of the commitment of those institutions, agencies, or organizations to the applicant's program;

(7) a description of how the applicant will evaluate the progress and effectiveness of its program, including—

(A) the program's goals and objectives;

(B) the performance indicators the applicant will use to measure the program's progress; and

(C) the outcome measures that will be used to determine the program's effectiveness; and

(8) an assurance that the applicant will provide to the Secretary such information as the Secretary determines necessary to determine the overall effectiveness of programs under this title.

SEC. 6. USES OF FUNDS AND PERIOD OF SERVICE.

(a) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Funds under this title may be used for—

(1) recruiting program participants, including informing them of opportunities under the program and putting them in contact with other institutions, agencies, or organizations that would train, place, and support them;

(2) training stipends and other financial incentives for program participants, not to exceed $5,000 per participant;

(3) assisting institutions of higher education or other providers of teacher training to tailor their training to meet the particular needs of professionals who are changing their careers to teaching;

(4) placement activities, including identifying high-poverty local educational agencies with a need for the particular skills and characteristics of the newly trained program participants and assisting those participants to obtain employment in those local educational agencies; and

(5) post-placement induction or support activities for program participants.

(b) PERIOD OF SERVICE.—A program participant in a program under this title who completes his or her training shall serve in a high-poverty local educational agency for at least 3 years.

(c) REPAYMENT.—The Secretary shall establish such requirements as the Secretary determines appropriate to ensure that program participants who receive a training stipend or other financial incentive under subsection (a)(2), but fail to complete their service obligation under subsection (b), repay all or a portion of such stipend or other incentive.

SEC. 7. EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

To the extent practicable, the Secretary shall make awards under this title that support programs in different geographic regions of the Nation.

SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) HIGH-POVERTY LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term ''high-poverty local educational agency'' means a local educational agency in which the percentage of children, ages 5 through 17, from families below the poverty level is 20 percent or greater, or the number of such children exceeds 10,000.

(2) PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.—The term ''program participants'' means career-changing professionals who—

(A) hold at least a baccalaureate degree;

(B) demonstrate interest in, and commitment to, becoming a teacher; and

(C) have knowledge and experience that are relevant to teaching a high-need subject area in a high-need local educational agency.

WELLSTONE AMENDMENT NO. 2865

Mr. WELLSTONE proposed an amendment to the bill, S. 1134, supra; as follows:

At the appropriate place add the following:

SEC. . REPORT TO CONGRESS REGARDING EXTENT AND SEVERITY OF CHILD POVERTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than June 1, 2001 and prior to any reauthorization of the temporary assistance to needy families program under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) for any fiscal year after fiscal year 2002, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the ''Secretary'') shall report to Congress on the extent and severity of child poverty in the United States. Such report shall, at a minimum—

(1) determine for the period since the enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–193; 110 Stat. 2105)—

(A) whether the rate of child poverty in the United States has increased;

(B) whether the children who live in poverty in the United States have gotten poorer; and

(C) how changes in the availability of cash and non-cash benefits to poor families have affected child poverty in the United States;

(2) identify alternative methods for defining child poverty that are based on consideration of factors other than family income and resources, including consideration of a family's work-related expenses; and

(3) contain multiple measures of child poverty in the United States that may include the child poverty gap and the extreme poverty rate.

(b) LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL.—If the Secretary determines that during the period since the enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–193; 110 Stat. 2105) the extent or severity of child poverty in the United States has increased to any extent, the Secretary shall include with the report to Congress required under subsection (a) a legislative proposal addressing the factors that led to such increase.

KERRY AMENDMENT NO. 2866

(Ordered to lie on the table.)

Mr. KERRY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill, S. 1135, supra; as follows:

At the appropriate place, add the following:

TITLE —AMENDMENTS TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965

SEC. 01. SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FUTURE TEACHERS.

Part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SUBPART 9—SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FUTURE TEACHERS

''SEC. 420L. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.

''It is the purpose of this subpart to establish a scholarship program to promote student excellence and achievement and to encourage students to make a commitment to teaching.

''SEC. 420M. SCHOLARSHIPS AUTHORIZED.

''(a) PROGRAM AUTHORITY.—The Secretary is authorized, in accordance with the provisions of this subpart, to make grants to States to enable the States to award scholarships to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and who make a commitment to become State certified teachers in elementary schools or secondary schools that are served by local educational agencies.

''(b) PERIOD OF AWARD.—Scholarships under this section shall be awarded for a period of not less than 1 and not more than 4 years during the first 4 years of study at any institution of higher education eligible to participate in any program assisted under this title. The State educational agency administering the scholarship program in a State shall have discretion to determine the period of the award (within the limits specified in the preceding sentence).

''(c) USE AT ANY INSTITUTION PERMITTED.—A student awarded a scholarship under this subpart may attend any institution of higher education.

''SEC. 420N. ALLOCATION AMONG STATES.

''(a) ALLOCATION FORMULA.—From the sums appropriated under section 420U for any fiscal year, the Secretary shall allocate to each State that has an agreement under section 420O an amount that bears the same relation to the sums as the amount the State received under part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 bears to the amount received under such part A by all States.

''(b) AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIPS.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations setting forth the amount of scholarships awarded under this subpart.

''SEC. 420O. AGREEMENTS.

''The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with each State desiring to participate in the scholarship program authorized by this subpart. Each such agreement shall include provisions designed to ensure that—

''(1) the State educational agency will administer the scholarship program authorized by this subpart in the State;

''(2) the State educational agency will comply with the eligibility and selection provisions of this subpart;

''(3) the State educational agency will conduct outreach activities to publicize the availability of scholarships under this subpart to all eligible students in the State, with particular emphasis on activities designed to assure that students from low-income and moderate-income families have access to the information on the opportunity for full participation in the scholarship program authorized by this subpart; and

''(4) the State educational agency will pay to each individual in the State who is awarded a scholarship under this subpart an amount determined in accordance with regulations promulgated under section 420N(b).

''SEC. 420P. ELIGIBILITY OF SCHOLARS.

''(a) SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATION OR EQUIVALENT AND ADMISSION TO INSTITUTION

REQUIRED.—Each student awarded a scholarship under this subpart shall—

''(1) have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

''(2) have a score on a nationally recognized college entrance exam, such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Testing Program (ACT), that is in the top 20 percent of all scores achieved by individuals in the secondary school graduating class of the student, or have a grade point average that is in the top 20 percent of all students in the secondary school graduating class of the student;

''(3) have been admitted for enrollment at an institution of higher education; and

''(4) make a commitment to become a State certified elementary school or secondary school teacher for a period of 5 years.

''(b) SELECTION BASED ON COMMITMENT TO TEACHING.—Each student awarded a scholarship under this subpart shall demonstrate outstanding academic achievement and show promise of continued academic achievement.

''SEC. 420Q. SELECTION OF SCHOLARS.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF CRITERIA.—The State educational agency is authorized to establish the criteria for the selection of scholars under this subpart.

''(b) ADOPTION OF PROCEDURES.—The State educational agency shall adopt selection procedures designed to ensure an equitable geographic distribution of scholarship awards within the State.

''(c) CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.—In carrying out its responsibilities under subsections (a) and (b), the State educational agency shall consult with school administrators, local educational agencies, teachers, counselors, and parents.

''(d) TIMING OF SELECTION.—The selection process shall be completed, and the awards made, prior to the end of each secondary school academic year.

''SEC. 420R. SCHOLARSHIP CONDITION.

''The State educational agency shall establish procedures to assure that a scholar awarded a scholarship under this subpart pursues a course of study at an institution of higher education that is related to a career in teaching.

''SEC. 420S. RECRUITMENT.

''In carrying out a scholarship program under this section, a State may use not less than 5 percent of the amount awarded to the State under this subpart to carry out recruitment programs through local educational agencies. Such programs shall target liberal arts, education and technical institutions of higher education in the State.

''SEC. 420T. INFORMATION.

''The Secretary shall develop additional programs or strengthen existing programs to publicize information regarding the programs assisted under this title and teaching careers in general.

''SEC. 420U. APPROPRIATIONS.

''There are authorized to be appropriated, and there are appropriated, to carry out this subpart $10,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2001 through 2005, of which not more than 0.5 percent shall be used by the Secretary in any fiscal year to carry out section 420T.''.

SEC. 02. LOAN FORGIVENESS AND CANCELLATION FOR TEACHERS.

(a) FEDERAL STAFFORD LOANS.—Section 428J of Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078–10) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) of subsection (b)(1), by striking ''for 5 consecutive complete school years'';

(2) by amending paragraph (1) of subsection (c) to read as follows:

''(1) AMOUNT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall repay—

''(i) not more than $5,000 in the aggregate of the loan obligation on a loan made under section 428 or 428H that is outstanding after the completion of the second complete school year of teaching described in subsection (b)(1); and

''(ii) not more than $5,000 in the aggregate of such loan obligation that is outstanding after the fifth complete school year of teaching described in subsection (b)(1).

''(B) SPECIAL RULE.—No borrower may receive a reduction of loan obligations under both this section and section 460.''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated, and there are appropriated, to carry out this section $50,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2001 through 2005.''.

(b) DIRECT LOANS.—Section 460 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087j) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i) of subsection (b)(1)(A), by striking ''for 5 consecutive complete school years'';

(2) by amending paragraph (1) of subsection (c) to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall repay—

''(A) not more than $5,000 in the aggregate of the loan obligation on a Federal Direct Stafford Loan or a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan that is outstanding after the completion of the second complete school year of teaching described in subsection (b)(1)(A); and

''(B) not more than $5,000 in the aggregate of such loan obligation that is outstanding after the fifth complete school year of teaching described in subsection (b)(1)(A).''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(i) APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated, and there are appropriated, to carry out this section $50,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2001 through 2005.''.

LANDRIEU (AND LIEBERMAN) AMENDMENT NO. 2867

(Ordered to lie on the table.)

Mrs. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted an amendment to be proposed by them to the bill, S. 1134, supra; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE —TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL QUALITY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 1. TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL QUALITY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This title may be cited as the ''Public Education Reinvestment, Reinvention, and Responsibility Act''.

(b) PROGRAMS.—Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6601 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

''TITLE II—TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL QUALITY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

''SEC. 2001. PURPOSE.

''The purpose of this title is to provide grants to State educational agencies and local educational agencies in order to assist their efforts to increase student academic achievement through such strategies as improving teacher and principal quality and increasing professional development.

''SEC. 2002. DEFINITIONS.

''In this title:

''(1) FULLY QUALIFIED.—The term 'fully qualified' means—

''(A) in the case of an elementary school teacher (other than a teacher teaching in a public charter school), a teacher who, at a minimum—

''(i) has obtained State certification (which may include certification obtained through alternative means), or a State license, to teach in the State in which the teacher teaches;

''(ii) holds a bachelor's degree from an institution of higher education; and

''(iii) demonstrates subject matter knowledge, teaching knowledge, and the teaching skills required to teach effectively reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, and other elements of a liberal arts education; and

''(B) in the case of a secondary school teacher (other than a teacher teaching in a public charter school), a teacher who, at a minimum—

''(i) has obtained State certification (which may include certification obtained through alternative means), or a State license, to teach in the State in which the teacher teaches;

''(ii) holds a bachelor's degree from an institution of higher education;

''(iii) demonstrates a high level of competence in all subject areas in which the teacher teaches through—

''(I) completion of an academic major (or courses totaling an equivalent number of credit hours) in each of the subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; or

''(II) achievement of a high level of performance in other professional employment experience in subject areas relevant to the subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; and

''(iv) achieves a high level of performance on rigorous academic subject area tests administered by the State in which the teacher teaches.

''(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term 'institution of higher education' means an institution of higher education, as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, that—

''(A) has not been identified as low performing under section 208 of the Higher Education Act of 1965; and

''(B) is in full compliance with the public reporting requirements described in section 207 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

''(3) OUTLYING AREA.—The term 'outlying area' means the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

''(4) POVERTY LINE.—The term 'poverty line' means the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget, and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act) applicable to a family of the size involved, for the most recent year.

''(5) SCHOOL-AGE POPULATION.—The term 'school-age population' means the population aged 5 through 17, as determined on the basis of the most recent satisfactory data.

''(6) STATE.—The term 'State' means each of the several States in the United States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

''SEC. 2003. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.

''(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary shall award a grant, from allotments made under subsection (b), to each State having a State plan approved under section 2005, to enable the State to raise the quality of, and provide professional development opportunities for, public elementary school and secondary school teachers, principals, and administrators.

''(b) RESERVATIONS AND ALLOTMENTS.—

''(1) RESERVATIONS.—From the amount appropriated under section 2015 to carry out this title for each fiscal year, the Secretary shall reserve—

''(A) ½ of 1 percent of such amount for payments to the Bureau of Indian Affairs for activities, approved by the Secretary, consistent with this title;

''(B) ½ of 1 percent of such amount for payments to outlying areas, to be allotted in accordance with their respective needs as determined by the Secretary, for activities, approved by the Secretary, consistent with this title; and

''(C) such sums as may be necessary to continue to support any multiyear partnership program award made under parts A, C, and D of this title and under title IV of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act (as such titles and Act were in effect on the day preceding the date of enactment of the Public Education Reinvestment, Reinvention, and Responsibility Act) until the termination of the multiyear award.

''(2) STATE ALLOTMENTS.—From the amount appropriated under section 2015 for a fiscal year and remaining after the Secretary makes reservations under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall allot to each State having a State plan approved under section 2005 the sum of—

''(A) an amount that bears the same relationship to 50 percent of the remainder as the school-age population from families with incomes below the poverty line in the State bears to the school-age population from families with incomes below the poverty line in all States; and

''(B) an amount that bears the same relationship to 50 percent of the remainder as the school-age population in the State bears to the school-age population in all States.

''(c) STATE MINIMUM.—For any fiscal year, no State shall be allotted under this section an amount that is less than ½ of 1 percent of the total amount allotted to all States under subsection (b)(2).

''(d) HOLD-HARMLESS AMOUNTS.—For fiscal year 2001, notwithstanding subsection (b)(2), the amount allotted to each State under this section shall be not less than 100 percent of the total amount the State was allotted under part B of this title (as this title was in effect on the day preceding the date of enactment of the Public Education Reinvestment, Reinvention, and Responsibility Act) for the preceding fiscal year.

''(e) RATABLE REDUCTIONS.—If the sums made available under subsection (b)(2) for any fiscal year are insufficient to pay the full amounts that all States are eligible to receive under subsection (d) for such year, the Secretary shall ratably reduce such amounts for such year.

''SEC. 2004. WITHIN STATE ALLOCATION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Each State educational agency for a State receiving a grant under section 2003(a) shall—

''(1) set aside 10 percent of the grant funds to award educator partnership grants under section 2013;

''(2) set aside not more than 5 percent of the grant funds to carry out activities described the State plan submitted under section 2005; and

''(3) using the remaining 85 percent of the grant funds, make subgrants by allocating to each local educational agency in the State the sum of—

''(A) an amount that bears the same relationship to 60 percent of the remainder as the school-age population from families with incomes below the poverty line in the area served by the local educational agency bears to the school-age population from families with incomes below the poverty line in the area served by all local educational agencies in the State; and

''(B) an amount that bears the same relationship to 40 percent of the remainder as the school-age population in the area served by the local educational agency bears to the school-age population in the area served by all local educational agencies in the State.

''(b) HOLD-HARMLESS AMOUNTS.—

''(1) FISCAL YEAR 2001.—For fiscal year 2001, notwithstanding subsection (a), the amount allocated to each local educational agency under this section shall be not less than 100 percent of the total amount the local educational agency was allocated under this title (as this title was in effect on the day preceding the date of enactment of the Public Education Reinvestment, Reinvention, and Responsibility Act) for fiscal year 2000.

''(2) FISCAL YEAR 2002.—For fiscal year 2002, notwithstanding subsection (a), the amount allocated to each local educational agency under this section shall be not less than 85 percent of the amount allocated to the local educational agency under this section for fiscal year 2001.

''(3) FISCAL YEARS 2003–2005.—For each of fiscal years 2003 through 2005, notwithstanding subsection (a), the amount allocated to each local educational agency under this section shall be not less than 70 percent of the amount allocated to the local educational agency under this section for the previous fiscal year.

''(c) RATABLE REDUCTIONS.—If the sums made available under subsection (a)(3) for any fiscal year are insufficient to pay the full amounts that all local educational agencies are eligible to receive under subsection (b) for such year, the State educational agency shall ratably reduce such amounts for such year.

''SEC. 2005. STATE PLANS.

''(a) PLAN REQUIRED.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) COMPREHENSIVE STATE PLAN.—The State educational agency for each State desiring a grant under this title shall submit a State plan, developed in consultation with the entity or agency, if other than the State educational agency, that is responsible for teacher certification or licensing in the State, to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

''(B) TEACHER CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.—The entity, or agency, if other than the State educational agency, that is responsible for teacher certification or licensing in the State, shall develop, in consultation with the State educational agency, and submit to the State educational agency the portion of the State plan described in subparagraph (A) that addresses teacher certification or licensure.

''(2) CONSOLIDATED PLAN.—A State plan submitted under paragraph (1) may be submitted as part of a consolidated plan under section 14302.

''(b) CONTENTS.—Each plan submitted under subsection (a) shall—

''(1) describe how the State is taking reasonable steps to—

''(A) reform teacher certification, recertification, or licensure requirements to ensure that—

''(i) teachers have the necessary teaching skills and academic content knowledge in the academic subjects in which the teachers are assigned to teach;

''(ii) such requirements are aligned with the challenging State content standards;

''(iii) teachers have the knowledge and skills necessary to help students meet the challenging State student performance standards;

''(iv) such requirements take into account the need, as determined by the State, for greater access to, and participation in, the teaching profession by individuals from historically underrepresented groups; and

''(v) teachers have the necessary technological skills to integrate more effectively technology in the teaching of content required by State and local standards in all academic subjects in which the teachers provide instruction;

''(B) develop and implement rigorous testing procedures for all teachers to ensure that the teachers have teaching skills and academic content knowledge necessary to teach effectively the content called for by State and local standards in all academic subjects in which the teachers provide instruction;

''(C) establish, expand, or improve alternative routes to State certification of teachers, especially in the areas of mathematics and science, for highly qualified individuals with a baccalaureate degree, including mid-career professionals form other occupations, paraprofessionals, former military personnel, and recent college or university graduates who have records of academic distinction and who demonstrate the potential to become highly effective teachers;

''(D) reduce emergency teacher certification;

''(E) develop and implement effective programs, and provide financial assistance, to assist local educational agencies, elementary schools, and secondary schools in effectively recruiting and retaining fully qualified teachers and principals, particularly in schools that have the lowest proportion of fully qualified teachers or the highest proportion of low-performing students;

''(F) provide professional development programs that meet the requirements described in section 2011;

''(G) provide programs that are designed to assist new teachers during their first 3 years of teaching, such as mentoring programs that—

''(i) provide mentoring to new teachers from veteran teachers with expertise in the same subject matter as the new teachers are teaching;

''(ii) provide mentors time for activities such as coaching, observing, and assisting teachers who are being mentored; and

''(iii) use standards or assessments that are consistent with the State's student performance standards and the requirements for professional development activities described in section 2011 in order to guide the new teachers;

''(H) provide technical assistance to local educational agencies in developing and implementing activities described in section 2010; and

''(I) ensure that programs in core academic subjects, particularly in mathematics and science, will take into account the need for greater access to, and participation in, such core academic subjects by students from historically underrepresented groups, including females, minorities, individuals with limited English proficiency, the economically disadvantaged, and individuals with disabilities, by incorporating pedagogical strategies and techniques that meet such students' educational needs;

''(2) describe the activities for which assistance is sought under the grant, and how such activities will improve students' academic achievement and close academic achievement gaps of low-income, minority, and limited English proficient students;

''(3) describe how the State will establish annual numerical performance objectives under section 2006 for improving the qualifications of teachers and the professional development of teachers, principals, and administrators;

''(4) contain an assurance that the State consulted with local educational agencies, education-related community groups, nonprofit organizations, parents, teachers, school administrators, local school boards, institutions of higher education in the State, and content specialists in establishing the

performance objectives described in section 2006;

''(5) describe how the State will hold local educational agencies, elementary schools, and secondary schools accountable for meeting the performance objectives described in section 2006 and for reporting annually on the local educational agencies' and schools' progress in meeting the performance objectives;

''(6) describe how the State will ensure that a local educational agency receiving a subgrant under section 2004 will comply with the requirements of this title;

''(7) provide an assurance that the State will require each local educational agency, elementary school, or secondary school receiving funds under this title to report publicly the local educational agency's or school's annual progress with respect to the performance objectives described in section 2006; and

''(8) describe how the State will coordinate professional development activities authorized under this title with professional development activities provided under other Federal, State, and local programs, including programs authorized under titles I and III and, where appropriate, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998.

''(c) SECRETARY APPROVAL.—The Secretary shall, using a peer review process, approve a State plan if the plan meets the requirements of this section.

''(d) DURATION OF THE PLAN.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State plan shall—

''(A) remain in effect for the duration of the State's participation under this title; and

''(B) be periodically reviewed and revised by the State, as necessary, to reflect changes to the State's strategies and programs carried out under this title.

''(2) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—If a State receiving a grant under this title makes significant changes to the State plan, such as the adoption of new performance objectives, the State shall submit information regarding the significant changes to the Secretary.

''SEC. 2006. PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Each State receiving a grant under this title shall establish annual numerical performance objectives with respect to progress in improving the qualifications of teachers and the professional development of teachers, principals, and administrators. For each annual numerical performance objective established, the State shall specify an incremental percentage increase for the objective to be attained for each of the fiscal years for which the State receives a grant under this title, relative to the preceding fiscal year.

''(b) REQUIRED OBJECTIVES.—At a minimum, the annual numerical performance objectives described in subsection (a) shall include an incremental increase in the percentage of—

''(1) classes in core academic subjects that are being taught by teachers who have degrees from institutions of higher education, and who are fully certified or licensed by the State in the academic subjects that the teachers are assigned to teach;

''(2) new teachers and principals receiving professional development support, including mentoring for teachers, during the teachers' first 3 years of teaching;

''(3) teachers, principals, and administrators participating in high quality professional development programs that are consistent with section 2011; and

''(4) fully qualified teachers teaching in the State, to ensure that all teachers teaching in such State are fully qualified by December 31, 2005.

''(c) REQUIREMENT FOR FULLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS.—Each State receiving a grant under this title shall ensure that all public elementary school and secondary school teachers in the State are fully qualified not later than December 31, 2005.

''(d) ACCOUNTABILITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State receiving a grant under this title shall be held accountable for—

''(A) meeting the State's annual numerical performance objectives; and

''(B) meeting reporting requirements specified by the Secretary.

''(2) SANCTIONS.—Any State that fails to meet the requirement described in paragraph (1)(A) shall be subject to sanctions. The Secretary shall reduce by an appropriate percentage the amount the State is entitled to receive for administrative expenses. The Secretary shall provide technical assistance, if sought, to a State subjected to the sanctions.

''(e) SPECIAL RULE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the provisions of subsection (c) shall not supersede State laws governing public charter schools.

''(f) COORDINATION.—Each State that receives a grant under this title and a grant under section 202 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 shall coordinate the activities the State carries out under such section 202 with the activities the State carries out under this section.

''SEC. 2007. OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES.

''Each State receiving a grant under section 2003(a) may use the grant funds—

''(1) to develop and implement a system to measure the effectiveness of specific professional development programs and strategies;

''(2) to increase the portability of teacher pensions and reciprocity of teaching certification or licensure among States, except that no reciprocity agreement developed under this section may lead to the weakening of any State teacher certification or licensing requirement;

''(3) to reform tenure systems;

''(4) to develop or assist local educational agencies in the development and utilization of proven, innovative strategies to deliver intensive professional development programs that are cost effective and easily accessible, such as programs offered through the use of technology and distance learning;

''(5) to provide assistance to local educational agencies for the development and implementation of innovative professional development programs that train teachers to use technology to improve teaching and learning and that are consistent with the requirements of section 2011;

''(6) to provide professional development to enable teachers to ensure that female students, minority students, limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students have the full opportunity to achieve challenging State content and performance standards in the core academic subjects;

''(7) to increase the number of women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities who teach in the State and who are fully qualified and provide instruction in core academic subjects in which such individuals are underrepresented; and

''(8) to increase the number of highly qualified women, minorities, and individuals from other underrepresented groups who are involved in the administration of elementary schools and secondary schools within the State.

''SEC. 2008. STATE ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.

''Each State receiving a grant under section 2003(a) may use not more than 5 percent of the amount set aside in section 2004(a)(2) for the cost of—

''(1) planning and administering the activities described in section 2005(b); and

''(2) making subgrants to local educational agencies under section 2004.

''SEC. 2009. LOCAL PLANS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Each local educational agency desiring a grant from the State under section 2004(a)(3) shall submit a local plan to the State educational agency—

''(1) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the State educational agency may require; and

''(2) that describes how the local educational agency will coordinate the activities for which assistance is sought under this title with other programs carried out under this Act, or other Acts, as appropriate.

''(b) LOCAL PLAN CONTENTS.—The local plan described in subsection (a) shall, at a minimum—

''(1) describe how the local educational agency will use the grant funds to meet the State performance objectives for teacher qualifications and professional development described in section 2006;

''(2) describe how the local educational agency will hold elementary schools and secondary schools accountable for meeting the requirements described in this title;

''(3) contain an assurance that the local educational agency will target funds to elementary schools and secondary schools served by the local educational agency that—

''(A) have the lowest proportion of fully qualified teachers; and

''(B) are identified for school improvement under section 1116;

''(4) describe how the local educational agency will coordinate professional development activities authorized under section 2010(a) with professional development activities provided through other Federal, State, and local programs, including those authorized under titles I and III and, where applicable, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998; and

''(5) describe how the local educational agency has collaborated with teachers, principals, parents, and administrators in the preparation of the local plan.

''SEC. 2010. LOCAL ACTIVITIES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Each local educational agency receiving a grant under section 2004(a)(3) shall use the grant funds to—

''(1) support professional development activities, consistent with section 2011, for—

''(A) teachers, in at least the areas of reading, mathematics, and science; and

''(B) teachers, principals, and administrators in order to provide such individuals with the knowledge and skills to provide all students, including female students, minority students, limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students, with the opportunity to meet challenging State content and student performance standards;

''(2) provide professional development to teachers, principals, and administrators to enhance the use of technology within elementary schools and secondary schools in order to deliver more effective curricula instruction;

''(3) recruit and retain fully qualified teachers and highly qualified principals, particularly for elementary schools and secondary schools located in areas with high percentages of low-performing students and students from families below the poverty line;

''(4) recruit and retain fully qualified teachers and high quality principals to serve in the elementary schools and secondary schools with the highest proportion of low-performing students, such as through—

''(A) mentoring programs for newly hired teachers, including programs provided by master teachers, and for newly hired principals; and

''(B) programs that provide other incentives, including financial incentives, to retain—

''(i) teachers who have a record of success in helping low-performing students improve those students' academic success; and

''(ii) principals who have a record of improving the performance of all students, or significantly narrowing the gaps between minority students and nonminority students, and economically disadvantaged students and noneconomically disadvantaged students, within the elementary schools or secondary schools served by the principals; and

''(5) provide professional development that incorporates effective strategies, techniques, methods, and practices for meeting the educational needs of diverse groups of students, including female students, minority students, students with disabilities, limited English proficient students, and economically disadvantaged students.

''(b) OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES.—Each local educational agency receiving a grant under section 2004(a)(3) may use the subgrant funds—

''(1) to provide a signing bonus or other financial incentive, such as differential pay for—

''(A) a teacher to teach in an academic subject for which there exists a shortage of fully qualified teachers within the elementary school or secondary school in which the teacher teaches or within the elementary schools and secondary schools served by the local educational agency; or

''(B) a highly qualified principal in a school in which there is a large percentage of children—

''(i) from low-income families; or

''(ii) with high percentages of low-performance scores on State assessments;

''(2) to establish programs that—

''(A) recruit professionals into teaching from other fields and provide such professionals with alternative routes to teacher certification, especially in the areas of mathematics, science, and English language arts; and

''(B) provide increased teaching and administration opportunities for fully qualified females, minorities, individuals with disabilities, and other individuals underrepresented in the teaching or school administration professions;

''(3) to establish programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of the teacher and principal force, such as innovative professional development programs (which may be provided through partnerships, including partnerships with institutions of higher education), and including programs that—

''(A) train teachers and principals to utilize technology to improve teaching and learning; and

''(B) are consistent with the requirements of section 2011;

''(4) for tenure reform;

''(5) to provide collaboratively designed performance pay systems for teachers and principals that encourage teachers and principals to work together to raise student performance;

''(6) to establish professional development programs that provide instruction in how to teach children with different learning styles, particularly children with disabilities and children with special learning needs (including children who are gifted and talented);

''(7) to establish professional development programs that provide instruction in how best to discipline children in the classroom, and to identify early and appropriate interventions to help children described in paragraph (6) learn;

''(8) to provide professional development programs that provide instruction in how to teach character education in a manner that—

''(A) reflects the values of parents, teachers, and local communities; and

''(B) incorporates elements of good character, including honesty, citizenship, courage, justice, respect, personal responsibility, and trustworthiness;

''(9) to provide scholarships or other incentives to assist teachers in attaining national board certification;

''(10) to support activities designed to provide effective professional development for teachers of limited English proficient students; and

''(11) to establish other activities designed—

''(A) to improve professional development for teachers, principals, and administrators that are consistent with section 2011; and

''(B) to recruit and retain fully qualified teachers and highly qualified principals.

''(c) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Each local educational agency receiving a grant under section 2004(a)(3) may use not more than 1.5 percent of the grant funds for any fiscal year for the cost of administering activities under this title.

''SEC. 2011. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS.

''(a) LIMITATION RELATING TO CURRICULUM AND CONTENT AREAS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a local educational agency may not use grant funds allocated under section 2004(a)(3) to support a professional development activity for a teacher that is not—

''(A) directly related to the curriculum for which and content areas in which the teacher provides instruction; or

''(B) designed to enhance the ability of the teacher to understand and use the State's challenging content standards for the academic subject in which the teacher provides instruction.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to professional development activities that provide instruction in methods of disciplining children.

''(b) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY.—A professional development activity carried out under this title shall—

''(1) be measured, in terms of progress described in section 2006(a), using the specific performance indicators established by the State in accordance with section 2006;

''(2) be tied to challenging State or local content standards and student performance standards;

''(3) be tied to scientifically based research demonstrating the effectiveness of such activities in increasing student achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers;

''(4) be of sufficient intensity and duration (such as not to include 1-day or short-term workshops and conferences) to have a positive and lasting impact on teachers' performance in the classroom, except that this paragraph shall not apply to an activity that is 1 component described in a long-term comprehensive professional development plan established by a teacher and the teacher's supervisor, and based upon an assessment of the needs of the teacher, the teacher's students, and the local educational agency;

''(5) be developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, parents, administrators, and local school boards of elementary schools and secondary schools to be served under this title, and institutions of higher education in the State, and, with respect to any professional development program described in paragraph (6) or (7) of section 2010(b), shall, if applicable, be developed with extensive coordination with, and participation of, professionals with expertise in such type of professional development;

''(6) to the extent appropriate, provide training for teachers regarding using technology and applying technology effectively in the classroom to improve teaching and learning concerning the curriculum and academic content areas, in which those teachers provide instruction; and

''(7) be directly related to the content areas in which the teachers provide instruction and the State content standards.

''(c) ACCOUNTABILITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A State shall notify a local educational agency that the agency may be subject to the action described in paragraph (3) if, after any fiscal year, the State determines that the programs or activities funded by the agency under this title fail to meet the requirements of subsections (a) and (b).

''(2) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—A local educational agency that has received notification pursuant to paragraph (1) may request technical assistance from the State and an opportunity for such local educational agency to comply with the requirements of subsections (a) and (b).

''(3) STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY ACTION.—If a State educational agency determines that a local educational agency failed to carry out the local educational agency's responsibilities under this section, the State educational agency shall take such action as the agency determines to be necessary, consistent with this section, to provide, or direct the local educational agency to provide, high-quality professional development for teachers, principals, and administrators.

''SEC. 2012. PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW.

''Each local educational agency receiving a grant under section 2004(a)(3) shall annually report to the State in which the agency is located information, in the aggregate, on the professional qualifications of teachers in schools served by the agency, including the percentage of such teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials, the percentage of class sections in such schools that are not taught by fully qualified teachers, and the percentage of teachers in such schools who are fully qualified.

''SEC. 2013. STATE REPORTS AND GAO STUDY.

''(a) STATE REPORTS.—Each State educational agency receiving a grant under this title shall annually provide a report to the Secretary describing—

''(1) the progress the State is making in increasing the percentages of fully qualified teachers in the State to ensure that all teachers are fully qualified not later than December 31, 2005, including information regarding—

''(A) the percentage increase over the previous fiscal year in the number of fully qualified teachers teaching in elementary schools and secondary schools served by local educational agencies receiving funds under title I; and

''(B) the percentage increase over the previous fiscal year in the number of core classes being taught by fully qualified teachers in elementary schools and secondary schools being served under title I;

''(2) the activities undertaken by the State educational agency and local educational agencies in the State to attract and retain fully qualified teachers, especially in geographic areas and content subject areas in which a shortage of such teachers exist; and

''(3) the approximate percentage of Federal, State, local, and nongovernmental resources being expended to carry out activities described in paragraph (2).

''(b) GAO STUDY.—Not later than September 30, 2004, the Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and submit to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate a study setting forth information regarding the progress of States' compliance in increasing the percentage of fully qualified teachers, as defined in section 2002(1), for fiscal years 2000 through 2003.

''SEC. 2014. EDUCATOR PARTNERSHIP GRANTS.

''(a) SUBGRANTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A State receiving a grant under section 2003(a) shall award subgrants, on a competitive basis, from amounts made available under section 2004(a)(1), to local educational agencies, elementary schools, or secondary schools that have formed educator partnerships, for the design and implementation of programs that will enhance professional development opportunities for teachers, principals, and administrators, and will increase the number of fully qualified teachers.

''(2) ALLOCATIONS.—A State awarding subgrants under this subsection shall allocate the subgrant funds on a competitive basis and in a manner that results in an equitable distribution of the subgrant funds by geographic areas within the State.

''(3) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Each educator partnership receiving a subgrant under this subsection may use not more than 5 percent of the subgrant funds for any fiscal year for the cost of planning and administering programs under this section.

''(b) EDUCATOR PARTNERSHIPS.—An educator partnership described in subsection (a) includes a cooperative arrangement between—

''(1) a public elementary school or secondary school (including a charter school), or a local educational agency; and

''(2) 1 or more of the following:

''(A) An institution of higher education.

''(B) An educational service agency.

''(C) A public or private not-for-profit education organization.

''(D) A for-profit education organization.

''(E) An entity from outside the traditional education arena, including a corporation or consulting firm.

''(c) USE OF FUNDS.—An educator partnership receiving a subgrant under this section shall use the subgrant funds for—

''(1) developing and enhancing of professional development activities for teachers in core academic subjects to ensure that the teachers have content knowledge in the academic subjects in which the teachers provide instruction;

''(2) developing and providing assistance to local educational agencies and elementary schools and secondary schools for sustained, high-quality professional development activities for teachers, principals, and administrators, that—

''(A) ensure that teachers, principals, and administrators are able to use State content standards, performance standards, and assessments to improve instructional practices and student achievement; and

''(B) may include intensive programs designed to prepare a teacher who participates in such a program to provide professional development instruction to other teachers within the participating teacher's school;

''(3) increasing the number of fully qualified teachers available to provide high-quality education to limited English proficient students by—

''(A) working with institutions of higher education that offer degree programs, to attract more people into such programs, and to prepare better new, English language teachers to provide effective language instruction to limited English proficient students; and

''(B) supporting development and implementation of professional development programs for language instruction teachers to improve the language proficiency of limited English proficient students;

''(4) developing and implementing professional development activities for principals and administrators to enable the principals and administrators to be effective school leaders and to improve student achievement on challenging State content and student performance standards, including professional development relating to—

''(A) leadership skills;

''(B) recruitment, assignment, retention, and evaluation of teachers and other staff;

''(C) effective instructional practices, including the use of technology; and

''(D) parental and community involvement; and

''(5) providing activities that enhance professional development opportunities for teachers, principals, and administrators or will increase the number of fully qualified teachers.

''(d) APPLICATION REQUIRED.—Each educator partnership desiring a subgrant under this section shall submit an application to the appropriate State educational agency at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the State educational agency may reasonably require.

''(e) COORDINATION.—Each educator partnership that receives a subgrant under this section and a grant under section 203 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 shall coordinate the activities carried out under such section 203 with any related activities carried out under this section.

''SEC. 2015. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title $1,600,000,000 for fiscal year 2001 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.''.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will conduct an oversight hearing on Wednesday, March 1, 2000 on the Report prepared by the National Academy of Public Administration entitled ''A Study of Management and Administration: The Bureau of Indian Affairs.'' The hearing will be held in the Committee room, 485 Russell Senate Building and will begin at 9:30 a.m.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2000 at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing on draft legislation to reauthorize the Indian Health Care Improvement Act of 1976. The hearing will be held in the Committee room, 485 Russell Senate Building.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Rules and Administration will meet at 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 8, 2000, in Room SR–301 Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing, followed by an executive session, on the nominations of:

Danny Lee McDonald, of Oklahoma, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2005 (reappointment); and

Bradley A. Smith, of Ohio, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2005, vice Lee Ann Elliott, resigned.

For further information concerning this meeting, please contact Hunter Bates at the Rules Committee on 4–6352.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I would like to announce that a full committee hearing has been scheduled before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The hearing will take place Wednesday, March 8, 2000, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C.

The purpose of this hearing is to examine energy supply and demand issues relating to crude oil, heating oil, and transportation fuels in light of the rise in price of these fuels.

Those who wish to submit written testimony should write to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. Presentation of oral testimony is by Committee invitation only. For further information, please contact Jo Meuse or Brian Malnak at (202) 224–6730.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION, AND RECREATION

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that H.R. 1615, a bill to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to extend the designation of a portion of the Lamprey River in New Hampshire as a recreational river to include an additional river segment, has been added to the list of bills scheduled for a hearing by the Subcommittee on March 8, 2000 at 2:30 p.m.

The hearing will take place on Wednesday, March 8 at 2.30 p.m. in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

For further information, please contact Jim O'Toole or Kevin Clark of the Committee staff at (202) 224–6969.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, be allowed to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2000. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the Agriculture Trade Agreement with China.

The PRESIDENT OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the

Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2000 at 9:30 a.m., in open session, to receive testimony on the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 2001 and the future years defense program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2000, at 9:30 a.m., on the nominations of Carol Carmody and John Goglia to be members of the National Transportation Safety Board.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1 at 9:30 a.m., to conduct an oversight hearing. The committee will consider the President's proposed budget for FY 2001 for the Department of the Interior.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2000, at 10:45 a.m. and 2 p.m., to hold two hearings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2000, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet in executive session for the consideration of S. 2, the Educational Opportunities Act, during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2000.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous that the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2000 at 9:30 a.m. to conduct an oversight hearing on the Report prepared by the National Academy for Public Administration entitled: ''A Study of Management and Administration: The Bureau of Indian Affairs.'' The hearing will be held in the committee room, 485 Russell Senate Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on Wednesday, March 1, 2000, at 10 a.m., in SD226.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs would like to request unanimous consent to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to receive the legislative presentations of the Disabled American Veterans. The hearing will be held on Wednesday, March 1, 2000, at 10 a.m., in room 345 of the Cannon House Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2000 at 9:30 a.m. to hold a closed hearing on intelligence matters.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FISHERIES, WILDLIFE, AND WATER

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Water be authorized to conduct a hearing to examine the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed rules regarding changes in the total maximum daily load and NPDES permit programs pursuant to the Clean Water Act, Wednesday, March 1, 1 p.m., hearing room (SD–406).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2000 at 2:30 p.m., in closed and open sessions to receive testimony on Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Protection, in review of the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 2001.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT AND THE COURTS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on Wednesday, March 1, 2000, at 2 p.m., in SD226.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SPACE

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Science, Technology, and Space Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2000, at 2:30 p.m. on Next Generation Internet 2000.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE FUELS AND CHEMICALS ACT OF 1999

On February 29, 2000, the Senate amended and passed S. 935, as follows:

S. 935

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

TITLE I—BIOMASS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2000

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Biomass Research and Development Act of 2000''.

SEC. 102. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) conversion of biomass into biobased industrial products offers outstanding potential for benefit to the national interest through improved strategic security and balance of payments, healthier rural economies, improved environmental quality, near-zero net greenhouse gas emissions, technology export, and sustainable resource supply;

(2) the key technical challenges to be overcome in order for biobased industrial products to be cost competitive are finding new technology and reducing the cost of technology for converting biomass into desired biobased industrial products;

(3) biobased fuels, such as ethanol, have the clear potential to be sustainable, low cost, and high performance fuels that are compatible with both current and future transportation systems and provide near zero net greenhouse gas emissions;

(4) biobased chemicals—

(A) can provide functional replacements for essentially all organic chemicals that are currently derived from petroleum; and

(B) have the clear potential for environmentally benign product life cycles;

(5) biobased power can provide environmental benefits, promote rural economic development, and diversify energy resource options;

(6) many biomass feedstocks suitable for industrial processing show the clear potential for sustainable production, in some cases resulting in improved soil fertility and carbon sequestration;

(7)(A) grain processing mills are biorefineries that produce a diversity of useful food, chemical, feed, and fuel products; and

(B) technologies that result in further diversification of the range of value-added biobased industrial products can meet a key need for the grain processing industry;

(8)(A) cellulosic feedstocks are attractive because of their low cost and widespread availability; and

(B) research resulting in cost-effective technology to overcome the recalcitrance of cellulosic biomass would allow biorefineries to produce fuels and bulk chemicals on a very large scale, with a commensurately

large realization of the benefit described in paragraph (1);

(9) research into the fundamentals to understand important mechanisms of biomass conversion can be expected to accelerate the application and advancement of biomass processing technology by—

(A) increasing the confidence and speed with which new technologies can be scaled up; and

(B) giving rise to processing innovations based on new knowledge;

(10) the added utility of biobased industrial products developed through improvements in processing technology would encourage the design of feedstocks that would meet future needs more effectively;

(11) the creation of value-added biobased industrial products would create new jobs in construction, manufacturing, and distribution, as well as new higher-valued exports of products and technology;

(12)(A) because of the relatively short-term time horizon characteristic of private sector investments, and because many benefits of biomass processing are in the national interest, it is appropriate for the Federal Government to provide precommercial investment in fundamental research and research-driven innovation in the biomass processing area; and

(B) such an investment would provide a valuable complement to ongoing and past governmental support in the biomass processing area; and

(13) several prominent studies, including studies by the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology and the National Research Council—

(A) support the potential for large research-driven advances in technologies for production of biobased industrial products as well as associated benefits; and

(B) document the need for a focused, integrated, and innovation-driven research effort to provide the appropriate progress in a timely manner.

SEC. 103. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The term ''Advisory Committee'' means the Biomass Research and Development Technical Advisory Committee established by section 106.

(2) BIOBASED INDUSTRIAL PRODUCT.—The term ''biobased industrial product'' means fuels, commercial chemicals, building materials, or electric power or heat produced from biomass.

(3) BIOMASS.—The term ''biomass'' means any organic matter that is available on a renewable or recurring basis, including agricultural crops and trees, wood and wood wastes and residues, plants (including aquatic plants), grasses, residues, fibers, and animal wastes, municipal wastes and other waste materials.

(4) BOARD.—The term ''Board'' means the Biomass Research and Development Board established by section 105.

(5) INITIATIVE.—The term ''Initiative'' means the Biomass Research and Development Research Initiative established under section 107.

(6) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given that term in section 1201(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1141(a)).

(7) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—The term ''national laboratory'' means a facility or group of facilities owned, leased, or operated by a Federal agency (including a contractor of the Federal agency) for the performance of research, development, or engineering.

(8) POINT OF CONTACT.—The term ''point of contact'' means a point of contact designated under section 104(d).

(9) PROCESSING.—The term ''processing'' means the derivation of biobased industrial products from biomass, including—

(A) feedstock production;

(B) harvest and handling;

(C) pretreatment or thermochemical processing;

(D) fermentation;

(E) catalytic processing;

(F) product recovery; and

(G) coproduct production.

SEC. 104. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION IN BIOMASS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Energy shall cooperate with respect to, and coordinate, policies and procedures that promote research and development leading to the production of biobased industrial products.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the cooperation and coordination shall be to—

(1) understand the key mechanisms underlying the recalcitrance of biomass for conversion into biobased industrial products;

(2) develop new and cost-effective technologies that would result in large-scale commercial production of low cost and sustainable biobased industrial products;

(3) ensure that biobased industrial products are developed in a manner that enhances their economic, energy security, and environmental benefits; and

(4) promote the development and use of agricultural and energy crops for conversion into biobased industrial products.

(c) AREAS.—In carrying out this title, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Energy, in consultation with heads of appropriate departments and agencies, shall promote research and development to—

(1) advance the availability and widespread use of energy efficient, economically competitive, and environmentally sound biobased industrial products in a manner that is consistent with the goals of the United States relating to sustainable and secure supplies of food, chemicals, and fuel;

(2) ensure full consideration of Federal land and land management programs as potential feedstock resources for biobased industrial products; and

(3) assess the environmental, economic, and social impact of production of biobased industrial products from biomass on a large scale.

(d) POINTS OF CONTACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To coordinate research and development programs and activities relating to biobased industrial products that are carried out by their respective Departments—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture shall designate, as the point of contact for the Department of Agriculture, an officer of the Department of Agriculture appointed by the President to a position in the Department before the date of the designation, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; and

(B) the Secretary of Energy shall designate, as the point of contact for the Department of Energy, an officer of the Department of Energy appointed by the President to a position in the Department before the date of the designation, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(2) DUTIES.—The points of contact shall jointly—

(A) assist in arranging interlaboratory and site-specific supplemental agreements for research, development, and demonstration projects relating to biobased industrial products;

(B) serve as cochairpersons of the Board;

(C) administer the Initiative; and

(D) respond in writing to each recommendation of the Advisory Committee made under section 106.

SEC. 105. BIOMASS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Biomass Research and Development Board to coordinate programs within and among departments and agencies of the Federal Government for the purpose of promoting the use of biobased industrial products by—

(1) maximizing the benefits deriving from Federal grants and assistance; and

(2) bringing coherence to Federal strategic planning.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Board shall consist of:

(1) The point of contact of the Department of Energy designated under section 104(d)(1)(B), who shall serve as cochairperson of the Board.

(2) The point of contact of the Department of Agriculture designated under section 104(d)(1)(A), who shall serve as cochairperson of the Board.

(3) A senior officer of each of the following agencies who is appointed by the head of the agency and who has a rank that is equivalent to the points of contact:

(A) The Department of the Interior.

(B) The Environmental Protection Agency.

(C) The National Science Foundation.

(D) The Office of Science and Technology Policy.

(4) At the option of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Energy, other members appointed by the Secretaries (after consultation with members described in paragraphs (1) through (3)).

(c) DUTIES.—The Board shall—

(1) coordinate research, development, and demonstration activities relating to biobased industrial products—

(A) between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Energy; and

(B) with other departments and agencies of the Federal Government; and

(2) provide recommendations to the points of contact concerning administration of this title.

(d) FUNDING.—Each agency represented on the Board is encouraged to provide funds for any purpose under this title.

(e) MEETINGS.—The Board shall meet at least quarterly to enable the Board to carry out the duties of the Board under subsection (c).

SEC. 106. BIOMASS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Biomass Research and Development Technical Advisory Committee to—

(1) advise the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Agriculture and the points of contact concerning—

(A) the technical focus and direction of requests for proposals issued under the Initiative; and

(B) procedures for reviewing and evaluating the proposals;

(2) facilitate consultations and partnerships among Federal and State agencies, agricultural producers, industry, consumers, the research community, and other interested groups to carry out program activities relating to the Initiative; and

(3) evaluate and perform strategic planning on program activities relating to the Initiative.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Committee shall consist of the following members appointed by the points of contact:

(1) An individual affiliated with the biobased industrial products industry.

(2) An individual affiliated with an institution of higher education who has expertise in biobased industrial products.

(3) two prominent engineers or scientists from government or academia who have expertise in biobased industrial products.

(4) An individual affiliated with a commodity trade association.

(5) An individual affiliated with an environmental or conservation organization.

(6) An individual associated with State government who has expertise in biobased industrial products.

(7) At the option of the points of contact, other members.

(c) DUTIES.—The Advisory Committee shall—

(1) advise the points of contact with respect to the Initiative; and

(2) evaluate whether, and make recommendations in writing to the Board to ensure that—

(A) funds authorized for the Initiative are distributed and used in a manner that is consistent with the goals of the Initiative;

(B) the points of contact are funding proposals under this title that are selected on the basis of merit, as determined by an independent panel of scientific and technical peers; and

(C) activities under this title are carried out in accordance with this title.

(d) MEETINGS.—The Advisory Committee shall meet at least quarterly to enable the Advisory Committee to carry out the duties of the Advisory Committee under subsection (c).

SEC. 107. BIOMASS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Energy, acting through their respective points of contact and in consultation with the Board, shall establish and carry out a Biomass Research and Development Initiative under which competitively-awarded grants, contracts, and financial assistance are provided to, or entered into with, eligible entities to carry out research on biobased industrial products.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of grants, contracts, and assistance under this section shall be to—

(1) stimulate collaborative activities by a diverse range of experts in all aspects of biomass processing for the purpose of conducting fundamental and innovation-targeted research and technology development;

(2) enhance creative and imaginative approaches toward biomass processing that will serve to develop the next generation of advanced technologies making possible low cost and sustainable biobased industrial products;

(3) strengthen the intellectual resources of the United States through the training and education of future scientists, engineers, managers, and business leaders in the field of biomass processing; and

(4) promote integrated research partnerships among colleges, universities, national laboratories, Federal and State research agencies, and the private sector as the best means of overcoming technical challenges that span multiple research and engineering disciplines and of gaining better leverage from limited Federal research funds.

(c) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible for a grant, contract, or assistance under this section, an applicant shall be—

(A) an institution of higher education;

(B) a national laboratory;

(C) a Federal research agency;

(D) a State research agency;

(E) a private sector entity;

(F) a nonprofit organization; or

(G) a consortium of 2 or more entities described in subparagraphs (A) through (E).

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—After consultation with the Board, the points of contact, on behalf of the Board, shall—

(A) publish annually 1 or more joint requests for proposals for grants, contracts, and assistance under this section;

(B) establish a priority in grants, contracts, and assistance under this section for research that—

(i) demonstrates potential for significant advances in biomass processing;

(ii) demonstrates potential to substantially impact scale-sensitive national objectives such as sustainable resource supply, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, healthier rural economies, and improved strategic security and trade balances; and

(iii) would improve knowledge of important biomass processing systems that demonstrate potential for commercial applications;

(C) require that grants, contracts, and assistance under this section be awarded competitively, on the basis of merit, after the establishment of procedures that provide for scientific peer review by an independent panel of scientific and technical peers; and

(D) give preference to applications that—

(i) involve a consortia of experts from multiple institutions; and

(ii) encourage the integration of disciplines and application of the best technical resources.

(d) USES OF GRANTS, CONTRACTS, AND ASSISTANCE.—A grant, contract, or assistance under this section may be used to conduct—

(1) research on process technology for overcoming the recalcitrance of biomass, including research on key mechanisms, advanced technologies, and demonstration test beds for—

(A) feedstock pretreatment and hydrolysis of cellulose and hemicellulose, including new technologies for—

(i) enhanced sugar yields;

(ii) lower overall chemical use;

(iii) less costly materials; and

(iv) cost reduction;

(B) development of novel organisms and other approaches to substantially lower the cost of cellulase enzymes and enzymatic hydrolysis, including dedicated cellulase production and consolidated bioprocessing strategies; and

(C) approaches other than enzymatic hydrolysis for overcoming the recalcitrance of cellulosic biomass;

(2) research on technologies for diversifying the range of products that can be efficiently and cost-competitively produced from biomass, including research on—

(A) metabolic engineering of biological systems (including the safe use of genetically modified crops) to produce novel products, especially commodity products, or to increase product selectivity and tolerance, with a research priority on the development of biobased industrial products that can compete in performance and cost with fossil-based products;

(B) catalytic processing to convert intermediates of biomass processing into products of interest;

(C) separation technologies for cost-effective product recovery and purification;

(D) approaches other than metabolic engineering and catalytic conversion of intermediates of biomass processing;

(E) advanced biomass gasification technologies, including coproduction of power and heat as an integrated component of biomass processing, with the possibility of generating excess electricity for sale; and

(F) related research in advanced turbine and stationary fuel cell technology for production of electricity from biomass; and

(3) research aimed at ensuring the environmental performance and economic viability of biobased industrial products and their raw material input of biomass when considered as an integrated system, including research on—

(A) the analysis of, and strategies to enhance, the environmental performance and sustainability of biobased industrial products, including research on—

(i) accurate measurement and analysis of greenhouse gas emissions, carbon sequestration, and carbon cycling in relation to the life cycle of biobased industrial products and feedstocks with respect to other alternatives;

(ii) evaluation of current and future biomass resource availability;

(iii) development and analysis of land management practices and alternative biomass cropping systems that ensure the environmental performance and sustainability of biomass production and harvesting;

(iv) land, air, water, and biodiversity impacts of large-scale biomass production, processing, and use of biobased industrial products relative to other alternatives; and

(v) biomass gasification and combustion to produce electricity;

(B) the analysis of, and strategies to enhance, the economic viability of biobased industrial products, including research on—

(i) the cost of the required process technology;

(ii) the impact of coproducts, including food, animal feed, and fiber, on biobased industrial product price and large-scale economic viability; and

(iii) interactions between an emergent biomass refining industry and the petrochemical refining infrastructure; and

(C) the field and laboratory research related to feedstock production with the interrelated goals of enhancing the sustainability, increasing productivity, and decreasing the cost of biomass processing, including research on—

(i) altering biomass to make biomass easier and less expensive to process;

(ii) existing and new agricultural and energy crops that provide a sustainable resource for conversion to biobased industrial products while simultaneously serving as a source for coproducts such as food, animal feed, and fiber;

(iii) improved technologies for harvest, collection, transport, storage, and handling of crop and residue feedstocks; and

(iv) development of economically viable cropping systems that improve the conservation and restoration of marginal land; or

(4) Any research and development in technologies or processes determined by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Energy, acting through their respective points of contact and in consultation with the Board, to be consistent with the purposes described in subsection (b) and priorities described in subsection (c)(2)(B).

(e) TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION TRANSFER TO AGRICULTURAL USERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service and the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service shall ensure that applicable research results and technologies from the Initiative are adapted, made available, and disseminated through their respective services, as appropriate.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this title, the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service and the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service shall report to the committees of Congress with jurisdiction over the Initiative on the activities conducted by the services under this subsection.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to funding provided for biomass research and development under the general

authority of the Secretary of Energy to conduct research and development and demonstration programs (which may also be used to carry out this title), there are also authorized to be appropriated $49,000,000 to the Department of Agriculture for each of the fiscal years 2000 through 2005 to carry out this title.

SEC. 108. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AND FUNDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To the extent administrative support and funds are not provided by other agencies under subsection (b), the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of Agriculture may provide such administrative support and funds of the Department of Energy and the Department of Agriculture to the Board and the Advisory Committee as are necessary to enable the Board and the Advisory Committee to carry out this title.

(b) OTHER AGENCIES.—The heads of the agencies referred to, or appointed under, paragraphs (3) and (4) of section 105(b) may, and are encouraged to, provide administrative support and funds of their respective agencies to the Board and the Advisory Committee.

SEC. 109. REPORTS.

For each fiscal year that funds are made available to carry out this title, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Energy shall jointly transmit to Congress a detailed report on—

(1) the status and progress of the Initiative, including a certification from the Board that funds authorized for the Initiative are distributed and used in a manner that is consistent with the goals of the Initiative; and

(2) the general status of cooperation and research efforts carried out by each Secretary with respect to sustainable fuels, chemicals, and electricity derived from biomass, including a certification from the Board that the points of contact are funding proposals that are selected on the basis of merit, as determined by an independent panel of scientific and technical peers.

SEC. 110. SUNSET.

This title and the authority conferred by this title shall terminate on December 31, 2005.

TITLE II—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR ETHANOL RESEARCH PILOT PLANT

SEC. 201. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to construct a Department of Agriculture corn-based ethanol research pilot plant a total of $14,000,000 for fiscal year 2000 and subsequent fiscal years.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2000

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until the hour of 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 2. I further ask unanimous consent that on Thursday, immediately following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then resume debate on the pending Hatch-Mack amendment to S. 1134, the education savings account bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, the Senate will resume consideration of the Hatch-Mack amendment No. 2827 regarding the marriage penalty tax at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow. Following 30 minutes of debate, at approximately 10 a.m., the Senate will proceed to a vote on or in relation to the amendment.

The managers are actively working on scheduling the remaining amendments that need to be acted upon. It is possible the bill may be completed as early as tomorrow evening. Therefore, Senators can expect votes throughout the day and into the evening.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator WYDEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG AFFORDABILITY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this morning the Democratic Policy Committee had a very important hearing on the issue of prescription drug coverage under Medicare for the Nation's older people. We heard from senior citizens, we heard from pharmacists, we heard from gerontologists, extraordinarily compelling testimony about why this prescription drug benefit is so important.

Frankly, I do not think there is a single Member of the Senate, whether they are a Democrat or a Republican, who would not be moved by what we heard this morning. The senior citizens, as we hear again and again in townhall meetings at home, are pointing out that they cannot afford their prescription medicines.

The pharmacists went into detail about how frustrated they are that so many of the older people lack bargaining power in the marketplace, bargaining power that can help them drive down the cost of their medicine. I thought the gerontologists we heard from this morning were very compelling in making the case of how so many of these drugs today can promote wellness and help seniors stay healthy and keep from racking up these extraordinary medical bills that are so often incurred and require hospitalization under what is called Part A of the Medicare program.

It is so important that we come together as a body to address this issue. Senator DASCHLE, in particular, mentions to me on almost a daily basis how he wants to reconcile the various bills. He wants to reach out to colleagues on the other side of the aisle. In particular, I praise my colleague, Senator SNOWE. She and I have worked for over a year on a bipartisan effort with respect to prescription drugs.

I know colleagues on the other side of the aisle are interested in this issue as well. Frankly, I think any Member of the Senate who heard what the Democratic Policy Committee heard this morning had to have been moved by how great the need is for prescription drug coverage for seniors.

One of the issues that has come up in recent days is this question of whether private insurance companies are going to be interested in this benefit and whether they are going to be willing to update their policies. We are hearing a lot of talk that maybe they are not and they are not going to come forward.

I guess we are starting to hear from the same crowd who said doctors and hospitals in the early sixties were not going to participate in the Medicare program. It is preposterous to say private insurers are not going to participate once we go forward and enact a responsible bipartisan prescription drug program for seniors under Medicare.

What the Snowe-Wyden legislation does is make it very clear the money that would be earmarked under our bipartisan bill would be made available to pick up the prescription drug portion of a senior citizen's private health insurance bill.

The Presiding Officer, who has great expertise in this area as well, knows that the vast majority of seniors have these private policies—Medigap policies, HMO policies, a variety of private policies today.

I am absolutely convinced that when we go forward to enact this program on a bipartisan basis, as we heard in the Democratic policy session this morning, private insurance companies all over this country will tear up their existing contracts with older people and add the prescription drug program that we enact this year to their coverage. By the way, they would not be required to do it. Under our legislation and other bills, this would be voluntary for both private insurance companies and for older people.

The reason why I believe private insurance companies are going to be very eager to participate is that they will not be able to be competitive with the various other companies in an area unless they offer the benefit.

If you took a Salt Lake City, UT, or a Portland, OR, or a Denver, CO, where there are a variety of insurers, once we enact this program, seniors are going to go to private insurers and ask: Are you offering this particular benefit? Because we see the Congress has passed a law making available funds to pick up the prescription drug portion of a senior citizen's private health insurance bill.

I think all this talk about how private insurance companies are not going to be interested in offering this benefit is incredibly farfetched. While our proposal and the other good proposals that

are offered are voluntary, we are already hearing from insurance companies that they are going to be very interested in offering this benefit. In fact, many of them are going to believe they have to do it in order to be competitive in their community.

I hope—I did want to be brief tonight—we can go forward in the days ahead and act on this matter as priority business before the Senate. I intend to keep coming to the floor to bring to the attention of this body cases from home and from across this country of older people who, when they are done paying their prescription drug bills, literally have only a few hundred dollars a month to pay for their food and their rent and their utilities. It is outrageous, in a country as good and strong as ours, that we have not updated our health care system to provide this coverage.

Because I have come to the floor now 25 times in 3 months to talk about this issue, and Senator DASCHLE's effort to bring the Senate together, to reach out to colleagues on the other side of the aisle, I am asked all the time: Can America afford to cover prescription drugs for older people? My response is: We can't afford not to cover prescription drugs.

What the gerontologists told us today is that if you want, for the long-term, to promote wellness and to keep seniors healthy, make these drugs—the drugs that lower blood pressure and cholesterol—available to seniors because with them seniors will be able to stay healthy and not rack up these much larger medical bills that are incurred when they are ill.

One of the most striking examples I have seen in this discussion involves the anticoagulant drugs, the drugs that prevent strokes. It might cost $1,000 or $1,500 for a senior to get those drugs for a year—certainly that is expensive—but if, through drugs such as that, you can prevent stroke—which will cost upwards of $100,000—it seems to me it makes a very clear case that we ought to be offering this benefit.

I recognize that colleagues have different views as to how to go about doing it. Several of my Democratic colleagues have bills. I do not expect to have the last word on this subject. I know colleagues on the other side of the aisle have legislation, as well. I am very honored to have been able to team up with Senator SNOWE for 15 months now in an effort to pass this prescription drug benefit on a bipartisan basis.

But let us make sure this issue does get addressed, and addressed in this Congress. Because to let this become fodder for another political season, and to have the back and forth that would go on in a political campaign, where one side blames the other side, is not productive. That is not what Senator DASCHLE wants to have, as he tries to bring together the various approaches that have been offered by Members of the Senate. I know there are a number of Republicans who want to avoid that kind of train-wreck scenario where you do not act on this issue; instead, it just becomes the fodder for another political campaign.

What the Democratic Policy Committee heard this morning from seniors, from pharmacists, from gerontologists, ought to be compelling to every Member of this body—Democrats, Republicans, liberals, and conservatives.

Let us debate the specifics about how to go about offering this benefit, but let us make sure this issue gets done because I do not think it is right for the country to wait any longer to move forward on an issue that is so vital to health care reform.

I intend to keep coming back to the floor to address this issue. The session held by the Democratic Policy Committee was so compelling this morning that I wanted to take a couple minutes to bring it to the attention of the Senate.

I wish to make it clear that I look forward to working with all of my colleagues on a bipartisan basis. The Presiding Officer—the Senator from Utah—and I have talked about health care on a number of occasions since I have been in the Senate. He has great expertise. We are going to involve him in this cause and get it done in a bipartisan way.

I think this morning's program by the Democratic Policy Committee was another step in the right direction.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9:30 a.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:27 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 2, 2000, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1996

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Speaker, February 8th marks the fourth anniversary of the historic Telecommunications Act of 1996. The purpose of the Act was to unleash competition in all telecommunications markets and thus achieve unprecedented investment and technological innovation. Businesses would enjoy substantial productivity gains and consumers would have access to new technologies that promised profound changes in the way we work, communicate and entertain. Schools, libraries and homes would have access to information that is revolutionizing the way we educate ourselves. Electronic commerce, distance learning, and telemedicine have all become realities. The progress we've seen in the four short years—in Kentucky and nationwide—has been remarkable and rapid. Consider the following:

The Explosion of the Internet. There were 50 million Internet users just two years ago and today there are more than 80 million Americans online and 200 million worldwide. Electronic commerce is projected to be a trillion-dollar activity in the next three to five years.

Ninety-nine percent of American households—in both urban and rural areas—can reach the Internet via a local telephone call. Substantial new network investment by Internet backbone providers has made this possible. In 1996, 14 such providers existed; by 1999, that number had more than tripled to 43. In four years, Internet backbone providers expanded their points of presence—where Internet Service Providers (ISP's) establish high-speed links to the backbone—from less than 70 to more than 1000.

The number of ISPs offering consumers Internet access has exploded—today there are more than 6,500 ISPs nationwide. Forty-six states have 100 or more ISPs, including my home state of Kentucky.

Independent rural telephone companies and cooperatives offer Internet connectivity—97 percent offer Internet dial-up at speeds of up to 56K, and 30 percent are offering broadband services (1999 NCTA survey).

The number of competitive carriers has increased dramatically. Today, over 600 long distance companies compete against one another in a dynamic market that has seen per-minute prices drop to 5 cents. In addition, the Act spurred the creation of more than 375 new entrepreneurial companies that are fighting to bring competition to local telephone markets.

These new local competitors, called ''CLECs,'' have grown significantly since 1996. They now employ 70,000 people and have invested $30 billion in new networks since passage of the Act. In four years, their market capitalization has increased from $3.1 billion to about $85 billion today.

In my home state of Kentucky, 25 CLECs are up and running.

In short Mr. Speaker, the Telecommunications Act is working. It has been a catalyst for almost unimaginable technological progress. Having said that, our work as a nation is not done—there are still some Americans who need access to better, faster and more affordable means of communication. However, we are heading in the right direction and the Telecommunications Act along with the millions of American men and women working in the industry are the driving force.

IN HONOR OF THE LATE LT. MARGARET O'MALLEY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Lt. Margaret O'Malley, who passed away recently after battling with liver cancer at the age of 44. Lt. O'Malley had been in charge of security at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport since 1993.

Lt. O'Malley received much accreditation for her hard work and innovative ideas. She was awarded several commendations from the Secret Service for her assistance in providing security when President Clinton landed at Cleveland Hopkins Airport aboard Air Force One. She accommodated numerous celebrities throughout her seven years of work at the airport, including Bette Midler and Melissa Etheridge, and also worked to ensure the safety of the Cleveland Indians when fans poured into the airport to greet the team in the wee hours of the morning after their pennant-clinching victory. According to Capt. Margaret A. Downding, who was Lt. O'Malley's domestic partner for the past 19 years. ''Often, when celebrities arrived, she expedited their travel through the airport.'' Also, in order to aid her staff, the Lt. arranged for the donation of several bicycles so that officers could patrol the airport by bicycle. Although her primary concern was the safety of travelers in the airport, she also worked to enhance the experience of visitors to the city and to accommodate the local residents who came to the airport to greet friends and relatives.

The Cleveland native followed in the footsteps of her father Michael, who is also a Cleveland police lieutenant. The elder O'Malley has the most seniority of any officer in the 1,850-member department. The younger O'Malley grew up in Cleveland and Fairview Park. She earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Edgecliffe College, now part of Xavier University. She was accepted into the police academy in 1979, was promoted to sergeant in 1985, and promoted again to lieutenant in 1993.

Lt. O'Malley also excelled when she was not in uniform. She coordinated women's sporting events for police officers and friends, including volleyball matches and softball games. Last summer, she organized a charitable golf outing that benefited the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Research Foundation. Her zest for life invigorated all those around her.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Lt. O'Malley's hard work and dedication to her community. The great lengths she took to ensure safety to all and her commitment to the people of Cleveland will be greatly missed.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ELKS BPOE LODGE 481

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 100th anniversary of an organization that I am proud to be a member of, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks Lodge 481 in Belleville, Illinois.

The beginnings for the Elks organization is credited to Charles Algernon Sidney Vivian. Born in London, Vivian arrived in New York in 1867. Vivian, an actor, met with a group of other theatrical entertainers to create a loose organization called the Jolly Corks. When one of the members died in 1867, leaving both his wife and his children destitute, the Jolly Corks decided, that in addition to good fellowship, they needed a more enduring organization to serve those in need. On February 16, 1868, they established the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks and elected Vivian to head it. As word of it's social activities and benefit performances increased and spread to other cities, other Elk's ''lodges'' were formed.

The legacy of Charles Vivian continues to this day. In addition to aiding members in distress, the Elks raise money for children with disabilities, college scholarships, youth projects and recreational programs for patients in veterans hospitals.

In 1907, the Elks held the first flag day observance. This tradition, started by the Elks, was later declared a national holiday by President Harry S. Truman. During World War I, the Elks funded and equipped field hospitals in France. Their loans to 40,000 returning veterans for college, rehabilitation and education was the precursor to the original GI bill. The Elks were used during WWII to recruit construction workers for the military and they also contributed books to the Merchant Marines. During the Korean War, the Elks gave more than a half million pints of blood to help the wounded and in Vietnam, the Elks provided funds for the recreational needs of the military. When Desert Storm took place, the Elks undertook letter-writing campaigns to help keep up soldiers morale.

Today, there are more than 1.3 million members of the Elks in 2200 local lodges found in all 50 states. Many members of Congress have been Elks. Former Speakers, Tom

Foley, Tip O'Neill, Carl Albert, John McCormick and Sam Rayburn all belonged to the Elks. Hale Boggs of Louisiana was also an Elk. Presidents Harding, FDR, Truman, Kennedy and Ford were all Elks lodge members.

Local Elks lodges provide recreational and support facilities for the entire family and are the focal point for many community service projects. Lodge 481 members in Belleville log in thousands of hours in volunteer service to charitable, educational and patriotic causes in our community. Chartered in 1899, Lodge 481 continues to be an asset to the community. This lodge sponsors baseball, softball, football and soccer leagues in the area. They organize blood drives, help local scouts and provide their facilities free of charge to local fund raising efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 100 years of service of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks Lodge 481 and salute members of the lodge both past and present.

TRIBUTE TO CAL FARMER—EDUCATOR FOR YOUTH AND INDUSTRY

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, recently, one of my constituents, Dr. Cal Farmer, was honored by his many friends and colleagues for his lifelong dedication to vocational education and its vital role in equipping young people for success in the complex and increasingly technical industries of our community, state, and nation.

The specialized field of vocational education has grown rapidly over the past decade and for its many students in our community, Cal Farmer's energetic leadership has continuously pushed for higher standards and broader goals at every level.

Cal's efforts with the Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) program, as an advisor and as a consultant, have brought thousands of high school and college students to a new level of understanding of the value of vocational education. At the same time, his work with the American Vocational Association (AVA) has expanded his vision to both California and national programs.

Industries large and small have come to realize that their interests and needs are best served by educated employees, and students are best served by opportunities to participate in workforce training while in school.

Even beyond formal educational pursuits, Cal has brought vigor and vision to many community services: Boy Scouts, American Cancer Society, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Long Beach Associates (DLBA), Navy League, Pubic Corporation of the Arts, Propeller Club, and many others. His busy and productive life remains an inspiration for countless others. I wish him well in his many continuing endeavors.

COLORADO NURSERY PERSON OF THE YEAR, DENNIS HILL

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado's Nursery Person of the Year, Dennis Hill.

Dennis won the award from the Excellence In Landscape Design Competition. Dennis has worked for twenty years in the industry. He was first an independent landscape contractor and presently a retail nursery. Owner of the nursery Bookcliff Gardens, Dennis admits that a love of gardening is only part of the job. He also thrives on being involved with people. He says that he gardens for two reasons: for the shade and for the beauty and peace.

In addition to the individual award that Dennis received, his business also received the Merit Award in Landscape Construction in the Single Family Residential category.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I offer this tribute in honor of Dennis Hill and Bookcliff Gardens. He has brought dedication and professionalism to his profession.

IN HONOR OF COMMANDER GREGORY BAEPPLER

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Commander Gregory Baeppler, a thirty year veteran of the Cleveland Police Department.

Gregory Baeppler was appointed to the Cleveland Police Department on October 17, 1969. Throughout his career Gregory Baeppler has excelled at civil service tests as well as in the field. Baeppler was promoted to Sergeant on November 6, 1976, to the rank of Lieutenant on July 26, 1982, and then the rank of Captain on July 18, 1985.

On April 14, 1986, Gregory Baeppler was appointed to the rank of Commander of Police and he has successfully held the rank of Commander longer than any other person in the history of the Cleveland Police Department. Commander Baeppler was in charge of the sixth district from his appointment until August 29, 1988, when he transferred and was assigned as Commander of the Second District. From August 29, 1988, until the retirement of Commander Baeppler, the Second District usually led the city in every measurement of importance.

Throughout his years on the force Commander Baeppler has shown leadership qualities that have caused him to be pursued by the private sector. He has been in charge of security for a vast array of sporting events and concerts.

Commander Baeppler's retirement brings a close to an exemplary thirty year career.

My fellow colleagues please join me in honoring Commander Baeppler, a true beacon in the Cleveland community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, on February 29 and March 1, a family emergency prevented my return to Washington, D.C. and I missed rollcall votes Nos. 26, 27, 28. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes'' on S. 613, The Indian Tribal Economic Development and Contract Encouragement Act; ''yes'' on H.R. 5, Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act; and ''yes'' on the Senate amendments to H.R. 1883, Iran Nonproliferation Act.

TARIFF CORRECTION BILL

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I introduced a miscellaneous tariff correction bill (H.R. 3715) that will be one tool to help keep the remaining cathode ray tube and computer display screen manufacturers in the United States.

Monochrome glass envelopes are used to make cathode ray tubes that provide the ''light'' behind the computer monitor. When the tariff on monochrome glass envelopes was first proposed, there were American manufacturers of this product. But over the last few years, the final American manufacturer of monochrome glass envelopes decided to get out of the business. Thus, the tariff duty designed to provide a modest level of protection for U.S. makers of monochrome glass envelopes no longer serves its purpose. In fact, the import duty is now hurting the international competitiveness of U.S. cathode ray tube and computer display screen manufacturers.

Other foreign competitors are able to purchase monochrome glass envelopes without this tariff. Thus, they are able to price their computer monitors in the U.S. more competitively than U.S. manufacturers of equivalent product. Mr. Speaker, there should not be a U.S.-government imposed incentive for Americans to buy foreign computer display screens! That's why I ask my colleagues to support the inclusion of H.R. 3715 into the comprehensive miscellaneous tariff correction bill to be taken up by the House later this year. We need to remove the import tariff on monochrome glass envelopes so that American manufacturers of cathode ray tubes and computer monitors can compete on a more equal footing with their foreign counterparts.

HONORING LAURENE KNUPP

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize a woman who has meant so much to the community of Eagle, Colorado. Laurene Knupp has lived in Eagle for all but a few of her 82 years. She

attended elementary school and high school in Eagle, a small town of 200 citizens at the time. Laurene has witnessed many changes in her hometown. Growth can be a good thing, but Laurene misses the days of knowing everyone in town.

After high school Laurene attended Junior College in Grand Junction, then Teacher's College in Greeley, Colorado (now University of Northern Colorado) where she majored in elementary education. She earned enough credits to teach for one year. She continued to teach and go to summer school for years. She confesses that it took 18 years to earn her degree.

Laurene was teaching in Oak Creek in 1941 when the United States entered World War II. She decided to take the place of the Deputy County Clerk in Eagle when the clerk was drafted. During that time she met and married Donald Knupp. She put work and teaching aside for nine years to start a family. When she returned to teaching, she taught for 25 more years. She retired in 1981.

Even though Laurene is retired, she is still very involved in her community. She maintains a keen interest in school and community affairs. She serves on the building committee for the Methodist Church, secretary/treasurer for the board of directors for Eagle Valley Medical Center and on the Retired Teachers Association. She has lunch regularly at the Eagle Senior Center and enjoys playing bridge with her friends.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to offer this tribute in honor of a staple in the Eagle community. Laurene Knupp is a great woman who has given endlessly to her community.

HONORING 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ILLINOIS PTA

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Illinois Parent Teachers Association (PTA).

The Illinois PTA was founded May 30, 1900 and is part of the largest child advocacy organization in the United States. PTA is a not-for-profit association of parents, educators, students, and other citizens active in their schools and their communities. PTA is a leader in reminding our Nation of its obligations to children. In the United States, PTA has over 6.5 million members working in 26,000 local chapters in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and in Department of Defense schools in the Pacific and in Europe.

The mission of the PTA is three-fold: to support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community and before government bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children. Second, they assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children, and third, to encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools. PTA's objectives include promoting the welfare of children and youth in the home, school, place of worship, and in the community. PTA strives to raise the standards of home life and secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children. PTA also brings a closer relationship to the home, school, and work to develop cooperative efforts between parents and teachers.

During the past 100 years, whenever children's issues are jeopardized, the PTA has responded promptly, taking a leadership role in identifying solutions and advocating change. PTA knows the benefits of parent involvement. This is why parent involvement is central to all PTA programs. The Illinois PTA is involved in developing before and after school programs, block grants, charter schools, class size reduction, health services, nutritional issues, professional development, reading programs, tobacco and violence prevention. The Illinois PTA has been at the forefront of children first and that is why they are hosting the national PTA convention this year.

PTA's within my congressional district are involved with many activities that support the needs of children and youth. From before and after school programs to after prom parties, PTA has provided a leadership role in our local educational support system.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 100 years of service of the Illinois PTA organization.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT S. JOE, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, Southern California owes much of what it is today to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps built our ports—now the largest port complex in the Americas—it protected us from flooding, it helped us rebuild from earthquakes and other disasters, and helped give us water to drink. Today, the Corps is even helping repair our schools. Southern California would be a very different place had it not been for the work of the Corps of Engineers over the past century.

For the past 30 years, one person in particular has stood out among the many excellent members of the Corps in California. For 30 years, Robert Joe has played an integral part in the myriad activities the Corps is involved in. This month, Bob is retiring from the Corps and his position as Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management for the Los Angeles District of the Corps. We will miss him sorely.

Bob is retiring from a position in which he directed a $300 million operational budget. Before serving in his current position, Bob ran the planning division for 11 years. He managed the vital projects that helped people stretching from Los Angeles to Phoenix and Las Vegas. In my own area, Bob has been a key to the success of keeping the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles the leaders in the country and restoring flood control protection to 500,000 people in southern Los Angeles County. All of my colleagues from the Southwest can point to their own examples of how Bob Joe and the Corps helped the people they represent.

Mr. Speaker, Bob Joe has been a professional colleague and a good friend to me since I was elected to Congress. He has provided immeasurable help to the people I have the privilege to represent. I join my other colleagues in wishing Bob much happiness and success in the future.

IN HONOR OF MR. JUSTICE MICHAEL MORIARTY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Justice Michael Moriarty, pillar of the legal community in Ireland and a man who has dedicated his life to justice.

Mr. Moriarty was born in Belfast, later relocating to Dublin, Ireland in 1960. He attended college in Dublin, completed his legal education in Kings Inn, and was called to the Bar in 1968. In 1982, he became a senior counsel, and four years later he was appointed Chairman of the Employment Appeals Tribunal. In 1987, he embarked on his judicial career when he became a Circuit Court Judge. He was then appointed to the High Court in 1996.

Recently, Justice Michael Moriarty was appointed as the head of the tribunal of Inquiry, a body responsible for investigating and reporting financial irregularities involving government officials in Ireland. The scope of the investigations and the zeal Mr. Moriarty has shown for his work has caused the media to rename the Tribunal of Inquiry the Moriarty Tribunal.

Justice Michael Moriarty is married to Ms. Mary Irvine, Senior Counsel. He is the father of a son and two daughters. Currently, he and his family reside in Blackrock, Co. Dublin.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in welcoming Mr. Moriarty to Cleveland as the honored guest at this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade on march 17, 2000.

HONORING THE STATE CHAMPION GRAND JUNCTION HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE BOWL TEAM

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to congratulate the Grand Junction High School Science Bowl Team on winning the state competition for the sciences.

The team from Grand Junction High School won first place in the state competition for the Colorado Science Bowl in Golden, Colorado. As a result of this victory, the team will travel to Washington, DC to compete at the national level in the United States Department of Energy's National Science Bowl.

The students on this team have demonstrated remarkable talent and knowledge in the areas of physics, chemistry, astronomy, earth science and mathematics. The students are to be commended for their dedication to learning the finer points of these fields.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to offer this tribute to all the members of the team and their faculty sponsor. Congratulations, Tony Arcieri, Brianna Blume, Ariane

Chepko, John Frazer, Michelle Hays, and sponsor, Jim Rexroad. They have made us all very proud!

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF J. BRUCE McKINNEY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT HERSHEY ENTERTAINMENT & RESORTS COMPANY

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Mr. J. Bruce McKinney on the announcement of his retirement as Chairman of the Board of Directors at Hershey Entertainment & Resorts Company in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Mr. McKinney, who turned 63 in February, held a wide variety of positions in his long and exemplary career. He attended Milton Hershey School, Dickinson College, Dickinson Law School, and the Pennsylvania State Executive Management Program. In 1966, Mr. McKinney began working as an executive staff assistant for Hershey Foods Corporation. Five years later, he joined the Hershey Entertainment & Resorts Company team (HERCO) as the assistant general manager for HERSHEYPARK, only to become general manager a mere one year later. Throughout the seventies and eighties, Mr. McKinney went on to hold various challenging, exciting, and prestigious senior officer positions in the Hershey area. Some of the most notable positions include: group vice president of Sports and Entertainment in 1974, senior vice president of HERCO's Commercial Group in 1981, and corporate executive vice president in 1985. Throughout his tenure at HERCO, Mr. McKinney is remembered chiefly for leading the team that brought the corporation out of near financial ruin to an extremely high level of prosperity, saving the company from certain failure. Because of his honorable services, a year later, on March 1, 1986, Mr. McKinney became the chief operating officer at HERCO, later assuming the role as chief executive officer on August 10, 1987, and then taking the position of chairman of the board on October 24, 1989. Mr. McKinney remained at HERCO for another eleven years, eventually becoming chief executive officer and chairman of the board. On September 22, 1999, after seven consecutive record-breaking years from 1993–2000, Mr. McKinney decided to respectfully retire from HERCO. Assuming Mr. McKinney's responsibilities is Mr. Scott J. Newkam, who was named president and chief executive officer.

Following his retirement, Mr. McKinney will continue to serve on the board of directors of the Hershey Trust Company and the M.S. Hershey Foundation. He will also tend to his duties on the board of managers for the Milton Hershey School, and serve as a director on the Team Pennsylvania Board, where he is instrumental in the promotion of regional cooperation. Even in his retirement, Mr. McKinney will continue to serve the community through his tireless efforts in ensuring the future prosperity of Hershey.

Mr. McKinney will continue to reside in Hershey, Pennsylvania with his wife Sally, two daughters, Kelly McKinney-Brakewood and Kathleen McKinney-Gavazzi, and three grandchildren, Harrison, Eleanor, and Grace.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize Mr. McKinney for his tremendous career and life work in Hershey, and wish him the best of luck, in all his future endeavors.

HONORING 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF VFW POST 8677

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 40th anniversary of Veteran's of Foreign Wars Post 8677 in Fairview Heights, Illinois. Started on March 5, 1960, Post 8677 continues to lead efforts to support veterans and their needs in their community.

While VFW Post 8677 celebrates its 40th anniversary, the VFW organization itself celebrates the 100th anniversary of its existence. In 1898, several veterans of the Spanish-American War gathered together to form the basis of the VFW. Since then, the VFW organization has proven to be a driving force for veterans and their issues.

The VFW is considered to be one of the most powerful and influential force in the halls of Congress. Their efforts resulted in the creation of the House Veterans' Committee, the WW I bonus, the Veterans Day holiday, various GI bills, creation of the cabinet position of Veterans' Affairs and support on many veteran's health issues, such as Agent Orange and Persian Gulf related illness.

The VFW is 2 million members strong and represents a great cross section of our society. They work to promote citizenship and provide information about our national flag. They are actively involved in disaster relief efforts raising over a million dollars in assistance. They are a leading force in the creation of a WW II memorial and support ongoing efforts of our troops abroad by providing our troops with phone cards, gift packages and coordinating USO shows.

I cannot mention the VFW and not speak of the ''Buddy Poppy'' program. Since 1922, the poppy program has raised millions of dollars annually to support national and local veteran's service programs. As a means of rehabilitation, the poppies themselves are assembled by patients in VA and State veterans homes.

VFW Post 8677 in Fairview Heights has been a leader in the local community by providing leadership on veterans issues in my congressional district. They, along with the other posts in the area, create a firm footing for veteran's assistance, advocacy and service. Post 8677 works with Pontiac and William Holiday schools for Red Ribbon Drug Awareness Day. They sponsor Khoury teams and Boy and Girl Scout troops. The post holds flag raising ceremonies on Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Flag Day. Each month, members of the Post volunteer their time and the necessary items to veterans at the John Cochran VA Hospital and finally, every year both the Post and its auxiliary place flags on the grave sites of 3000 veterans at the Lakeview Memorial Cemetery.

Let us reflect with pride on our country and remember with gratitude the contributions of the many loyal and courageous veterans who have given so much of themselves both at home and around the world to protect our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 40 years of service of the VFW Post 8677 and to salute the members of the Post and Auxiliary both past and present for their service to the people of southwestern Illinois.

THE ''RE-ELECT AMERICA'' BUS TOUR BY BALINT VAZSONYI

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in support of the Center of the American Founding's ''Re-Elect America'' bus tour. The tour will make one of its first stops in Atlanta, Georgia this Friday, March 3, 2000.

The tour is being led by Balint Vazsonyi, a man who first came to America as a refugee from communism, and is now one of our foremost constitutional writers. Despite his arrival as an immigrant and the fact that he is a classical pianist by training, Balint has made enormous contributions to his adopted nation as a student and writer on constitutional history and principles.

Not content with writing a wildly popular book, ''America's Thirty Years War,'' and becoming a columnist for the Washington Times, Balint has now resolved to follow in the footsteps of Alexis de Tocqueville, and travel across our country to ignite a national discussion about those values that make America what it is—the beacon of freedom for the entire world.

As we continue an extended period of economic prosperity, our nation cannot afford to ignore very serious threats to our culture, society, and political systems. We have to keep people engaged in finding solutions to the problems facing our nation in the 21st century. The ''Re-Elect America'' bus tour aims to do exactly that, by reminding people about the great institutions of our history, government and society. Balint Vazsonyi knows that unless our citizens know, understand, and appreciate our nation's history and institutions, then when those institutions are under attack, people don't appreciate them enough to come to their defense.

Visiting all 50 state capitols in a few short months is something very few of us would attempt. However, I am confident that with Balint Vazsonyi at the helm, this tour will be a roaring success. I wish him all the best on his stop in Georgia, and look forward to following his progress from there, all across this great and glorious land.

MRS. MELISSA TREZISE, A PIONEER OF EDUCATION

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize a woman that has

dedicated her life to educating children. Mrs. Melissa Trezise has been a true pioneer in education. To preserve the history of education in rural Colorado in the early twentieth century, she has written her memoirs about what it was to be a teacher in rural Colorado in the 1930's.

Melissa knew from the time she was in elementary school she wanted to be a teacher. She wanted to help children learn how to read and write, but more importantly, she wanted to teach them about science, history and even art. Melissa taught math, science, geography, U.S. history, health, Colorado history, and agriculture. Students always looked forward to Friday's, not only because of the weekend, but also for their art classes.

Melissa's first school, Catamount School, was located centrally in the region. This meant that everyone has to travel to the school. There was no well near the school, so pupils and teacher had to bring their own water. Melissa recalls that this was not always convenient and they all tried not to get too dirty.

Recess is usually a student's favorite part of the school day. In this case, the teacher enjoyed recess just as much as the student. Melissa was the pitcher during the baseball games and she loved to jump rope with the students. Many people said they couldn't tell the difference between teacher and student when they were on the playground.

Melissa moved to different schools and taught a great many children, but she will always remain a favorite in the eyes of many former students. Melissa's career encompassed everything from one-room schoolhouses to the current Eagle Valley Elementary School.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I offer this tribute in honor of a legend in education, Melissa Trezise. She is a woman that deserves our highest respect and praise.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE TELEWORK TAX INCENTIVE ACT

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to provide a $500 tax credit for telework. The purpose of my legislation is to provide an incentive to encourage more employers to consider telework for their employees. Telework should be a regular part of the 21st century workplace. The best part of telework is that it improves the quality of life for all.

Nearly 20 million Americans telework today, and according to experts, 40 percent of American jobs are compatible with telework. Telework reduces traffic congestion and air pollution. It reduces gas consumption and our dependency on foreign oil. Telework provides people with disabilities greater job opportunities. Telework helps fill our nation's labor market shortage. It is also a good way for retirees to pick up part-time work.

Companies save significantly when they have a strong telecommuting program. At one national telecommunications company, nearly 25 percent of its employees work from home at least 1 day per week. The company found positive results in the way of fewer days of sick leave, better worker retention, and higher productivity.

According to a George Mason University (Fairfax, VA) study, for every 1 percent of the Washington metro region workforce that telecommutes, there is a 3-percent reduction in traffic delays. George Mason University has recently completed another study which suggests that on Friday mornings there is a 26- to 4-percent drop in traffic volume in the Washington metro region, a so-called ''Friday effect.''

This is promising news because it means that with just a 1- to 2-percent increase in the number of commuters who leave their cars parked and instead telework just 1 or 2 days per week, we could get to the so-called ''Friday effect'' all week long.

Last fall, I participated in Virginia Governor James Gilmore's telework task force. I want to take the opportunity to congratulate Governor Gilmore for his strong leadership and involvement in telework. The Governor's task force made a number of recommendations to increase and promote telework. One recommendation was to establish a tax credit toward the purchase and installation of electronic and computer equipment that allow an employee to telework. For example, the cost of a computer, fax machine, modem, phone, printer, software, copier, and other expenses necessary to enable telework could count toward a tax credit, provided the person worked at home a minimum number of days per year.

My legislation today would provide a $500 tax credit ''for expenses paid or incurred under a teleworking arrangement for furnishings and electronic information equipment which are used to enable an individual to telework.'' For example, the cost of a computer, fax machine, modem, software, etc., as well as home office furnishing would apply toward the credit. An employee must telework a minimum of 75 days per year to qualify for the tax credit. Both the employer and employee are eligible for the tax credit, but the tax credit goes to whomever absorbs the expense for setting up the at-home worksite.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have many groups joining in support of my legislation. Supporters include: the International Telework Association and Council, Northern Virginia Technology Council, Greater Washington Board of Trade, Covad Communications, National Town Builders Association, George Mason University, Litton Industries, Orbital Sciences Corporation, Consumer Electronic Association, Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce, Capnet, BTG Corporation, Electronic Industries Alliance, Telecommunications Industry Association, American Automobile Association Mid-Atlantic, Dimensions International Inc., Capunet, TManage, Science Applications International Corporation, AT&T, Virginia Economic Bridge, Computer Associates Incorporated, and Dyn Corp.

I have stated before that work is something you do, not someplace you go. Hopefully we can make telework as commonplace as the morning traffic report. There is nothing magical about strapping ourselves into a car and driving sometimes up to an hour and a half, arriving at a workplace and sitting before a computer. We can access the same information from a computer in our living rooms. Wouldn't it be great if we could replace the evening rush hour commute with time spent with the family, or coaching little league or other important quality of life matters?

Mr. Speaker, I hope our colleagues will consider signing on as a cosponsor of this proposal to promote telework and provide employees choices for the workplace.

TRIBUTE TO LOUIE MOORE II IN CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. MARTIN OLAV SABO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the history and heritage of African-Americans this month, I wish to take this opportunity today, February 18, 2000, to recognize a very special man who lives in my Congressional District of Minneapolis—Louis Moore II.

Louie Moore II—a respected historian, successful businessman, outstanding community leader, and a caring and kind citizen—has made countless contributions to his community, his state, and his country over the course of his 84 years.

Louie was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1916. He attended the now-closed Mechanic Arts High School in St. Paul—where he quickly established a reputation as a star athlete, playing on the tennis and football teams and running track.

After graduating from the University of Minnesota in 1938 and marrying Harriet Mayle a year later, Louie began his long and distinguished professional career. In 1939, Harriet and Louie moved to Washington, D.C. where Louie worked for the United States Department of Agriculture for several years. During the time the Moores lived in Washington, their only child, Louis III, was born.

In 1950, Louie moved his family back to St. Paul, where he served as a USDA grain inspector. In 1955 the family moved to Minneapolis. Louie started work as a marketing manager for General Mills Incorporated—one of the few people of color to work at the corporate level during that time—and later joined the marketing department of Minneapolis' International Multifoods Corporation. Louie has been widely recognized for his marketing skills and his business savvy, helping to launch several successful companies throughout the Minneapolis community.

Louie has also worked to educate others about the legacy of African-Americans in the state of Minnesota. He played a key role in compiling information for the publication of a book called The Negro in Minnesota. This book, published in 1961, detailed the accomplishments of African-Americans throughout the state's history.

After Louie's retirement from corporate life, he became actively involved with the Minnesota Historical Society. His interest was first sparked when he worked with the Society on plans for Minnesota's Statehood Centennial Celebration in the 1950's. He became a member of the Society's Executive Council in 1972, and today he serves as an Honorary Council Member of the Minnesota Historical Society Board.

Louie has been a member of several other community, civic, and social organizations throughout the Twin Cities. He has served on the Board of Directors at the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center and he was a board member of the Twin Cities Opportunity Industrialization Center. He has also served with the

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Urban League; the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; the Twin Cities Rod and Gun Club; and the Forty Social Club. He is a respected member of the Omicron Boule of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity which, over the years, has honored him for his many achievements and his leadership in the community.

Louie Moore is a former member of St. Philip's Episcopal Church in St. Paul, and a current member of the St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Minneapolis.

Mr. Speaker, when you ask any of Louis Moore's many friends for the words that best describe him, the answers flow freely: ''kind,'' ''well-loved,'' ''involved,'' ''respected.'' In fact, one of his friends from the Minnesota Historical Society says regarding Louie, ''He is a wonderful person—delightful to talk to, with a warm personality. He has always been interested in 'bettering' situations and helping others.''

I am proud to know Louis Moore II, and it is an honor to recognize him today in celebration of Black History Month. His son, Louis III, is a member of my Congressional staff, and through him I have learned many things about this fine man. In his lifetime, Louis Moore II has developed a simply amazing list of professional and personal accomplishments—many more than those which I have mentioned today.

Mr. Speaker, today I salute Louis Moore II—a pillar of our community. I offer him my best wishes for good health and happiness always.

HONORING BRITH SHALOM

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Congregation Brith Shalom, located in the 25th district of Houston, Texas, on the occasion of their 45th anniversary. The Brith Shalom family has been a pillar of the community, effectively addressing the spiritual needs of its members for four and a half decades.

Brith Shalom's humble beginnings trace back to a rented apartment house at 2203 Bellfontaine in February of 1955. The congregation eventually bought a building at 4610 Bellaire Boulevard where they involved the entire congregation in making it the beautiful synagogue it is today. Architectural highlights include stained-glass windows which tell the story of the 12 tribes of Israel and the inclusion of Jerusalem stone in the sanctuary.

Brith Shalom's endurance in addressing the needs of its community deserves respect and admiration. With special emphasis on family and children, the congregation strives to increase Jewish identification and commitment. Brith Shalom embraces the concept that healthy spiritual development is necessary for children to grow into happy, whole adults. The congregation's belief in reinforcing a strong Jewish background gives Brith Shalom's youths a strong foundation and a clear sense of community, scholarship and religious identity throughout their lives.

Throughout Brith Shalom's history, the congregation's rabbis have initiated Judiac studies and social-action programs. Sisterhood and Men's Club participants have raised funds for the synagogue, the Jewish Theological Seminary, and scholarship programs. Synagogue youths take part in the United Synagogue Youth organization. Each president of Brith Shalom has been installed during a weekend complemented by a scholar, lecturer or educational program that stimulated new ideas on Jewish learning.

Mr. Speaker, Brith Shalom has much to celebrate on its 45th anniversary. The congregation has been a haven for its community. Since its beginnings through more than four decades of growth, Brith Shalom should be commended for its dedication to God and commitment to the needs of its congregation and surrounding community.

HONORING A TRUE AMERICAN HERO, FRED W. DYER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell you of a man that served our country with unselfish bravery. A combat pilot that did more than just fly planes, Fred Dyer was a man of tremendous service and dedication. Sadly Fred recently passed away.

Fred was valued by his fellow pilots as a man that would never turn his back or leave in the middle of the storm. He often times put his own life in danger to ensure that the lives of others were safe. In one of many accounts recorded in Tom Brokaw's book, ''The Greatest Generation,'' a fellow pilot, George Wells, tells of how many bombing records were made by their unit, but one of the most notable was when he and Fred established the record for the highest number of bomber missions flown by a United States pilot in World War II. They flew 102 missions before returning home for rest.

In 1943, Fred recieved the distinguished Service Cross for action in Sicily where he refused to leave a plane that had caught on fire until everyone on board was safely out. All the crew members donned parachutes and jumped; Fred waited until they were all out then jumped himself. Unfortunately, he landed in the midst of a tank battle, but he was quickly rescued by British soldiers. Acts of bravery like these are why Fred was credited with medals such as the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Purple Heart, the Silver Star and the Air Medal with 15 clusters.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I offer this tribute to honor Fred Dyer. He put the lives of others before his own and displayed unparalleled loyalty and bravery. Fred will be missed by all those who knew him.

RETIREMENT OF CAPTAIN GARY L. McGHEE

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Captain Gary McGhee, who will be retiring in May, after a long and distinguished career with the Michigan State Police. Needless to say, as a former state trooper myself, I am proud of Michigan law enforcement, and Captain McGhee's service has given us additional reason to be proud. It is for this reason that on behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, and the citizens of the State of Michigan, I commend Captain McGhee on his service, and wish him the best of luck and good health in his retirement.

Captain McGhee achieved a high level of success throughout his years with the State Police, culminating with his current position as Eighth District Commander, where he is in charge of thirteen State Police Posts and three two-officer concept offices, total delivery of State Police services to fifteen counties of the U.P.

Captain McGhee has always looked out for the citizens of Michigan by his service as a trooper, his guidance of his fellow officers, and his leadership and initiative. He began his service with his enlistment in recruit school in May of 1966, and his start as a trooper in Bridgeport and Lansing. Of course, not one to sit on the sidelines, a year later he received a Lifesaving Award when he jumped off the Zilwaukee Bridge to aid another officer, risking his own life to save that of another.

Captain McGhee has published both nationally and internationally, and been instrumental in bringing law enforcement communities to work together on timely issues. His innovative traffic safety initiative, ''Let's Buckle (the) U.P.'', drew together all law enforcement agencies for the first time in a united effort to promote safety on Michigan's streets. Most recently, in 1998 and 1999 he coordinated law enforcement between Michigan and Wisconsin by putting together the Wisconsin/Michigan Law Enforcement Summit where officials and government leaders from both states met to discuss issues common across the border.

Captain McGhee has done so much, so well, for so long, that I can only recall one occasion that his judgment may be called into question: letting me graduate from recruit school while he was Recruit School Commander! In all seriousness, I thank him for his help and advice that he gave me and other recruits that went on to serve in his tradition. As former Post-Commander in Reed City, Assistant District Commander in the Eight and Seventh Districts, and as the current Eighth District Commander, Captain McGhee has ensured that the men and women under his watch perform to their highest possible levels, to the best advantage of the citizens of the U.P. and Michigan.

Captain McGhee, you will be missed, but your accomplishments and guidance have left their mark, making law enforcement in the U.P. and Michigan something we can all be proud of! I also congratulate Suzanne McGhee on her retirement, and wish the best to the entire McGhee family.

ACKNOWLEDGING MANUEL ESQUEDA

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to honor and recognize the outstanding contributions of Manuel Esqueda, a man who has devoted much of his life serving the community of Orange County.

A survivor of the USS Princeton, he returned a Second World War veteran to his home in Santa Ana. An employee of Bank of America since 1946, he served the institution for 32 years, while retiring as bank manager in 1978.

Manuel is a perfect example of how one man can make a difference. He has taken the initiative to provide 1,078 students with scholarship awards under the banners of the Gemini Club, Time and Time Again, and Serafines de Orange County/California Angels. Mr. Esqueda is a positive role model for the surrounding community and a mentor of our youth. He has brought experience, dedication and a passion to comfort those who are so much in need.

The contributions and the lasting legacy that he will leave behind is a testament of his hard work of which we are all so proud of. I urge my colleagues to please join with me today as we honor Mr. Manuel Esqueda, a caring man who is committed to his profession and to the betterment of our community.

HELSINKI COMMISSION HEARING ON: ''KOSOVO'S DISPLACED AND IMPRISONED''

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, this week the Helsinki Commission held a hearing to review the current situation in Kosovo and the prospects for addressing outstanding human rights issues there. More specifically, the hearing focused on the more than 200,000 displaced of Kosovo, mostly Serb and Roma, as well as those Albanians—numbering at least 1,600 and perhaps much more—imprisoned in Serbia. Witnesses included Ambassador John Menzies, Deputy Special Advisor to the President and Secretary of State for Kosovo Implementation; Bill Frelick, Director for Policy at the U.S. Committee for Refugees; His Grace, Bishop Artemije of the Serbian Orthodox Church; Andrzej Mirga, an expert on Roma issues for the Project on Ethnic Relations and the Council of Europe; Susan Blaustein, a senior consultant at the International Crisis Group; and, finally, Ylber Bajraktari, a student from Kosovo.

The situation for the displaced, Mr. Speaker, is truly horrible. In Serbia, most collective centers are grim, lacking privacy and adequate facilities. While most displaced Serbs have found private accommodations, they still confront a horrible economic situation worsened by the high degree of corruption, courtesy of the Milosevic regime. The squalor in which the Roma population from Kosovo lives is much worse, and they face the added burdens of discrimination, not only in Serbia but in Montenegro and Macedonia as well. There is little chance right now for any of them to go back to Kosovo, given the strength of Albanian extremists there. Indeed, since KFOR entered Kosovo eight months ago, it was asserted, more than 80 Orthodox Churches have been damaged or destroyed in Kosovo, more than 600 Serbs have been abducted and more than 400 Serbs have been killed. The situation for those Serbs and Roma remaining in Kosovo is precarious.

Other groups—including Muslim Slavs, those who refused to serve in the Yugoslav military, and ethnic Albanians outside Kosovo—face severe problems as well, but their plights are too often overlooked.

Meanwhile, the Milosevic regime continues to hold Albanians from Kosovo in Serbian prisons, in many cases without charges. While an agreement to release these individuals was left out of the agreement ending NATO's military campaign against Yugoslav and Serbian forces, with the Clinton Administration's acquiescence, by international law these people should have been released. At a minimum, the prisoners are mistreated; more accurately, many are tortured. Some prominent cases were highlighted: 24-year-old Albin Kurti, a former leader of the non-violent student movement; Flora Brovina, a prominent pediatrician and human rights activist; Ukshin Hoti, a Harvard graduate considered by some to be a possible future leader of Kosovo; and, Bardhyl Caushi, Dean of the School of Law, University of Pristina. Clearly, the resolution of these cases is critical to any real effort at reconciliation in Kosovo.

This human suffering, Mr. Speaker, must not be allowed to continue. Action must be taken by the United States and the international community as a whole. Among the suggestions made, which I would like to share with my colleagues, are the following:

First, get rid of Milosevic. Little if anything can be done in Kosovo or in the Balkans as a whole until there is democratic change in Serbia;

Second, bring greater attention to the imprisoned Albanians in Serbia, and keep the pressure on the Milosevic regime to release them immediately and without condition;

Third, rein in extremists on both sides—Albanian and Serb—in Kosovo with a more robust international presence, including the deployment of the additional international police as requested by the UN Administrator;

Fourth, find alternative networks for improved distribution of assistance to the displaced in Serbia;

Fifth, consider additional third-country settlement in the United States and elsewhere for those groups most vulnerable and unable to return to their homes, like the Roma and those who evaded military service as urged by NATO.

Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I intend to pursue some of these suggestions with specific legislative initiatives, or through contacts with the Department of State. I hope to find support from my fellow Commissioners and other colleagues. Having heard of the suffering of so many people, we cannot neglect to take appropriate action to help, especially in a place like Kosovo where the United States has invested so much and holds considerable influence as a result.

THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL DIALOGUE IN KAZAKHSTAN

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, last December President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan visited Washington for the annual meeting of the U.S.-Kazakhstan Joint Commission. The purpose of these meetings, which are alternately held in the United States and Kazakhstan, is to promote economic and political cooperation between our two countries. Among other things, the U.S. side regularly presses the government of Kazakhstan to improve its human rights record and undertake economic and political reforms.

I understand that U.S. officials pressed the Kazakh side especially hard this year, because of international criticism of parliamentary elections that were held last October, heightened corruption, and an acceleration of abusive action taken against opponents of President Nazarbayev's government. In an apparent move to blunt the severity of U.S. pressure as the Joint Commission meeting approached, President Nazarbayev reportedly issued a statement on November 4th, 1999 saying that he was ready to cooperate with the opposition in Kazakhstan and that he would welcome the return of former Prime Minister Akhezan Kazhegeldin, the exiled leader of the main opposition party.

On November 19th, Mr. Kazhegeldin responded to President Nazarbayev by calling for a ''national dialogue'' to examine ways to advance democracy, economic development and national reconciliation in Kazakhstan. Mr. Kazhegeldin pointed out that convening a national dialogue would be an ideal way to initiate cooperation between the opposition and the government.

President Nazarbayev, however, has reacted with silence to Mr. Kazhegeldin's proposal and a court reportedly convicted an opposition leader for having the temerity to criticize Nazarbayev's government. Finally, investment disputes with foreign companies that have lost millions of dollars because the government failed to honor its commitments remain unresolved and an investigation and trial seem to have failed to find anyone to blame for the delivery last year of 40 MiG fighter aircraft from Kazakhstan to North Korea.

Mr. Speaker, the cause of freedom and democracy in Kazakhstan appears to be in jeopardy. Our government should consider supporting a national dialogue along the lines proposed by former Prime Minister Kazhegeldin. At the very least, the government of Kazakhstan should make an hour of state-controlled television available every week for the use by the opposition. For its part the U.S. should also assist the democratic opposition by providing printing presses to replace those that have been confiscated by the government. It is time to stand up for democracy in Kazakhstan.

HONORING THE RECIPIENT OF THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, BILL PETTY

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, the Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce has named the recipient of the 1999 Lifetime Achievement Award, Bill Petty.

Bill is a respected business leader who has had a substantial positive impact on the overall quality of life in Grand Junction, Colorado. He has focused time, energy and resources by serving on business organizations such as the Chamber Board, Downtown Development Authority Board and most recently the Western Colorado Business Development Corporation. Bill has also served on the St. Mary's Foundation Board and the St. Mary's Hospital Board since 1996. Bill became President of Norwest Banks, Grand Junction in 1992. He has also had a commitment to the arts by serving on the Western Colorado Center for the Arts Board, the Avalon Board of Directors and the Colorado Pubic Radio.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to offer this tribute to a valued member of the Grand Junction community and a close personal friend, Bill Petty. He is committed to making his community a better place to live.

COMMEMORATING THE RETIREMENT OF CHIEF HELENA ASHBY

HON. JULIAN C. DIXON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the March 31st retirement of Chief Helena Ashby, the first female Division Chief in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Chief Ashby began her work with the Sheriff's Department in 1964 absent a role model; 36 years later, she is herself a role model for women and African Americans. Her leadership and dedication will be missed.

During her tenure with the Sheriff's Department, Ms. Ashby has also commanded the Detective Division, as well as the Court Services Division. She spent five years as a Commander within Field Operations Region II and the Detective Division and has served as Captain of the Juvenile Investigations Bureau, Court Services West, Sybil Brand Institute for Women, and Personnel Bureau of the Administrative Division.

Chief Ashby holds degrees from the University of Southern California and the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She is a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy and the National Interagency Counterdrug Institute.

The demands of her work in the Sheriff's Department have not precluded Ms. Ashby from establishing herself as a leader in the Los Angeles community. She sits on the Board of Directors of the Peace Officers Association of Los Angeles County, the Coro Foundation, and the Association of Independent Colleges of Southern California. Her contributions to the community have been recognized by the Soroptimist Club, the YWCA, and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives.

Chief Ashby has said of the Sheriff's Department that ''Most of us leave here a better person than when we arrived.'' In Helena Ashby's case, her positive influence will also leave the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department a better place than when she arrived.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 29, 2000 I had to delay my return to the Capitol in order to attend to personal business in my district. During my absence, I missed rollcall vote 26.

Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes'' on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the Indian Tribal Economic Development and Contract Encouragement Act (S. 613).

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF RONALD L. GUTSHALL AS CHIEF OF THE RESCUE FIRE COMPANY NO. 1 IN HARRISBURG, PA

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Mr. Ronald L. Gutshall on the announcement of his retirement as Chief of the Rescue Fire Company No. 1 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Gutshall has been an esteemed member of the Rescue Fire Company No. 1 since 1960. Since then, he has continually, selflessly, and honorably served and protected the citizens of Susquehanna Township in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. At the start of Mr. Gutshall's career, he immediately began proving his leadership qualities, commanding skills, expertise, and willingness to ascend professionally. By 1964 he successfully attained the rank of Lieutenant and Assistant Chief. A year later, the Rescue Fire Company No. 1 elected Mr. Gutshall to his first term as Fire Chief, a truly remarkable accomplishment in such a short period of time. Mr. Gutshall remained as Chief from 1970 until the announcement of his retirement on January 18, 2000.

Throughout his career, Mr. Gutshall has not only served and protected the citizens of Susquehanna Township from the disastrous forces of nature, but also served administratively in the Rescue Fire Company's office. Since 1962, Mr. Gutshall has served as Treasurer, in efforts to maintain and ensure the future financial security and prosperity of the Rescue Fire Company. Mr. Gutshall was also instrumental in the acquisition of the Township Fire Tax which helped provide all the Township Fire Companies with state of the art fire equipment to sustain and assure the protection and safety of the employees.

Mr. Gutshall has led his career and company with compassion. He upholds and preserves the tradition of volunteer service and commitment, a vital part of community functions. He instructs and educates members in the highest moral and ethical values which is proven in their discipline and attitudes. My Gutshall has been a tremendous mentor too all those who have worked beside him, a hero to those who know him, and teacher to both the fire services and county.

Mr. Gutshall has served as a leader of the public safety community for more than forty years, thirty-one of those years as Chief. He has served the members of Rescue Fire Company No. 1, the Edgemont and Progress Fire Company, and was instrumental in forming and serving the Township's Public Safety Committee since its inception. Susquehanna Township is a secure and protected community as a result of Mr. Gutshall's prospects in public safety.

Mr. Speaker, we are all very proud of Mr. Gutshall's accomplishments and I would like to extend our sincere congratulations to him and his family. We wish him health and happiness in his retirement years.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLIFTON CHRISTIAN CHURCH TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to congratulate the congregation and clergy, both past and present, of the Clifton Christian Church as they celebrate their 90th Anniversary.

The Clifton Christian Church was chartered in 1910 by a group of people that were determined. This determination has led the congregation over 90 years of service to the Clifton and Grand Junction communities.

The Church has built three buildings during the course of growing and changing. The first building was dedicated in 1921. The congregation raised $34,000 to pay the remaining balance for contruction. In 1982, this building was entered into the National Register of Historic Places. By 1919, only nine years after the first building was dedicated, the congregation was too large for the present facility. Construction for the second church began in the summer of 1920 and by January 1921.

The present building was put into use in February of 1977. The congregation has steadily grown and flourished. With that growth has come more opportunities to serve the community, supporting active community projects such as: Missions, WWIT (Widows & Widowers In Touch), Adventure Club, Teen Discipleship Groups, Salt-n-Light Elementary Youth Worship, Never Too Old, Genesis Christian School, and the Food & Clothing Ministry have given the church an outstanding reputation in Clifton.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer this tribute in honor of the 90th Anniversary of the Clifton Christian Church, the ''Church By the Side of the Road''. Their contributions to the spiritual health and well-being of our community deserve our highest gratitude and praise.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 3768 TO ENSURE ZIP CODE ALLOCATION

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, it's deja vu all over again. In the 105th Congress I stood before this body and introduced a bill designed to ensure fairness in ZIP code allocation. I had hoped not to be here again in the 106th Congress. I had hoped to be in my district, announcing the creation of a unique ZIP code for the City of Signal Hill by the United States Postal Service. Instead, I am back before this body, reintroducing a bill I hope will be the end to this decade-long problem.

I rise today to re-introduce a bill that would ensure fairness in ZIP code allocation. This issue was brought to my attention by the ongoing plight of one city in my district—the City of Signal Hill. Signal Hill is a bustling community of over 9,000 residents located in Southern California, surrounded completely by the City of Long Beach. Unfortunately, this community's growth and economic expansion are hampered by the three-way division of the city among ZIP codes. While the issuance of five little numbers may not seem like a big deal to many of those in Washington, it is of paramount importance to this community back home.

Dividing a community results in mail addressing and delivery problems and higher insurance rates for residents. It is unfair at best and inefficient at worst to punish residents of Signal Hill with unnecessarily high costs simply because the Postal Service mandated this division without any input from this active community. I have worked with the United States Postal Service since I came to office over five and a half years ago to find a solution to this issue that benefits both parties, however I am afraid we have come to an impasse. The Postal Service refuses to allocate a unique ZIP code to this city despite the overwhelming evidence that Signal Hill needs and deserves its own ZIP code. The time has come for a new approach to this ongoing problem.

The bill I am re-introducing would ensure that all cities like Signal Hill can count on efficient mail service and a distinct community identity. It says any city with a population of at least 5,000 residents that is completely surrounded by another city would not have to share its Zip code with any other city. This legislation takes the politics out of Postal Service decision-making and institutes instead, a straightforward, fair system for ZIP code allocation. This bill will put an end to years of delivery problems, community identification problems and insurance rate problems. Simply put, an economically independent community should not be forced to share their identity with anyone else simply due to geography and Postal Service bureaucracy. The City of Signal Hill is a distinct and viable city and deserves to be recognized as such.

Mr. Speaker, the bill follows:

H.R. 3768

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. ZIP CODE REQUIREMENT.

(a) REQUIREMENT.—Effective 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, no ZIP code that is assigned to a city (or portion of a city) that is completely surrounded by any other city may also be assigned to any area outside of the city so surrounded.

(b) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, the term ''city'' means any unit of general local government that is classified as a city, town, or municipality by the Bureau of the Census, and within the boundaries of which 5,000 or more individuals reside.

PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH

HON. CAROLYN McCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, it is a little known fact that March is Professional Social Work Month. Why is it that at a time when healthcare and child welfare are of utmost importance, we tend to overlook the middlemen? Is it that we forget about their role in today's society, or is it that we never learned about it in the first place?

I tend to think it is the latter reason. Social workers are the people who translate their education and training into commitment to making a difference in all aspects of people's lives. They are everywhere: in the courts, healthcare settings, schools, public and private agencies, congressional offices and industry, just to name a few. Often the public decries social problems that they would like solved; these are the people who work on a daily basis with individuals affected by them.

As a nurse, I am deeply concerned with the social problems plaguing the nation, and I worry about what is to come for future generations. As a legislator, I work to improve current problems by addressing these issues in Congress. In doing so, I recognize the vital importance of social work as a professional field of practice. It is one thing for us to acknowledge something as being a problem, it is another to be the person trying to fix it on a personal, case-by-case basis. I admire those who take on the responsibility of helping others help themselves.

It is easy to see why we overlook the importance of social workers. They work in the background, not in front of the television camera. They are not national figures, but ordinary people who make a living out of helping others. At the end of the day, one cannot measure in grand terms the effect they have had. But if we asked one of their clients, I am sure the difference they make would be obvious. They alter real lives.

I encourage you to take time to acknowledge the importance of social workers in everyday life. In a country that celebrates its diversity, culture, and history, it is appropriate to proclaim March to be Professional Social Work Month, and recognize the difference that these people have made and continue to make.

TRIBUTE TO ELOISE ROGERS

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Eloise M. Rogers, a woman of lasting commitment to service in her community. Just last week, Mrs. Rogers celebrated the happy occasion of her 100th birthday.

Born in 1900 in Charleston, South Carolina, Mrs. Rogers was the wife of the late Reverend Preston B. Rogers. Together, they had one son. Not only was Mrs. Rogers a wife and a mother, she was also a homemaker and a farmer. During this time she was active in her community as she served on the Deaconess Board, the Senior Choir, and as the Secretary for the Williamsburg Association. Mrs. Rogers active participation in her community remains as she now resides in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Currently, she is a member of the Joint Stock Liberty Worth Chapter 171 and a missionary.

Aside from being a selfless community servant, Mrs. Rogers is one of the many unsung heroes of the Civil Rights Movement that should be celebrated and remembered. She was among the first African Americans to register to vote in Williamsburg County of South Carolina, which is in the Sixth Congressional District I am pleased to represent in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me today in paying a tribute to an individual who epitomizes the virtue of being a public servant. She has made her mark in the church and in the political world, and continues to take part in her community. I ask you to join me in congratulating Mrs. Eloise Rogers on her 100th birthday, and wish for her many happy returns.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RONNIE SHOWS

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, I was away from the floor of the House on Tuesday, February 29, 2000, on official business and was unable to cast a recorded vote on rollcall 26.

Had I been present for rollcall 26, I would have voted ''yea'' on the motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 613, the Indian Tribal Economic Development and Contract Encouragement Act.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE FOR H.R. 2484

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I submit for the benefit of the Members a copy of the cost estimate prepared by the Congressional Budget Office for H.R. 2484, a bill to provide that land which is owned by the Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota but which is not held in trust by the United States for the Community may be leased or transferred by the Community without further approval by the United States. The bill was passed by the House of Representatives on February 29, 2000 by voice vote.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
U.S. CONGRESS,
Washington, DC, February 29, 2000.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Chairman, Committee on Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 2484, a bill to provide that land which is owned by the Lower Sioux Indian Community in the state of Minnesota but which is not held in trust by the United States for the community may be leased or transferred by the community without further approval by the United States.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contacts are Lanette Keith (for federal costs), who can be reached at 226–2860, and Marjorie Miller (for the impact on state, local, and tribal governments), who can be reached at 225–3220.

Sincerely,
BARRY B. ANDERSON,
(For Dan L. Crippen, Director).

Enclosure.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

H.R. 2484—A bill to provide that land which is owned by the Lower Sioux Indian Community in the state of Minnesota but which is not held in trust by the United States for the community may be leased or transferred by the community without further approval by the United States.

CBO estimates that implementing this bill would have no significant impact on the federal budget. Because enactment of H.R. 2484 would not affect direct spending or receipts, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. H.R. 2484 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

H.R. 2484 would allow the Lower Sioux Indian Community to lease, sell, or convey any land held by the community that is not held in trust by the United States. Current law requires Congressional approval before tribes may convey land that is not held in trust.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Lanette J. Keith (for federal costs), who can be reached at 226–2860, and Marjorie Miller (for the impact on state, local, and tribal governments), who can be reached at 225–3220. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES OF CHICAGO CELEBRATES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago (NHS) for its effort and success in rebuilding urban neighborhoods on the occasion of its 25th anniversary.

NHS is a nonprofit neighborhood revitalization organization with programs organized around four major areas of activity: community development, neighborhood lending, real estate development and home ownership education.

NHS promotes community development through 10 neighborhood-based programs offering home ownership, lending and rehabilitation services. Neighborhood Lending Services, the lending arm of NHS and an Illinois Residential Mortgage licensee, administers loan programs that finance home improvement, home safety repairs, purchase and home rehabilitation for low and moderate income families. The NHS Redevelopment Corporation buys and redevelops single and multifamily properties and builds new homes. Redevelopment activity is strategically targeted to support the work of neighborhood-based programs and to promote neighborhood development. NHS's NeighborWorks Home Ownership Center is an innovative approach to providing in one location all the services and training that customers need to shop for, purchase, rehabilitate, insure and maintain a home. NHS's Homebuyer Education and Landlord Training classes are offered at the Center several times per month in English and Spanish.

Since 1975, NHS has rehabilitated more than 20,000 units of affordable housing for Chicago, families, including 334 units of low-income rental housing owned and managed by the NHS Redevelopment Corporation. NHS has initiated more than 12,000 loans totaling nearly $250 million to help individuals purchase or rehabilitate homes. NHS has also generated more than $1 billion of investment in 19 Chicago neighborhoods and reclaimed 990 vacant and abandoned homes for occupancy by new homeowners.

NHS's efforts in community development, neighborhood lending, real estate development and home ownership education have improved Chicago and its neighborhoods for thousands of families.

I am very honored to commend NHS on its invaluable work. I have witnessed the vital difference NHS makes in our communities and I thank them for their work and commitment.

Once again, I congratulate Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago for its exceptional dedication improving Chicago's communities.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict in my Congressional District on Tuesday, February 29, I was not present for rollcall vote 26. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea''.

TEXAS

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is a special day in Texas because tomorrow, March 2, is the first Texas Independence Day of the new millennium. In 1836, 164 years ago today, the Republic of Texas was born.

Let me set the stage for what happened 163 years ago. On March 1, 1836, 54 delegates representing settlements across Texas gathered for the Convention of 1836 at the small farm village of Washington-on-the-Brazos.

From the beginning, it was an event marked by haste and urgency. Mexican forces under Santa Anna were closing in on the defenders of the Alamo. On March 2, the day after the opening of the convention, the delegates declared the independence of Texas from Mexico. Within days of that announcement, the Alamo would fall, the first in a chain of defeats for the small Texas Army, which would nevertheless emerge victorious at the battle of San Jacinto, 6 weeks later, on April 21.

Mr. Speaker, what were these brave Texans fighting for? Up to the point when they gathered at Washington-on-the-Brazos, it was simply to restore the Mexican Constitution of 1824, which had been suspended by Santa Anna.

On the night of March 1, however, a group of five men stayed up late into the night, drafting the document that would be approved the next day by the full convention. This document, which echoed the lines of its American counterpart, was the Texas Declaration of Independence.

It started off in much the same way, with the words, ''When a government has ceased to protect the lives, liberty and property of the people.'' It spoke of the numerous injustices inflicted upon the settlers of the state of Coahuila y Tejas: the elimination of the state's legislative body, the denial of religious freedom, the elimination of the civil justice system, and the confiscation of firearms being the most intolerable, particularly among Texans.

Finally, it ended with the declaration that, because of the injustice of Santa Anna's tyrannical government, Texans were severing their connection with the Mexican nation and declaring themselves ''a free, sovereign, and independent republic . . . fully invested with all the rights and attributes'' that belong to independent nations; and a declaration that they ''fearlessly and confidently'' committed their decision to ''the Supreme Arbiter of the destinies of nations.''

Over the next two weeks, a constitution was drafted and an interim government was formed, despite daily reports from the front detailing the collapse of the Alamo and subsequent advance of the Mexican Army through Texas. On March 17, 1836, the government was forced to flee Washington-on-the-Brazos on the news of the advance of Santa Anna.

Just over a month later, however, independence would be secured in the form of a victory over that same army by Sam Houston, a delegate at the very convention, and his courageous fighters at the battle of San Jacinto.

Mr. Speaker, let me remind folks from Tennessee that Sam Houston served in this Congress from the State of Tennessee. I have at times told my friends from Tennessee ''The best of Tennessee immigrated to Texas in the 1830's.''

From that point on, Texas was firmly established in the community of nations; and for 10 years she stood as an independent nation, until President James K. Polk signed the treaty admitting Texas to the United States in 1845.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the Congress and the whole country will join us in a day that in Texas we celebrate, our schoolchildren celebrate, Texas Independence Day.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. H. ROBERT AND LYLA DAVIS

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to recognize the lifelong achievements of two of my constituents Dr. H. Robert Davis and Lyla Townsend Davis.

Dr. and Mrs. Davis have lived and worked in Pennsylvania's 19th Congressional District for most of their lives. Over those decades they have been dedicated to ensuring a better future for our young people in Cumberland County. From his years as a family physician to his service as School Board President, Dr. Davis promoted the health and well being of families throughout the community. Of course, his wonderful wife, Lyla, was always at his side, providing love and support and just as much hard work. The Davis's have truly been an inspiration to all who know them.

On March 4, the Bubbler Foundation will honor Dr. and Mrs. Davis for their years of community service. I am pleased to be among the many members of their family, church, friends, and community to recognize and congratulate them for their extraordinary efforts.

PROVIDING TARIFF RELIEF FOR MACHINERY AND COMPONENTS USED TO MANUFACTURE DIGITAL VERSATILE DISCS (DVDs)

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce today legislation that would provide tariff relief on machinery and components for use in the manufacture of digital versatile discs (DVDs).

DVD, using cutting-edge optical disc technology, provides consumers the highest quality audio and video reproduction. Used both in DVD players as part of a home theater system and in DVD–ROM-equipped computers, these discs have grown enormously in popularity since their introduction in 1997. I have used this technology myself and certainly understand its rapid growth. In the short time since the introduction of DVD hardware, demand for discs that play on these machines has grown from 8 million annually to an expected 394 million in 2000. In fact, it is expected that DVD technology will replace both videocassette tapes and video laser discs as the preferred medium for presentation of movies in the home.

There are at least 17 domestic producers of DVDs, including such electronics and entertainment companies as Time Warner, Panasonic, Sony, and JVC. Panasonic is also a major employer in the state of Georgia, with over 1000 employees in my district alone. In 1997, Panasonic opened the first disc replication facility in the United States to dedicated exclusively to the production of DVDs. Nine hundred Panasonic employees in the United States now produce over four million video discs per month for such movie companies as Universal, Fox, and Paramount. In total, companies in the United States produce 16.6 million discs a month, all using imported machinery.

DVDs are the ''next generation'' recorded video media in the marketplace, succeeding video laser discs (VLDs) that were produced in the early 1990s. These machines consist of several components (including a master recording system, injection mold machine, laser encoder, and finishing line) that function together to produce DVDs. Machines that produce DVDs use essentially the same technology as machines used to produce VLDs—a laser encoder creates the desired pits on optical disc media (plastic or glass disc substrates). Recent advancements in technology enable DVDs to hold more recordings on smaller discs than VLDs.

In 1994, Congress passed new, duty free tariff legislation for VLD manufacturing machines. This legislation helped companies like Time Warner (WEA Manufacturing) create and save jobs in the U.S. that were being lost as a result of foreign production of CDs and VLDs. Importantly, this legislation did not adversely affect any U.S. industry because optical disc technology, such as that used in VLDs and DVDs, was first developed overseas and there was no domestic production.

Shortly after passing duty free legislation on VLDs, however, home video entertainment shifted to DVDs. Companies shifted production of VLDs to DVDs using substantially the same systems, and companies like Panasonic began manufacturing DVDs in the U.S. DVD manufacturers import the machines used to make DVDs, purchasing them from the same foreign companies that produced VLD manufacturing machines. Under the established legal principal that legislation should be interpreted to take into account advancements in technology, DVD manufacturing machines should be classified under than same duty free provisions as VLD manufacturing machines. Customs, however, has ruled that DVD manufacturing machines are not classified under the duty free provisions for VLDs, and that the components of DVD manufacturing machines should be classified under 11 separate tariff headings, with an average duty of three percent. This ruling has had the effect of negating the benefits of Congress' 1994 legislation on VLDs.

My legislation would provide tariff relief on imported DVD machinery and components, thus reducing the cost of production for domestic manufacturers. Competition from Taiwan, Japan, and the European Union is very strong. A recent internal study indicated some overseas competitors are trying to sell their DVD discs in the U.S. as low as 75 cents each, compared to a cost of $1.61 for domestic production.

Reduced production costs would help the seventeen U.S. producers of DVD discs be more competitive and ensure the continued employment of American workers in those companies. Indeed, duties on the discs produced using DVD manufacturing machines actually are lower than the duties now imposed on DVD manufacturing machines. The proposed legislation would remove such inequitable and inverted tariffs, thereby promoting U.S. jobs and manufacturing of DVDs in the U.S. New DVD products are being released each year. Recordable DVDs will be available in 2001. As U.S. consumers respond to the superior quality of digital sound and images, this legislation will help companies fulfill the demand for digital products and help increase jobs associated with the popularity of this important information technology media.

This legislation also will protect U.S. intellectual property rights. Movie studios have invested heavily in the protection of movie content for DVDs. Keeping production of DVDs in the U.S., rather than in countries that have weaker intellectual property laws and enforcement, will help prevent the mass piracy of software that occurs overseas.

The enactment of this legislation for DVD machinery and components would not injure any domestic producer, and it would ensure the continued growth of jobs and investment in the United States while protecting against the potential loss of valuable intellectual property. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

REMEMBERING THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL HAND TRANSPLANT

HON. ANNE M. NORTHUP

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Ms. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary event that took place in my district, Louisville, Kentucky, one year ago. The horizons of medical possibilities were expanded when an amazing team of doctors performed America's first successful hand transplant at Louisville, Kentucky's Jewish Hospital. I am pleased to report that one year later, everything is going well for the patient and four other hand transplants have taken place around the world. We are moving into a new frontier where transplant medicine's boundless capabilities to heal are no longer restricted to the life threatened, but can also apply to those with mechanical ailments. This giant leap in the application of surgical research reflects the dauntless will of doctors to bring the total health of the individual on par with the available science of today.

Such an outstanding achievement is just one example of what can happen when people work together to achieve a common goal. The hand transplant was a joint project of Jewish Hospital, the University of Louisville, and Kleinert and Kutz Associates. This remarkable local partnership is the only one in the country capable of doing a hand transplant. This pioneering accomplishment and other research efforts will have a multiplier effect that can create 1,000 medical jobs in the next five years. But this is just in Louisville, for the effects worldwide are infinite.

We are also reminded to maintain profound respect for those who give. None of this would have happened without the hand, which came from Kentucky Organ Donor Affiliates, the organization that coordinates donation and distribution of body parts in Kentucky, Southern Indiana, and Western Virginia. One person's decision to become an organ and tissue donor can benefit as many as 200 lives. One organ donor can enhance or save the lives of one heart patient, one liver recipient, two lung patients, two kidney patients, one diabetic, two people with impaired vision, three or four burn victims, and over 100 recipients of bone grafts. That is why in February, the House

passed a resolution supporting the goals and ideas of National Donor Day. Miracles don't just happen—people make them happen.

As the success of this hand transplant demonstrates, a family's contribution of their loved one's organs can not only save a life, but improve the quality of life for others. I salute all those, doctors and donors alike, whose contributions help patients worry less about the little things in life that most people take for granted.

I am forever impressed by the kinds of medical miracles we can achieve when we support research endeavors in this country. I am honored to have such a fine team of doctors in Louisville and hope that the contribution of Jewish Hospital, the University of Louisville, and the doctors of Kleinert and Kutz can continue to be built upon by others. Their enthusiasm and dedication add to the vitality of the Louisville community and can-do attitude for all to follow.

ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION AWARENESS

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to introduce legislation to authorize the organ and tissue donation awareness ''semi-postal'' stamp.

With 67,000 people on the organ donation waiting list, there is no time to lose in educating the public about the importance of organ and tissue donation.

As a result of strong congressional interest, the U.S. Postal Service issued a 32-cent organ donation commemorative stamp in August 1998, but the postal rate increased to 33 cents just five months later. Even though this commemorative stamp is still available at some post offices, purchasers have to buy a 1-cent stamp to make up the difference in postage, which works to discourage people from buying and using the organ donation stamp. Despite these difficulties, there are less than 3 million of these stamps remaining from the 50 million that the post office printed.

This time, we are seeking authorization for a ''semi-postal'' stamp that would sell for up to 25 percent above the value of a first-class stamp with the surplus revenues going to programs to increase organ donor awareness.

The decision to donate an organ is a lifesaving decision, but one that is unfortunately not communicated among family members and loved ones. We strongly believe that every effort we make to remind people that this is a decision that should not wait until tragedy strikes, is an effort toward saving lives. Whether it is an organ and tissue donation postage stamp or a box that drivers may mark as they are renewing their drivers' licenses—these all serve to raise attention to the important issue of communicating a decision to become an organ donor with family members and friends before tragedy strikes.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues, Representatives MOAKLEY, THURMAN, and FRANKS, for being original cosponsors of this legislation. I urge you and other Members of this Congress to join with us and cosponsor this very worthwhile measure.

IN SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO THOMAS R. WINTERS ON THE OCCASION OF HIS FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay special tribute to a truly outstanding individual from the state in Ohio. On Sunday, March 12, 2000, Mr. Thomas R. Winters will celebrate his fiftieth birthday. I certainly want to extend my warmest wishes to him on this event.

Tom Winters has attained a long and illustrious career working in all aspects of government and politics in Ohio. Tom served for more than ten years as a top assistant and Chief of Staff to then Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives Vern Riffe. In that time, Tom served as Clerk of the House, Executive Secretary of the House, and Majority Counsel. During his service, Tom worked very closely with members of the Ohio General Assembly and has maintained a strong relationship with current and past members of the Ohio House and Senate.

As President of the Ohio Senate, I had the opportunity to work with Tom first-hand and found him to be talented and helpful in my dealings with Speaker Riffe and the entire Ohio House. Although we were on opposite sides of the political fence, Tom worked aggressively for the benefit of all Ohioans, not just a select few. His commitment to sound public policy and positive legislative accomplishments is well documented and deserves our commendation.

Currently, Tom is a partner in the Columbus office of Vorys, Sater, Seymour, and Pease LLP where he represents governments, businesses, and trade associations on legislative matters at the national, state, local, and administrative agency levels. As an attorney, Tom works diligently on behalf of his clients to ensure that their interests are represented with the highest level of character and integrity. While I do not have the opportunity to see Tom as often as I did while I served in the Ohio Senate, I know that his words are true and his intentions honorable.

Mr. Speaker, Tom Winters has spent more than twenty-five years working to improve public policy and build our system. It is often said that America prospers due to the unwavering commitment of her sons and daughters. Without question, Tom Winters has freely given of his time and talents to the betterment of government and politics. For that, we all owe him a debt of gratitude.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleagues to stand and join me in wishing Thomas R. Winters a very Happy Birthday. We look forward to his continued success and we extend our best wishes to him, his wife, Mary, and his entire family.

CONGRESSMAN MICHAEL N. CASTLE STATEMENT IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL TRIO DAY

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to my colleagues' attention National TRIO Day, celebrated on the last Saturday of February.

The federal TRIO programs, which include Talent Search, Upward Bound, Student Support Services, Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement, Educational Opportunity Centers, Staff Development programs, and GEAR UP, were established to compliment student aid programs and help students overcome class, social and cultural barriers to higher education.

As mandated by Congress, two-thirds of the students served must come from families with low incomes where neither parent graduated from college. Today, 2,000 colleges, universities and community agencies sponsor TRIO programs, and more than 780,000 students between the ages of 11 and 27 benefit from these services.

In my state of Delaware, there are 15 TRIO programs, including those at Delaware State University, the University of Delaware, and Delaware Technical & Community College. TRIO programs at these schools serve nearly 3,000 Delawareans, and studies show that these students will be more likely to remain in college and earn an undergraduate degree than students from similar backgrounds who did not participate in TRIO.

One of the beneficiaries of the Delaware TRIO programs is Jean-Marie Nixon. Ms. Nixon worked in hospitality management until a major industrial accident prevented her from returning to her old job. Ms. Nixon enrolled in classes at Delaware Technical & Community College and, with the help of the TRIO program, she graduated from her program with honors and is now an Instructional Tutor.

Access and retention services are absolutely essential to help ensure equal educational opportunity for students like Ms. Nixon. I would like to encourage my colleagues to visit the TRIO programs in their districts and learn for themselves how valuable these programs are to our nation.

TRIBUTE TO DOLLIE M. SHIBLES

HON. JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Dollie M. Shibles who recently turned 100 years old. Dollie truly is one of Maine's state treasures.

Dollie was born on Know Ridge in Montville, Maine, in 1990 and married her husband, Perry Shibles, in 1924. They raised their son, Foster, together and were nearly inseparable for 67 years of marriage until Perry's death in 1991.

Dollie always has dedicated herself to her family, and she has been an integral part of every community in which she has ever lived. She has been an active member of a number

of civic and church groups—some of which she has outlived!—including The Women's Group, The Cecilia Society, Missionary Guild, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Penney Memorial Baptist Church.

Today, Dollie continues to live a rich and fulfilling life in Augusta, Maine, at the St. Mark's Home for Women. In addition to her son, she is very proud of her three grandsons and six great-grandchildren. Although Dollie does not point to any one key to her longevity, it probably did not hurt that she never smoked a cigarette or had a drink of alcohol. I expect that the beautiful environment and clean air in Maine have contributed as well.

I am pleased to join many of her friends and family in wishing Dollie Shibles all the best as she enters her second century of life.

TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL WALTER C. CORISH, JR., GA ANG

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and honor the retirement of one of Georgia's finest citizens. Walter C. Corish, Jr., Brigadier General, Georgia Air National Guard, will end his duties as an outstanding guardsman on March 4, 2000. On this day, he deserves our respect and gratitude for his 32 years of honorable and dedicated service to this great nation.

Outside of family, church, and friends, General Corish lives two lives—one protecting our freedom and the other serving as a business and civic leader. As a soldier, General Corish sets the standard for the National Guard. His duties include Commander of the 283rd Combat Communications Squadron, Communications-Computer Staff Officer, Deputy Chief of Staff and Special Assistant to the Commander, and Commander of the Georgia Air National Guard. His professional military education includes Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff Course, and the National Security Management Course. His military decorations consist of the Air Force Meritorious Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, the Air Force Achievement Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Air Force Organizational Excellence Award, Combat Readiness Medal, the Georgia Meritorious Service Medal and the Georgia Commendation Medal.

As a civilian, Walter is President of Corish and Company, a successful independent insurance agency. He served as an Alderman for the City of Savannah, President of the National Guard Association of Georgia, member of the Savannah Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Committee, plus many other church, civic and fraternal organizations.

Mr. Speaker, General Corish is a shining example of what is best about the National Guard. He epitomizes the great admiration many of my colleagues here in Congress have for the men women who serve our nation while maintaining their occupational and family responsibilities.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to get to know Walter on a personal basis. As a citizen soldier, he embodies virtues of duty, honor, and love of country. Furthermore, he is a man of courage, dignity, enthusiasm, and impeccable morality. His devotion to church, family, the Guard, business, and his community goes beyond the highest level. I am personally grateful for what Walter and his family have sacrificed over the years, a sacrifice so many of us take for granted.

I am happy and proud to join Walter's wife, Patty, his two children, Trey and Kathy, other family, friends, and the National Guard on this special occasion. On behalf of millions of grateful Americans everywhere, and especially on behalf of the people of the First District of Georgia, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Walter for the many years of service rendered to a grateful nation.

A TRIBUTE TO EVELYN ''TESSIE'' WILLIAMS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements of a dedicated city employee, Evelyn ''Tessie'' Williams.

''Tessie'', as she is affectionately known to all her friends and co-workers, was born in Salisbury, North Carolina. Her family moved to the Fort Greene neighborhood in Brooklyn when she was 7 years old. Tessie is the mother of five children and grandmother of 13. She developed an interest in better quality education for children in the New York City school system and served as the P.T.A. President at P.S. 46 in Community School District 13 for four years.

Her volunteer service led to employment as one of the first para-professionals in the City, enabling her to resume her education at New York City Community College and Richmond College (presently The College of Staten Island), as a student of early childhood education. Tessie then enrolled at John Jay College of Criminal Justice to study Government and Public Administration.

In 1979, Tessie became District Manager of Community Board #2. She brought her skills and talents acquired during her five years in the private sector as a program coordinator of the NY/NJ Minority Purchasing Council. Her varied abilities and new position reaffirmed an earlier awareness that true change in government begins when one becomes involved and gains knowledge of how the system works. As District Manager, she shares that knowledge and is truly committed to making a difference in the community she grew up in and now represents.

Tessie was the co-founder of the Better Education Committee, Community of Business Labor, Educational Services (CABLE), and the Brooklyn Women's Political Caucus. She is also on several boards, is an affiliate with many organizations and the recipient of numerous honors. Please join me in recognizing the contributions of one of Brooklyn's most respected city employees, Evelyn ''Tessie'' Williams.

NEW JERSEY SUPPORTS THE UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the United Negro College Fund, and to call attention to its annual campaign celebration that will occur on March 2, 2000, in Trenton, NJ.

For nearly six decades, the United Negro College Fund has had a long and rich history of helping students in New Jersey and nationwide obtain a higher education.

In 1943, Dr. Frederick D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute, wrote an open letter which appeared in the Pittsburgh Courier newspaper, which called on the presidents of the nation's private black colleges to join with him to ''pool their small monies and make a united appeal to the national conscience,'' His words became the guiding principle for what was to become one of the world's leading education assistance organizations. One year later, on April 25 1994, the United Negro College Fund was incorporated with 27 member colleges and a combined enrollment of just 14,000 students.

Fifty-six years later, UNCF has grown to become one of our nation's oldest and most-respected educational organizations. Today, the UNCF is a strong consortium of 39 private, accredited, four-year historically black colleges and universities.

In recent years, UNCF has broadened its focus by offering programs designed to enhance educational quality provide financial assistance to deserving students, raise funds for member colleges and universities, and supply technical assistance to member institutions.

More than 300,000 men and women have obtained an education with the support they received from the United Negro College Fund. In communities from central new Jersey to central California and every place in between, UNCF graduates are working to build a stronger nation as community leaders in every walk of life.

On Thursday, March 2, 2000, the United Negro College Fund will kick off its yearly events with a ceremony held in Trenton, New Jersey. Through its hard work and the commitment of community leaders, including Trenton Mayor Douglas H. Palmer, and citizens, the UNCF was able to offer scholarships to several students last year, and campaign organizers hope to double their efforts in the year ahead.

Mr. Speaker, education is the admission ticket to opportunity on today's economy. The efforts and commitment of organizations like the United Negro College Fund, which have made a positive difference in the lives of so many young Americans, are to be commended and recognized.

I hope that my colleagues will join in me paying tribute to the efforts of the United Negro College Fund in central New Jersey and nationwide.

PRESENTING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO JOHN CARDINAL O'CONNOR

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 15, 2000

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, and I applaud my colleague from New York City [Mr. FOSSELLA] for his work in bringing it to the floor today. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bill honoring a great man and a great New Yorker.

I rise too, to celebrate John Cardinal O'Connor's eighty years and his more than fifteen years of service as the Archbishop of New York. Cardinal O'Connor was not only a spiritual leader, but a secular leader as well. He spoke softly—and sometimes not so softly—about our most pressing problems: homelessness, the AIDS crisis, and condition of the poor, and he worked with others on concrete plans and strategies to address them. Former Governor Mario Cuomo recently cited Cardinal O'Connor's efforts as paving the way for the City's aggressive response to AIDS.

Cardinal O'Connor was a great leader and a friend of all leaders in our city. More than one mayor told me they often consulted with him on how to handle their work and to respond to the challenges of leading the City. He received almost every award his Church and City could bestow on him, although he once told me once that the only award that impressed his mother was the time he was named Grand Marshall of the St. Patrick's Day parade.

Cardinal O'Connor was a permanent fixture at many of our City's major events. I remember him at every parade, coming out to greet the people. In addition, he was an outstanding pastor, taking care of individual needs, and putting the most personal of touches into his sermons.

Cardinal O'Connor will be retiring later this year, and will be solely missed by all residents of the City. Whoever is selected as his successor will face a great challenge—to bring together a diverse population, and to serve—as Cardinal O'Connor did—as a beacon and an inspiration to the less fortunate and to all residents of the City.

In light of his years of public service and his devotion to people of all walks of life, it is only fitting that we give him this honor today. I applaud Cardinal O'Connor for his leadership, and for his service to the people of New York and to Catholics around the world. I thank my colleague from New York for introducing this legislation, and I urge all my colleagues to support this bill to pay a fitting tribute to a genuine humanitarian and a great leader.

HONORING THE 1999 FAIRFAX CENTRAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PUBLIC SAFETY AWARD WINNERS

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to rise and bring to the attention of my colleagues some very special public safety personnel in Fairfax City, in the Eleventh Congressional District of Virginia. Every year the Fairfax Central Chamber of Commerce honors police officers and fire fighters who have shown the highest level of dedication to their noble duties. These individuals who are role models to others in their profession were honored on February 24, 2000 at the 1999 Public Safety Awards Luncheon.

The 1999 awards recipients are:

Career Fire Fighter of the Year: Technician James B. Jeckell: Technician Jeckell is recognized with this prestigious award for his diligent efforts, exceptional work, and commitment to the Fire Department. Technician Jeckell's attention to detail and quality is exceptional, and as the protective clothing representative, he consistently obtains the best available protective gear presently made to meet the needs of our station personnel. He also handles equipment procurement and necessary repairs needed on the Department's small equipment. Technician Jeckell serves on the Department's training committee, and is consistently methodical, goal oriented, and focused on performing his duties with the highest standards of excellence during emergency incidents.

Volunteer Fire Fighter of the Year: Hana F. Brilliant: Fire Fighter Brilliant is recognized for her tremendous commitment to the fire department in volunteering an extensive number of overtime/recall hours. She has covered shift vacancies with little or no notice, and consistently and promptly responds to requests for staffing assistance. During calendar year 1999, she volunteered 582 minimum staffing hours. In addition to her service in operational staffing roles, she is dedicated to training, and attends in-station training on a regular basis. During the pilot Fire Fighter I & II certification class, Fire Fighter Brilliant not only served as an instructor, but was also responsible for arranging volunteer coverage for career on-duty instructors. She continues in this role with our current certification class. Additionally, Fire Fighter Brilliant serves as a contributing member of the Department's Quality Council and the Training Committee.

Valor Award: Bruce Suslowitz: Fire Medic Suslowitz is being honored today with an Honorable Mention of Valor for his life-saving actions at the three-alarm fire at 3939 Persimmon Drive on January 7, 2000. As a member of the first-arriving unit on the scene, and after giving the appropriate situation report, Fire Medic Suslowitz approached the building to ensure all tenants were exiting safely. Upon opening the stairway door, Fire Medic Suslowitz heard someone yelling for assistance. Without regard for his own safety, Fire Medic Suslowitz rapidly ascended three floors to find an 80-year-old wheelchair-bound man being assisted by his 17-year-old neighbor. Ultimately, without the assistance of anyone, Fire Medic Suslowitz valiantly rescued the gentleman from the smoke-filled building, who was then treated and taken to the hospital for smoke inhalation.

Police Officer of the Year: Detective Michael D. Boone: Detective Michael Boone is being honored today for his consistently high level of dedication in the performance of his law enforcement duties. An example of his dedication to upholding the law was demonstrated on a peeping-Tom case involving a sexual offender with prior convictions of burglary, rape, and abduction. Over the course of several months, Detective Boone's initiative and excellent investigative techniques triggered a probation violation hearing. As a result, the judge imposed the entirety of a 10-year sentence in the State Penitentiary on the probation violation. Detective Boone's actions successfully removed a violent sex offender from the community.

Life Saving Award: Officer Craig M. Buckley and Officer Martin Nachtman: On July 7, 1999, Officer Nachtman responded to a call in the Fairfax Circle area for an individual panhandling and bothering customers of a business. When he arrived on scene, the individual was not at the building. Upon checking the area for the individual, he was found behind the building. The man, using the belt, had hanged himself from a handrail on the steps to the rear of the building. Officer Buckley then arrived on the scene. The officers immediately lifted the man and removed the belt from around his neck. The individual was nonresponsive and not breathing. At this point the officers began to administer CPR to the subject. Their efforts were successful in restoring the man's breathing. City of Fairfax Fire and Rescue units arrived and continued to care for this individual and transported him to the hospital. He was originally listed in critical condition, but has since improved and is expected to make a full recovery.

Several factors stand out in the performance of these officers: the quick response to a seemingly minor call; the diligence in checking for the subject when he was not present at the location; and finally, the teamwork and life-saving action that each of them took. These fine police officers should be commended for the exemplary role they played in saving a man's life.

Due to the dedicated efforts of public service providers, like Technician Jim Jeckell, Fire Fighter Hana Brilliant, Fire Medic Bruce Suslowitz, Detective Michael Boone, Officer Martin Nachtman, and Officer Craig Buckley, who place the safety and well-being of others above their own, the city of Fairfax is a better place to live. They have rightfully earned the highest appreciation and respect from myself, the members of the Fairfax Central Chamber of Commerce, and from all the people of our community whose lives they have touched. I know my colleagues will join me in thanking these heroes for a job well done.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE FOR H.R. 1749

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I submit for the benefit of the Members a copy of the cost estimate prepared by the Congressional Budget Office for H.R. 1749, a bill to designate Wilson Creek in Avery and Caldwell Counties, North Carolina, as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, February 29, 2000.

HON. DON YOUNG,
Chairman, Committee on Resources,
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1749, a bill to designate Wilson Creek in Avery and Caldwell counties, North Carolina, as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis.

Sincerely,

DAN L. CRIPPEN,
Director.

Enclosure.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE—H.R. 1749

H.R. 1749 would designate a 23-mile segment of Wilson Creek in North Carolina as a component of the Wild and Scenic River System, to be administered by the U.S. Forest Service. Based on information provided by the Forest Service, administering the Wilson Creek segment would have no significant impact on federal spending. The river segment would remain undeveloped.

Because H.R. 1749 would not affect direct spending or receipts, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis, who can be reached at 226–2860. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

A CALL FOR THE RELEASE OF CUBAN POLITICAL PRISONER, DR. OSCAR ELIAS BISCET

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, a great Cuban patriot, the physician Oscar Elias Biscet, has been sentenced to 3 years in prison by the Cuban dictatorship for peacefully demanding free elections and human rights for the Cuban people.

Dr. Biscet forms part of a new generation of leadership that has risen in the Cuban pro-democracy movement and that will play a key role in the free and democratic Cuba that is near.

Dr. Biscet's imprisonment must be condemned and his immediate and unconditional release demanded by all freedom-loving people.

A number of us here in Congress have written the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, urging that she add her voice to the call for Dr. Biscet's immediate release. We will not cease our efforts until he and all of the other Cuban political prisoners are free.

I hereby submit for the record, Mr. Speaker, the letter sent by 13 Members of this House to U.N. High Commissioner Robinson, as well as a translation of a letter by Dr. Biscet that was written on a handkerchief and secretly taken out of Dr. Biscet's prison cell approximately 6 weeks ago. The letter was delivered to Cuban independent journalist Angel Pablo Polanco, who revealed its contents via telephone.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, February 25, 2000.

Ms. Mary Robinson,
Office of High Commissioner For Human Rights, United Nations Headquarters, New York, NY.

Dear Ms. Robinson: This is to request your urgent assistance on behalf of the Cuban human rights activist Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet, who is scheduled to stand trial on February 25th, 2000 at the Municipal Tribunal ''10 de Octubre'' in Havana, Cuba. The Cuban dictatorship apparently plans years of incarceration for Dr. Biscet for so called crimes of ''dishonoring national symbols'', ''public disorder'' and ''inciting delinquent behavior''.

On October 28, 1999 Dr. Biscet held a press conference, prior to the Ibero-American Summit held in Havana in early November. During the press conference, Dr. Biscet along with other members of the peaceful opposition movement announced a march calling for the release of all political prisoners and respect of human rights for the Cuban people. During the press conference two Cuban flags were displayed in an inverted position as a sign of protest for the countless human rights violations that occur on the island. Subsequently, on November 3, 1999, Dr. Biscet was detained and taken to ''Cien y Aldabo'', where he was placed in a damp cell without sunlight with three common criminals.

Dr. Biscet represents the noblest of aspirations of democracy in Cuba. His efforts as the founder of the Lawton Foundation for Human Rights, a humanitarian organization which promotes the respect for human rights through nonviolent means, have gained him the respect and admiration of notable human rights activists throughout the world and inspired countless Cubans to continue in their struggle for democratic change.

The Cuban regime, intimidated by the effectiveness of Dr. Biscet's message, has detained him 26 times over that last 18 months, terminated his employment and evicted him and his family from their home. He has been subjected to psychiatric examinations and has been constantly pressured to abandon Cuba.

We respectfully urge you to immediately denounce Dr. Biscet's unjust incarceration and trial and call for his immediate and unconditional release from prison. A statement of this nature would greatly serve to protect Dr. Biscet and his family from further harm by the Cuban government.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lincoln Diaz-Balart, Robert Wexler, ——— ———, Christopher H. Smith, James A. Traficant, Jr., Dana Rohrabacher, Porter J. Goss, Peter Deutsch, Tillie K. Fowler, Bill McCollum, Luis V. Gutierrez, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Ben Gilman.

HAVANA, JANUARY 20, 2000.

Supreme Court of Justice of the United States of America

EXCELLENCIES: I send you kind greetings. From a ''tapiada'' cell I write in darkness where it is forbidden to read and write. Under these conditions I pray God may grant you wisdom to make the proper decision in the case of the Cuban child Elian in order to dignify human life and liberty.

Esteemed judges: a nation must never deprive any person of freedom unless the individual becomes a danger to society, always respecting human rights. Nor may parents deprive their children of their right to life and freedom. Limits must prevail for both, nation and parents, to prevent violations of inalienable human rights.

I ask, what is life without freedom? Nothing, as without freedom life is deprived of the love of God.

''Justice exalts a nation, sin becomes its shame.'' Proverbs.

Magistrates, glorify humanity.

Thank you.

DR. OSCAR ELIAS BISCET,
Lawton Foundation for Human Rights.

Note: This letter, written on a handkerchief, was clandestinely taken out of the prison at the Department of Technical investigation in Havana where Dr. Biscet is incarcerated. The letter was delivered to the independent journalist in Cuba, Angel Pablo Polanco who revealed its contents abroad via telephone.

HONORING DR. PERLITA NARVAEZ

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize a woman who has worked hard to educate women in Bent County about preventing cancer. Dr. Perlita Narvaez works with women in her county to encourage regular checkups and comforts patients with her gentle bedside manner.

Perlita was honored by the local chapter of the Colorado Women's Cancer Control Initiative for her services to help encourage preventative measures in women's health. Perlita has been performing cancer screenings for area women for nearly two years by working directly with the Cancer Control Initiative. The Initiative encourages low-income women to call for an appointment and even offers for a volunteer to go with the woman if she wishes. This Initiative and Perlita have worked diligently to help reduce the number of women who suffer from breast and cervical cancer.

Perlita has been practicing medicine for 12 years. She has made working with women and children her specialty. Her efforts have been applauded by both patients and the Cancer Control Initiative.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to offer this tribute of thanks to Dr. Perlita Narvaez. Colorado is grateful for her service.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 2, 2000 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 3

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the management of Air Force depot maintenance.

SR–222

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine the current United States employment situation.

1334, Longworth Building

MARCH 6

1 p.m.

Aging

To hold hearings to examine colon cancer, focusing on greater use of sceening as prevention.

SH–216

3 p.m.

Appropriations

Defense Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense.

SD–192

MARCH 7

9:30 a.m.

Veterans' Affairs

To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on the legislative recommendations of the Retired Enlisted Association, Gold Star Wives of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Air Force Sergeants Association, and the Fleet Reserve Association.

345, Cannon Building

Appropriations

Legislative Branch Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Secretary of the Senate, and the Sergeant at Arms.

SD–124

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Communications Subcommittee

To hold hearings on S. 1755, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to regulate interstate commerce in the use of mobile telephones.

SR–253

Armed Services

To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense and the Future Years Defense Program, focusing on military strategy and operational requirements; to be followed by a closed hearing (SR–232A).

SR–222

Judiciary

Administrative Oversight and the Courts Subcommittee

To hold hearings on the Counterintelligence Reform Act.

SD–216

10 a.m.

Appropriations

Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Naturalization Service, all of the Department of Justice.

SD–192

Appropriations

Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Food and Drug Administration.

SD–138

Environment and Public Works

Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee

To hold hearings on on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Transportation, focusing on the Federal Highway Administration.

SD–406

2 p.m.

Judiciary

Technology, Terrorism, and Government Information Subcommittee

To hold hearings on Internet identity preservation.

SD–226

2:30 p.m.

Energy and Natural Resources

Water and Power Subcommittee

To hold hearings on the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2001 for the Bureau of Reclamation of the Department of the Interior, and the Bonneville Power Administration, the Southeastern Power Administration, the Southwestern Power Administration, and the Western Area Power Administration, all of the Department of Energy.

SD–366

MARCH 8

9:30 a.m.

Appropriations

VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the National Science Foundation, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

SD–138

Judiciary

Administrative Oversight and the Courts Subcommittee

To hold hearings on S. 2089, to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to modify procedures relating to orders for surveillance and searches for foreign intelligence purposes.

SH–216

Rules and Administration

To hold hearings on the nomination of Danny Lee McDonald, of Oklahoma, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission; and Bradley A. Smith, of Ohio, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission; hearing to be followed by a business meeting.

SR–301

Indian Affairs

Business meeting to consider pending committee business, and will be followed by an open hearing on the reauthorization of the Health Care Improvement Act.

SR–485

10 a.m.

Appropriations

Defense Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense, focusing on medical programs.

SD–192

Foreign Relations

International Operations Subcommittee

To hold hearings on the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2001 for foreign aid.

SD–419

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 2097, to authorize loan guarantees in order to facilitate access to local television broadcast signals in unserved and underserved areas; S. 1452, to modernize the requirements under the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards of 1974 and to establish a balanced consensus process for the development, revision, and interpretation of Federal construction and safety standards for manufactured homes; the nomination of Kathryn Shaw, of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the Council of Economic Advisers; and the nomination of Jay Johnson, of Wisconsin, to be Director of the Mint.

SD–628

2:30 p.m.

Foreign Relations

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD–419

Energy and Natural Resources

National Parks, Historic Preservation, and Recreation Subcommittee

To hold hearings on S. 972, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to improve the administration of the Lamprey River in the State of New Hampshire; S. 1705, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to enter into land exchanges to acquire from the private owner and to convey to the State of Idaho approximately 1,240 acres of land near the City of Rocks National Reserve, Idaho; S. 1727, to authorize for the expansion annex of the historic Palace of the Governors, a public history museum located, and relating to the history of Hispanic and Native American culture, in the Southwest and for other purposes; S. 1849, to designate segments and tributaries of White Clay Creek, Delaware and Pennsylvania, as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; and S. 1910, to amend the Act establishing Women's Rights National Historical Park to permit the Secretary of the Interior to acquire title in fee simple to the Hunt House located in Waterloo, New York.

SD–366

MARCH 9

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense and the

Future Years Defense Program, focusing on the Atomic Energy Defense Activities of the Department of Energy.
SR–222

10 a.m.
Judiciary
Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.
SD–226

Appropriations
Transportation Subcommittee
To hold hearings on the Department of Transportation Program oversight.
SD–124

Joint Economic Committee
To hold hearings to examine the impact of supply-side economics on the United States economy over the past twenty years.
SD–562

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
To hold hearings to examine certain issues in Belarus.
334, Cannon Building

Governmental Affairs
Oversight of Government Management, Restructuring and the District of Columbia Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine managing human capital in the 21st century.
SD–342

MARCH 10

9 a.m.
Energy and Natural Resources
Forests and Public Land Management Subcommittee
To hold hearings on S. 1892, to authorize the acquisition of the Valles Caldera, to provide for an effective land and wildlife management program for this resource within the Department of Agriculture.
SD–366

9:30 a.m.
Armed Services
Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense and the Future Years Defense Program, focusing on the Service's infrastrutre accounts and Real Property Maintenance Programs and the National Defense Construction Request.
SR–222

MARCH 15

10 a.m.
Veterans' Affairs
To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on the Legislative recommendation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.
345, Cannon Building

MARCH 21

9:30 a.m.
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings on regulating Internet pharmacies.
SD–430

10 a.m.
Appropriations
Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Federal Communications Commission and the Securities and Exchange Commission.
S–146, Capitol

10:30 a.m.
Indian Affairs
To hold hearings on S. 2102, to provide to the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe a permanent land base within its aboriginal homeland.
SR–485

MARCH 22

9:30 a.m.
Appropriations
Interior Subcommittee
To hold hearings on the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2001 for the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture.
SD–124

Indian Affairs
To hold hearings on the nomination of Thomas N. Slonaker, of Arizona, to be Special Trustee, Office of Special Trustee for American Indians, Department of the Interior.
SR–485

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold hearings on the nomination of Susan Ness, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission.
SR–253

10 a.m.
Veterans' Affairs
To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on the Legislative recommendation of the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Retired Officers Association, American Ex-Prisoners of War, AMVETS, and the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs.
345, Cannon Building

2:30 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Science, Technology, and Space Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine recent program and management issues at NASA.
SR–253

MARCH 23

9:30 a.m.
Appropriations
VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Environmental Protection Agency.
SD–138

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Public Health Subcommittee
To hold hearings on safety net providers.
SD–430

10 a.m.
Appropriations
Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the Department of Commerce, and the Securities and Exchange Commission.
S–146, Capitol

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold oversight hearings on the Monetary Policy Report to Congress pursuant to the Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act of 1978.
SH–216

MARCH 28

9:30 a.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Communications Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the current state of deployment of hi-speed Internet technologies, focusing on rural areas.
SR–253

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Children and Families Subcommittee
To hold hearings on child safety on the Internet.
SD–430

MARCH 29

9:30 a.m.
Indian Affairs
Business meeting to consider pending calendar business; to be followed by hearings on S. 1967, to make technical corrections to the status of certain land held in trust for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, to take certain land into trust for that Band.
SR–485

Appropriations
Interior Subcommittee
To hold hearings on the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of the Interior.
SD–124

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.
SD–430

10 a.m.
Appropriations
Defense Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense, focusing on Air Force programs.
SD–192

MARCH 30

9:30 a.m.
Appropriations
VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.
SD–138

10 a.m.
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings on medical records privacy.
SD–430

APRIL 4

9:30 a.m.
Appropriations
Interior Subcommittee
To hold hearings on the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2001 for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Office of the Special Trustee, Department of the Interior.
SD–138

APRIL 5

9:30 a.m.
Indian Affairs
To hold hearings on S. 612, to provide for periodic Indian needs assessments, to require Federal Indian program evaluations.
SR–485

10 a.m.
Appropriations
Defense Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense, focusing on Army programs.
SD–192

APRIL 6

9:30 a.m.
Appropriations
VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Veterans Affairs.
SD–138

APRIL 11

9:30 a.m.
Appropriations
Interior Subcommittee
To hold hearings on the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Energy.
SD–138

APRIL 12

9:30 a.m.
Indian Affairs
To hold hearings on S. 611, to provide for administrative procedures to extend Federal recognition to certain Indian groups, and will be followed by a business meeting to consider pending committee business.
SR–485

10 a.m.
Appropriations
Defense Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense, focusing on missile defense programs.
SD–192

APRIL 13

9:30 a.m.
Appropriations
VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
SD–138

APRIL 26

10 a.m.
Appropriations
Defense Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense.
SD–192

SEPTEMBER 26

9:30 a.m.
Veterans' Affairs
To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on the Legislative recommendation of the American Legion.
345, Cannon Building

POSTPONEMENTS

MARCH 15

9:30 a.m.
Indian Affairs
Business meeting to consider pending calendar business; to be followed by hearings on the proposed Indian Health Care Improvement Act.
SR–485

APRIL 19

9:30 a.m.
Indian Affairs
Business meeting to consider pending calendar business; to be followed by hearings on S. 611, to provide for administrative procedures to extend Federal recognition to certain Indian groups.
SR–485

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

See Résumé of Congressional Activity.

The House passed H.R. 5, Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S983–S1043

Measures Introduced: Twelve bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 2126–2137, and S. Con. Res. 87. **Pages S1024–25**

Measures Passed:

Congressional Gold Medal: Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3557, to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York, in recognition of his accomplishments as a priest, a chaplain, and a humanitarian, and the bill was then passed. **Pages S1006–07**

Affordable Education Act: Senate continued consideration of S. 1134, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax-free expenditures from education individual retirement accounts for elementary and secondary school expenses, to increase the maximum annual amount of contributions to such accounts, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S983–S1003, S1005–18**

Adopted:

Coverdell (for Graham) Amendment No. 2844, to make permanent the special coordination rule between qualified tuition programs and the Hope and Lifetime Learning credits. **Page S1005**

By 96 yeas to 2 nays (Vote No. 18) Abraham/Wyden Amendment No. 2825, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the deduction for computer donations to schools and to allow a tax credit for donated computers. **Pages S992–96, S1005**

Graham Amendment No. 2864, to provide funds to assist high-poverty school districts in meeting their teaching needs. **Pages S1000–03, S1006**

By 89 yeas to 9 nays (Vote No. 20) Wellstone Amendment No. 2865, to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to report to Congress on the extent and severity of child poverty. **Pages S1009–13, S1017–18**

Hutchison Amendment No. 2860, to establish the Careers to Classrooms Program. **Pages S1013–14, S1018**

Rejected:

Robb Amendment No. 2861, to eliminate the use of education individual retirement accounts for elementary and secondary school expenses and to expand the incentives for the construction and renovation of public schools. (By 57 yeas to 42 nays (Vote No. 17), Senate tabled the amendment.) **Pages S983–92**

Bingaman Amendment No. 2863, to ensure accountability in programs for disadvantaged children and provide funds to turn around failing schools. (By 58 yeas to 40 nays (Vote No. 19), Senate tabled the amendment.) **Pages S996–S1000, S1006**

By 42 yeas to 56 nays (Vote No. 21) Murray Amendment No. 2821, to provide for class size reduction programs. **Pages S1014–18**

Pending:

Coverdell (for Mack/Hatch) Amendment No. 2827, to eliminate the marriage penalty in the reduction in permitted contributions to education individual retirement accounts. **Page S1018**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill, and the Coverdell (for Mack/Hatch) Amendment No. 2827 (listed above), with a vote to occur thereon. **Page S1018**

A further unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for certain amendments to be proposed to the bill, with votes to occur thereon. **Page S1018**

Messages From the House: **Page S1023**

Measures Referred: **Page S1023**

Communications: **Pages S1023–24**

Statements on Introduced Bills: **Pages S1025–29**

Additional Cosponsors: Pages S1029–31

Amendments Submitted: Pages S1031–38

Notices of Hearings: Page S1038

Authority for Committees: Pages S1038–39

Additional Statements: Pages S1021–23

Text of S. 935 as Previously Passed: Pages S1039–42

Record Votes: Five record votes were taken today. (Total—21) Pages S992, S1005–06, S1017–18

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m., and adjourned at 6:27 p.m., until 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, March 2, 2000. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1042.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS—NAVY/MARINE CORPS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense concluded hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense, focusing on Navy and Marine Corps programs, after receiving testimony from Richard Danzig, Secretary of the Navy; Gen. James L. Jones, USMC, Commandant of the Marine Corps; and Adm. Jay. L. Johnson, USN, Chief of Naval Operations.

APPROPRIATIONS—INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior concluded hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services, after receiving testimony from Michael H. Trujillo, Assistant Surgeon General, Director, Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services.

APPROPRIATIONS—FEMA

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies concluded hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, after receiving testimony from James Lee Witt, Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

DEFENSE BUDGET

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Senator Inhofe; Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, USA, Chief of Staff, United States Army; Adm. Jay L. Johnson, USN, Chief of Naval Operations; Gen. James L. Jones, Jr., USMC, Commandant of the Marine Corps; and Gen. Michael E. Ryan, USAF, Chief of Staff, United States Air Force.

DEFENSE BUDGET

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities concluded closed, followed by open hearings, on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense, focusing on cyber-security and critical infrastructure protection, after receiving testimony from Arthur L. Money, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence; Maj. Gen. Thomas B. Goslin, Jr., USAF, Director of Operations (J–3), U.S. Space Command; Maj. Gen. John H. Campbell, USAF, Director, Joint Task Force, Computer Network Defense; Michael A. Vatis, Deputy Assistant Director and Chief, National Infrastructure Protection Center, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice; Stephen E. Cross, Carnegie Mellon University Software Engineering Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Martin C. Faga, MITRE Corporation, McLean, Virginia.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded hearings on the nominations of John Goglia, of Massachusetts, and Carol Jones Carmody, of Louisiana, each to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board.

INTERNET PROGRAMS BUDGET

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Space concluded hearings on the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2001, for the Next Generation Internet and Large Scale Networking programs, after receiving testimony from Rita R. Colwell, Director, National Science Foundation; Neal Lane, Director and Assistant to the President, Office of Science and Technology Policy; Donald A. B. Lindberg, Director, National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services; Thomas C. Meredith, University of Alabama System, Tuscaloosa; Bill Stacy, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga; and Stephen Tolbert, Global Systems and Strategies, Inc., Vienna, Virginia.

INTERIOR BUDGET

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded hearings on the President's proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for Department of the Interior, after receiving testimony from Bruce Babbit, Secretary of the Interior.

CLEAN WATER ACT

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Drinking Water held hearings to examine the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed rule regarding total maximum daily loads and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit programs pursuant to the Clean Water Act, receiving testimony from J. Charles Fox, Assistant Administrator for Water, Environmental Protection Agency; Montana Governor Marc Racicot, Helena; Jamie Clover Adams, Kansas Department of Agriculture, Topeka, on behalf of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture; William Nielsen, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, on behalf of the National League of Cities; J. David Holm, Colorado Water Quality Control Division, Denver, on behalf of the Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators; Warren E. Archey, Massachusetts Bureau of Forestry, Pittsfield, on behalf of the National Association of State Foresters; and Richard A. Parrish, Southern Environmental Law Center, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Hearings recessed subject to call.

CHECHNYA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded hearings to examine the current conflict, focusing on the conduct of the Russian government, and the implications for the United States, after receiving testimony from Karen Koning AbuZayd, Regional Representative, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Thomas A. Dine, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Inc., and Peter Bouckaert, Human Rights Watch, all of Washington, DC.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded hearings on the nominations of N. Cinnamon Dornsife, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, with the rank of Ambassador, and Earl Anthony Wayne, of Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs.

CUBA'S GOVERNMENT

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded hearings to examine the impact of Cuba's oppressive government on its citizens and the current plight of Elian Gonzalez, after receiving testimony from Mel R. Martinez, Orange County, Florida; Alina Fernandez, Spain; Juan Carlos Formell, Queens, New York; Marisleysis Gonzalez, and Manual Gonzalez, both of Miami, Florida; Walter Benda, Children's Rights Council, Max Meadows, Virginia; and K.A. Paul, Global Peace Initiative, Houston, Texas.

CONTRACTUAL MANDATORY BINDING ARBITRATION

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts concluded hearings to examine contractual mandatory binding arbitration issues, after receiving testimony from Richard D. Holcomb, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, Richmond; Gene N. Fondren, Texas Automobile Dealers Association, Austin, on behalf of the Automotive Trade Association Executives; Jill Lajdziak, Saturn Corporation, Troy, Michigan; Jill MacDonald, Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, Patricia Sturdevant, National Association of Consumer Advocates, Eric Mogilnicki, American Bankers Association and Consumer Bankers Association, and Lawrence Lorber, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, all of Washington, DC; Lewis Maltby, National Workrights Institute, Inc., Princeton, New Jersey; and William Shack, Henderson, Nevada.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee met and began markup of S. 2, to extend programs and activities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, but did not complete action thereon, and recessed subject to call.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to consider pending intelligence matters.

Committee will meet again tomorrow.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Bills Introduced: 53 public bills, H.R. 3767–3819; 2 private bills, H.R. 3820–3821; and 5 resolutions, H.J. Res. 89; H. Con. Res. 259–260, and H. Res. 429–430, were introduced. **Page H630–32**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed as follows:

H.R. 5, to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age, amended (H. Rept. 106–507); and

H.R. 3615, to amend the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 to ensure improved access to the signals of local television stations by multichannel video providers to all households which desire such service in unserved and underserved rural areas by December 31, 2006, amended (H. Rept. 106–508 part 1).

Page H630

Speaker Pro Tempore: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he designated Representative LaHood to act as Speaker pro tempore for today.

Page H577

Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act: The House passed H.R. 5, to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age by a yea and nay vote of 422 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 27. **Pages H582–H603**

Earlier, agreed by unanimous consent to consider the bill in the House and that the amendment recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill be considered as adopted.

Pages H580–82

Iran Nonproliferation Act: The House agreed to the Senate amendments to H.R. 1883, to provide for the application of measures to foreign persons who transfer to Iran certain goods, services, or technology by a yea and nay vote of 420 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 28—clearing the measure for the President. **Pages H603–09**

Earlier, agreed by unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table H.R. 1883 with Senate amendments thereto and to consider in the House a motion to concur in the amendments. **Page H603**

Legislative Program: Representative Cox announced the legislative program for the week of March 6.

Page H609

Consideration of Suspensions: The House agreed to H. Res. 425, providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules on Wednesday, March 8, 2000. **Pages H609–10**

Meeting Hour Monday, March 6: Agreed that when the House adjourns on Thursday, March 2, 2000, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday, March 6. **Page H610**

Meeting Hour Wednesday, March 8: Agreed that when the House adjourns on Monday, March 6, 2000, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 8. **Page H610**

Calendar Wednesday: Agreed to dispense with the Calendar Wednesday business on Wednesday, March 8. **Page H610**

Quorum Calls Votes: Two yea and nay votes developed during the proceedings of the House today and appear on pages H603 and H608–09. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10:00 a.m. and adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Committee Meetings

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FDA, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, held a hearing on Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the USDA: Shirley R. Watkins, Under Secretary; and Rajen Anand, Executive Director, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, STATE, AND JUDICIARY APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary, on the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Commerce. Testimony was heard from Madeline K. Albright, Secretary of State; and William M. Daley, Secretary of Commerce.

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing on Fiscal Year 2001 Department of Defense Budget Overview. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the Department of Defense: William S. Cohen, Secretary; and Gen. Henry Shelton, USA, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior held a hearing on the Bureau of Land Management. Testimony was heard from Thomas A. Fry, Director, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior.

LABOR-HHS-EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a hearing on the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, the Fogarty International Center, the Human Genome Research Institute, and the National Eye Institute. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the NIH, Department of Health and Human Services: Anthony S. Fauci, M.D., Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases; Gerald T. Keusch, M.D., Director, Fogarty International Center; Francis Collins, M.D.,

Director, National Human Genome Research Institute; and Karl Kupfer, M.D., Director, National Eye Institute.

TRANSPORTATION APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation held a hearing on the Coast Guard. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the Department of Transportation: Adm. James Loy, USCG, Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard; and Kenneth M. Mead, Inspector General.

VA, HUD AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies held a hearing on the Council on Environmental Quality, and Cemeterial Expenses of the Army. Testimony was heard from George Frampton, Acting Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality; and Joe Westphal, Assistant Secretary, Civil Works, Department of the Army, Department of Defense.

REAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Military Readiness held a hearing on Real Property Maintenance and Infrastructure funding. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the GAO: Neal P. Curtin, Associate Director; and Brenda S. Farrell, Assistant Director; and the following officials of the Department of Defense: Randall A. Yim, Deputy Under Secretary (Installations); Maj. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, Jr., USA, Deputy Chief of Staff, Installations and Housing, Department of the Army; Rear Adm. Louis M. Smith, USN, Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command and Chief of Navy Civil Engineers, and Maj. Gen. Harold Mashbum, Jr., USMC, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, Installations and Logistics, U.S. Marine Corps, both with the Department of the Navy; and Maj. Gen. Earnest O. Robbins II, USAF, Civil Engineer, Department of the Air Force.

DEFENSEWIDE-RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Military Research and Development held a hearing on defensewide research and development programs. Testimony was heard from Jacques S. Gansler, Under Secretary, Acquisition and Technology, Department of Defense.

DECIMAL CONVERSION 2000: ARE THE MARKETS READY

Committee on Commerce: Subcommittee on Finance and Hazardous Materials held a hearing on Decimal Conversion 2000: Are the Markets Ready? Testimony was heard from Davi M. D'Agostino, Acting Associate Director, Financial Institutions and Markets Issues, GAO.

NATIONAL PRACTITIONER DATA BANK—PUBLIC ACCESS

Committee on Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing on Public Access to the National Practitioner Data Bank: What Consumers Should Know About Their Doctors. Testimony was heard from Senator Wyden; Claude Fox, Acting Administrator, Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services; Nancy Achin Sullivan, Executive Director, Board of Registration in Medicine, State of Massachusetts; Wayne Olsten, Director, Division of Health Care Standards and Surveillance, Department of Health, State of New York; and public witnesses.

AMERICA'S SCHOOLS—CHARACTER EDUCATION ROLE

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Families held a hearing on Building a Nation: The Role of Character Education in America's Schools. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing on Financial Management at the Department of Education. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the Department of Education: Frank Holleman, Deputy Secretary; and Lorraine Lewis, Inspector General; Gloria Jarmon, Director, Health, Education, and Human Services, Accounting and Financial Management Issues, GAO; and a public witness.

"ROLE OF YAH LIN 'CHARLIE' TRIE IN ILLEGAL POLITICAL FUNDRAISING"

Committee on Government Reform: Held a hearing on "The Role of Yah Lin 'Charlie' Trie in Illegal Political Fundraising." Testimony was heard from Yah Lin 'Charlie' Trie.

OPEC—U.S. POLICY TOWARD

Committee on International Relations: Held a hearing on U.S. Policy Toward OPEC. Testimony was heard from Bill Richardson, Secretary of Energy.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES; BUDGET VIEWS AND ESTIMATES

Committee on the Judiciary: Ordered reported H.R. 1443, Traffic Stops Statistics Study Act of 1999.

The Committee began mark up of H.R. 2372, Private Property Rights Implementation Act of 1999.

The Committee also approved Committee Budget Views and Estimates for Fiscal Year 2001 for submission to the Committee on the Budget.

VISA WAIVER PERMANENT PROGRAM ACT; PRIVATE BILLS

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims approved for full Committee action the Visa Waiver Permanent Program Act.

The Subcommittee also approved for full Committee action private bills.

COMMON SENSE PROTECTIONS FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Committee on Resources: Held a hearing on H.R. 3160, Common Sense Protections for Endangered Species Act. Testimony was heard from Marc Racicot, Governor, State of Montana; Jamie Clark, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior; and Penelope D. Dalton, Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce.

ENERGY DEPARTMENT—BUDGET AUTHORIZATION REQUEST

Committee on Science: Subcommittee on Energy and Environment held a hearing on Fiscal Year 2001 Budget Authorization Request: Department of Energy, Offices of Science; Environment, Safety and Health; and Environmental Management. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the Department of Energy: James F. Decker, Acting Director, Office of Science; Dan M. Berkovitz, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Policy, Planning, and Budget, Office of Environmental Management; and David M. Michaels, Assistant Secretary, Environment, Safety and Health.

FAA BUDGET REVIEW

Committee on Science: Subcommittee on Technology held a hearing on FAA Research and Development Fiscal Year 2001 Budget Review. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the Department of Transportation: Steven Zaidman, Associate Administrator, Research and Acquisitions, FAA; and Alexis M. Stefani, Assistant Inspector General, Auditing; and public witnesses.

SBA REAUTHORIZATION AND BUDGET REQUEST

Committee on Small Business: Held a hearing on Small Business Administration Reauthorization and Fiscal Year 2001 Budget Request. Testimony was heard from Aida Alvarez, Administrator, SBA; and public witnesses.

FAA'S BUDGET REQUEST AND FUNDING NEEDS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Aviation concluded hearings on the FAA's Budget request and funding needs. Testimony was heard from Jane F. Garvey, Administrator, FAA, Department of Transportation; and public witnesses.

EVERGLADES AND SOUTH FLORIDA ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing on restoration of the Everglades and South Florida Ecosystem. Testimony was heard from Representatives Meek of Florida, Deutsch and Foley, Joseph W. Westphal, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army; Mary E. Doyle, Counselor to the Secretary, Department of the Interior; David B. Struhs, Secretary, Department of Environmental Protection, State of Florida; and public witnesses.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS; FBI

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Met in executive session to consider pending business.

The Committee also met in executive session to hold a hearing on the FBI. Testimony was heard from departmental witnesses.

Joint Meetings

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Joint Meeting: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs concluded joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on the legislative recommendations of the Disabled American Veterans, after receiving testimony from Michael E. Dobmeier, Disabled American Veterans, Washington, D.C.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2000

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: business meeting to consider pending calendar business, 10 a.m., SR–328A.

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary, to hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of State, 10 a.m., SD–192.

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Personnel, to hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense and the Future Years Defense Program, focusing on the Defense Health Program, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

Subcommittee on SeaPower, to hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2001 for the Department of Defense and the Future Years Defense Program, focusing on shipbuilding procurement and research and development programs, 2 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the Financial Accounting Standards Board's pooling accounting regulation, 10 a.m., SD–628.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Communications, to hold hearings to examine certain issues relating to the America Online/Time Warner merger, 10:30 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold oversight hearings on the President's proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2001, focusing on the Department of Energy, 9:30 a.m., SD–366.

Subcommittee on Forests and Public Land Management, to hold oversight hearings on the United States Forest Service's proposed revisions to the regulation governing National Forest Planning, 2:30 p.m., SD–366.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold closed hearings on terrorism issues in Sudan, 1 p.m., S–407, Capitol.

Committee on Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine cyber attacks, focusing on the safety of the government, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine the Ryan White Care Act, focusing on the challenges of an evolving HIV/AIDS epidemic, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings on pending intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider pending calendar business, 10:15 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on legislative recommendations of the Jewish War Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Blinded Veterans Association, and the Non Commissioned Officers Association, 9:30 a.m., 345, Cannon Building.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, on Natural Resources Conservation Service, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary, on the Bureau of Prisons, 10 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs, hearing on Administration's Fiscal Year 2001 Budget request for Export Financing and Related Programs, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Interior, on Fish and Wildlife Service, 10 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, on National Institute of Mental Health, and the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, 10 a.m., and on National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, and the National Institute of Nursing Research, 2 p.m., 2358 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Military Construction, on Navy Construction, 9:30 a.m., and on Army Construction, 1:30 p.m., B–300 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Transportation, on Truck Safety, 10 a.m., 2358 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies, on American Battle Monuments Commission and the Chemical Safety and Health Investigation Board, 10 a.m., H–143 Capitol.

Committee on Armed Services, hearing on implementation of Department of Energy reorganization and reforms contained in Title XXXII of the Fiscal year 2000 National Defense Authorization Act, 1 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Special Oversight Panel on Department of Energy Reorganization, hearing on the National Nuclear Security Administration, Department of Energy, 10 a.m., 2216 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Military Installations and Facilities, hearing on the Fiscal Year 2001 budget request for military construction and military family housing of the Department of Defense, 9:30 a.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on the Budget, Members Day, 10 a.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Commerce, Subcommittee on Health and Environment, hearing on the national implementation of the reformulated gasoline program, 11 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, hearing on the Treatment of Stock Options and Employee Investment Opportunities under the Fair Labor Standards Act, 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on International Relations, Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, hearing on Human Rights in China and Tibet, 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Resources, Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health, oversight hearing on Forest Service Planning Rule Revision, 10 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, hearing on H.R. 3605, San Rafael Western Legacy District and National Conservation Act, 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Joint Meetings

Joint Meetings: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on legislative recommendations of the Jewish War Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Blinded Veterans Association, and the Non Commissioned Officers Association, 9:30 a.m., 345 Cannon Building.

Résumé of Congressional Activity

SECOND SESSION OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

The first table gives a comprehensive résumé of all legislative business transacted by the Senate and House. The second table accounts for all nominations submitted to the Senate by the President for Senate confirmation.

DATA ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

January 24 through February 29, 2000

	Senate	*House*	*Total*
Days in session	17	14	..
Time in session	98 hrs., 31′	58 hrs., 48′	..
Congressional Record:			
Pages of proceedings	981	575	..
Extensions of Remarks	..	202	..
Public bills enacted into law	2	2	4
Private bills enacted into law	..	..	..
Bills in conference	1	11	..
Measures passed, total	23	34	57
Senate bills	4	4	..
House bills	2	11	..
Senate joint resolutions	..	..	..
House joint resolutions	..	..	..
Senate concurrent resolutions	2	1	..
House concurrent resolutions	3	5	..
Simple resolutions	12	13	..
Measures reported, total	*5	*18	23
Senate bills	4	2	..
House bills	..	9	..
Senate joint resolutions	..	..	..
House joint resolutions	..	..	..
Senate concurrent resolutions	..	..	..
House concurrent resolutions	..	..	..
Simple resolutions	1	7	..
Special reports	1	..	..
Conference reports	..	..	..
Measures pending on calendar	125	65	..
Measures introduced, total	164	299	463
Bills	127	249	..
Joint resolutions	5	3	..
Concurrent resolutions	9	19	..
Simple resolutions	23	28	..
Quorum calls	1	1	..
Yea-and-nay votes	16	21	..
Recorded votes	..	4	..
Bills vetoed	..	..	..
Vetoes overridden	..	..	..

*These figures include all measures reported, even if there was no accompanying report. A total of 2 reports have been filed in the Senate, a total of 18 reports have been filed in the House.

DISPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

February 1 through February 29, 2000

Civilian nominations, totaling 210 (including 142 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	7
Unconfirmed	203
Other Civilian nominations, totaling 937 (including 778 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Unconfirmed	937
Air Force nominations, totaling 1,034 (including 15 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	1,006
Unconfirmed	28
Army nominations, totaling 1,020 (including 204 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	269
Unconfirmed	751
Navy nominations, totaling 299 (including 10 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	208
Unconfirmed	91
Marine Corps nominations, totaling 865 (including 1 nomination carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	855
Unconfirmed	10

Summary

Total Nominations carried over from First Session	1,150
Total Nominations received this session	3,215
Total Confirmed	2,345
Total Unconfirmed	2,020

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 2

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of S. 1134, Affordable Education Act.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, March 2

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Pro forma session.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Baldacci, John Elias, Maine, E214
Barr, Bob, Ga., E206
Bentsen, Ken, Tex., E208
Castle, Michael N., Del., E214
Clyburn, James E., S.C., E211
Collins, Mac, Ga., E213
Costello, Jerry F., Ill., E203, E205, E206
Davis, Thomas M., Va., E216
DiazpBalart, Lincoln, Fla., E217
Dixon, Julian C., Calif., E210
Gekas, George W., Pa., E206, E210
Gillmor, Paul E., Ohio, E214
Gilman, Benjamin A., N.Y., E209
Goodling, William F., Pa., E213
Green, Gene, Tex., E212
Gutierrez, Luis V., Ill., E212
Holt, Rush D., N.J., E215
Horn, Stephen, Calif., E204, E205, E211
Kilpatrick, Carolyn C., Mich., E204
Kingston, Jack, Ga., E215
Kucinich, Dennis J., Ohio, E203, E204, E205
McCarthy, Carolyn, N.Y., E211
McInnis, Scott, Colo., E204, E205, E206, E208, E210, E210, E217
Maloney, Carolyn B., N.Y., E216
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