

So I would urge this body to consider this legislation, to enact it, to help create jobs, create economic development, and create additional value-added agricultural operations that will provide the sustenance and necessary levels of profitability to sustain agriculture in this country.

I encourage and urge my colleagues in this Chamber to cosponsor this legislation and to help us see it become law.

REAL MONEY NEED FOR EDUCATION

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be joined here today by Patty Boyle, a teacher from Southern California, whose outstanding work is well known to the colleagues that she has had in teaching, to the parents, and the students that she has touched. As a result of Patty being here, I have decided to address the House on the importance of providing funds to modernize our schools and to provide additional classroom space.

I think we are all aware of how important it is to modernize our schools, to provide Internet access to teachers and to students. Many of us have focused on how important it is to provide air conditioning for schools as we go into the spring and summer months. More and more schools have extra programs or full-year sessions. Certainly, air conditioning is necessary then. It may also be necessary in May and in September when schools have their regular sessions.

Keep in mind, we here in Congress work in air-conditioned buildings. They tell tales of last century of what it was like to be a Member of Congress without air conditioning. Imagine what it is to try to teach 30 students without air conditioning.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we have again and again talked about the importance of smaller class sizes, particularly in the first 3 years. Well, if we are going to have class sizes of 18 or 20 students in the first 3 years or throughout elementary school, we are going to need more classrooms. We are either going to need to reconfigure the space that we have now or build additional space for those classrooms that will be needed because we take the same number of students and put them into a larger number of classrooms so that they can have smaller class sizes.

All too often, what this has meant for resource specialists, for special ed classrooms, is that, as there are more classrooms devoted to regular elementary school education, the special ed students find themselves relegated to closets, to faculty rooms, to whatever nook and cranny that was never designed to allow students to learn and teachers to teach.

Both parties have recognized the importance of allocating Federal aid to

schools and especially to provide school districts with the capacity to build additional classrooms and to modernize the classrooms that they do have.

But while both parties have recognized the need and both parties have decided that that need should be met by changing our Tax Code, that is where the similarity ends.

Unfortunately, the Republican Party has come up with a bizarre notion of how to use the Tax Code in order to encourage school construction. What they have said is it is okay for school districts to issue school bonds and then those districts will be encouraged to delay school construction, not for the 2 years that are allowed under the current tax law, but up to 4 years.

Now school districts need flexibility into when they issue the bonds and when they actually do the construction, but this is the first case where that flexibility is designed as a method of providing money for the school districts.

Well, how are they supposed to get money? Well, they are encouraged to arbitrage, to take the funds that they get by issuing school bonds and not build schools right away, but take the money to the markets, play the markets. Then they are allowed under the new Republican proposal to keep the profits.

The sole contribution to school construction and modernization offered in this Republican tax plan is a free ticket to Las Vegas for every school board member in the country.

I do not think that we should be encouraging schools to arbitrage invest, and we certainly should not view ourselves as having made some major contribution to education and school construction, because we have provided those free tickets to Las Vegas and told the school district that they are allowed to keep the profits that they make by playing the market.

Instead, the Democratic tax proposal, one that I am proud to cosponsor, and it is not just a Democratic proposal now, I believe the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) and many other Republicans have sponsored or cosponsored. This legislation would, instead, provide real money by allowing schools to have the Federal Government pay the interest on the bonds up to \$25 billion in bonds. That is real money for schools to spend.

CONGRATULATING HAWAII'S WINNERS OF THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY AWARD

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. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate two remarkable students from Hawaii—Leanne Nakamura, age 17, of Kaneohe and Aubrie Weedling, age 13, of Honolulu. Leanne and Aubrie are Hawaii's top two youth volunteers for the year 2000 in the Prudential

Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism.

Leanne Nakamura, a senior at James B. Castle High School, co-created "S.A.V.E. Kualoa Beach," an effort to remove marine debris and educate her community about environmental issues. While attending an environmental conference, Leanne learned about beach erosion and the devastating effect marine debris has on the beaches. She did not feel that the suggested action of writing letters to government officials was an adequate solution.

After being alerted by a faculty advisor of foreign fishnets on Kualoa Beach, Leanne organized an effort to remove the nets and conduct a beach clean-up. Leanne recruited volunteers from several school clubs and the University of Hawaii's Environmental Club and persuaded local merchants to donate food for the volunteers. As a result, three-quarters of the fishnets were removed. "I believe that when students took part in this project they learned about beach erosion and how people's carelessness affects the environment," said Leanne. "It allowed students to take responsibility for the earth, creating a relationship between the environment and the student."

Aubrie Weedling, an eighth grader at Moanalua Middle School, volunteers every week at a local food bank and once a month at a homeless shelter organizing, preparing, and serving food. Inspired by her mother, an ordained pastor who frequently talks about the importance of helping the less fortunate, Aubrie accepted an invitation by the food bank's organizer to volunteer her time. "Sometimes it's hard: I am the only young person from my church who works at the food bank and the Institute [shelter]," explains Aubrie. "The happiness on the faces of those we serve in more than I can ask for. I would tell other young people that it is a learning experience we should all have, and the feeling you get back is well worth your time."

I look forward to having the opportunity to meet these special young women and to welcome them to Washington when they come to the Capitol on May 9th. Leanne and Aubrie exemplify the very best of our youth, of Hawaii, and of our nation.

□ 1700

TAX RELIEF, TAX SIMPLIFICATION, AND TAX REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am here to talk about taxes. April 15 is drawing near once again, and I am joined by my friend, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, and others, to talk about taxes, a topic that is on a lot of Americans' minds right now. It is a bottom line issue for families and businesses in my district and around the country as we draw close to tax filing deadline.

Tax season is, in a sense, a time for renewed focus, and that focus, I think,