

I think we should be putting more money into classrooms in this country, not into bureaucracies in Washington, not into bureaucracies in State capitals, not into bureaucracies at the local level.

The administration's proposal puts money into classrooms to reduce class size. I have got two kids in kindergarten. I want them to have smaller classes. I want children throughout this country to have smaller classes because that is how they are going to get a better education. That is what is going to allow us to compete better in the future with countries throughout the world.

We are headed in the right direction when we are talking about education and when we are putting resources into education because there is no better investment than investing in our children.

STAY AND WORK FOR EDUCATION

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me say that I believe one of the most important issues that we have to be concerned about is the education of our children.

As I am pointing out to my colleagues and the Speaker, let me emphasize the accomplishments of this Congress, a Republican Congress. I think the most important point is the least number of days worked in decades.

If we had children in school and they sent home a report card or the teacher called us and said that Johnny or Mary had not been in school for 5 days or 1 month or they had not been in school since they got out of kindergarten, and it was now the third grade, we would be concerned.

I am glad to be here because the district I represent has schools that are crumbling. It has wires that are hanging down. I need the money, as do rural areas need the money, from organizations. I need the hundred thousand teachers. I need trained teachers for the children of America. Let us stay here and work and work for education.

FROM DEFICIT TO SURPLUS WITH THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESS

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

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, it is funny how the other side has such stunning lapses of memory. Whenever a number of Ivy League law school graduates appear before the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight or other congressional committees or courts of law, I find suddenly their brilliance evaporates, and they have a hard time remembering where they were yesterday.

The other side has completely forgotten that the government went from running \$200 billion a year deficits to a \$70 billion a year budget surplus.

Is there anyone who seriously thinks that welfare reform would have passed had it not been for the Republican majority elected to Congress and taking the oath in 1995? Is there anyone who seriously thinks the President would have been forced to accept the Republican balanced budget proposal of 1996 had it not been for that majority? Maybe they have just forgotten.

Here is another example. This is the stock market in 1993, and this is when it took off in 1995. That is a reflection of the American economy, a chart that does not lie. We will never see it from the other side, I gather, but I think it is pretty obvious why.

INVEST IN OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM

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

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, it has been said that, as education goes, so goes America. As education goes, so goes America. We are here in the last days of this Congress to try to build on bipartisan support for increasing local control, but also having Federal, State, local partnerships to address the dire need to invest in our education system.

One area that is so important, as a parent of three children, is to make sure that we reduce the class size. Would we rather have our teachers teaching 25 children or 18 children? That is a huge difference. That is local control, but it is a critically important partnership with our Federal local government.

We also need after-school programs to reduce crime and drugs. We are doing that in places like Elkhart, Indiana. But we need more support. Let us invest and work in supporting our education system in this country.

FUND-RAISING GETTING IN THE WAY OF PASSING BUDGET

(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, first of all, let me congratulate the President on his 100th fund-raiser. That is a quite a milestone for a guy who has only had time for two cabinet meetings this year.

This year, most of the money is American money, a novel concept. I understand that Chinese money has kind of been discouraged. Big step for the DCCC and the Democrat party. I congratulate him on that.

But it would be nice to think, why not try to get the cabinet meetings up to 5 this year. One hundred fund-raisers; five cabinet meetings. I do not know. He might want to talk about

Bosnia, health care education, jobs, taxes, who knows.

This week, Congress worked. We worked Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and of course Tuesday, and we will be working until we get the budget passed. Why? Because we have a great provision in there to put more dollars into the classroom for the school kids of America.

Why? Because there is a farm disaster, \$700 million in the State of Georgia alone. The President has vetoed the bill. No cabinet meeting on that, too. But, then again, who needs the cabinet member from the USDA.

Then of course we have Social Security, a Republican plan to petition and wall off \$1.4 trillion dollars so it cannot be used for general funds. All these are important, all these are working over the weekends. I hope the President will consider skipping one fund-raiser to help us out.

FUND EDUCATION

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

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, my colleague who just spoke must be working in a different Congress than I am working in. There were three votes on Saturday, no votes on Sunday, two or three votes yesterday, and he says we are working.

We ought to be here trying to do something about education, and, instead, the Republicans are trying to get out of town and go home.

The education issue has been on the table all this year, ever since the President made his State of the Union address. They want to go home. They have not dealt with it.

This is an issue that every single American understands. Every single American understands it. If we reduce the ratio of students to teachers, reduce that ratio, each single student gets more attention. Each single student gets more reading time. Each single student gets to relate to the teacher in a way that they can learn, and that is what this is all about. Let us fund education, and then we can go home.

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AMERICAN HOMEOWNERSHIP ACT

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

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Speaker, today we will have the opportunity to vote for an increased opportunity for home ownership for all Americans. I am very thrilled about this bill. The credit for this really goes to our colleague from New York (Mr. LAZIO) but I was pleased to be part of it.

I just wanted to draw my colleagues' attention to the fact that we have in

this Congress made a huge difference so that Americans can own their own homes. Some of the most important parts of this bill deal with the fact that, heretofore, the government has occasionally created obstacles to affordable housing by adding to its cost by regulations. By the time you have complied with all kinds of regulations, the housing is no longer affordable.

This bill that we will be voting on later today, H.R. 3899, establishes a benefit for those States and localities that eliminate the barriers, the costly requirements before one can build affordable housing. This bill creates a clearinghouse within HUD for those States and local units of government to learn how to make barriers less. It establishes a rule that no Federal agency can pass a regulation that puts a barrier effectively into building affordable housing without considering all possible alternatives that will make that barrier less. For those people who have had a dream to own a home in America, this bill is a substantial improvement. I commend it to all of our colleagues.

CONGRESS MUST ACT TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call on this Congress to pass legislation to strengthen our neighborhood public schools. We have heard people talk on the floor this morning about volume. Our children are told in the classroom it is the quality of their work, not the volume of the documents they produce. That ought to be true for this Congress as well. To go home without passing legislation to strengthen public education and to provide more teachers at the K-3 level, we have not put the quality in the legislation that we ought to pass. I know that because we have done it in my State. A lot of places we have not done it. A lot of places do not have the money. To say it is not needed is like saying we do not have a responsibility for our roads and a lot of other things we do.

We need to pass legislation to provide decent, safe, quality classrooms for our children. We can be accountable to the taxpayers, we can be accountable to our communities, but we can only be accountable if we do the job we were sent here to do. Our neighborhood public schools need our help now.

A MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT

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

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, Republicans in Congress have a message to the President: "Don't shut down the government." Republicans have been working with the administration since

last spring to avoid a government shutdown. I think we all agree it is not in the national interest to shut down the government. But how tragic it would be if the President were to force such a shutdown to divert attention from other matters or to use it for political purposes as we head into the mid-term elections. Republicans are willing to reach an honorable compromise with the White House on remaining differences just as we did last summer in order to pass the balanced budget amendment. Although there are still significant differences between the White House and the Republicans in Congress on the remaining spending bills, these differences can be resolved. In almost every case, the administration wants to spend more, the Republicans want to spend less. Let us find the common ground, avoid a government shutdown, and move on with the people's business.

EDUCATION EMERGENCY ACROSS AMERICA

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

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, Public School 91 in my district was evacuated last Friday as a result of conditions that were deemed unsafe for children. You have got lead poisoning, a coal-burning furnace, everything you can imagine in that building which was built in 1903. It should have been closed a long time ago. But Public School 91 is not atypical of the school districts across America. In fact nearly every congressional district in America has an equivalent to Public School 91, a school that really needs to be closed or modernized or reconstructed.

We have an education emergency all across the United States. Why not bring our money back to our school districts? All money comes from the local areas, anyhow. Bring our Federal money back for school construction. One of my colleagues on the Education Committee keeps insisting that the school construction bill is tilted toward the urban areas. Well, yes, that is where most of the children in America live. The Vietnam Memorial Monument, if you look at the names on there, most of them come from the urban areas, too. All the wars that have existed, while we have not emphasized it, they come from where the population is. Schools modernization is needed all across America. Urban areas are just the beginning.

STILL WAITING FOR CONGRESS TO ACT

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, 9 months ago the President and House Democrats laid out an education agenda for the 21st century. The American

people are still waiting for Congress to act.

Democrats want to help local governments modernize schools and help build and renovate 5,000 schools. The American people are still waiting for Congress to act.

The Democrats in Congress, the Democratic initiative wants to see smaller classrooms and more teachers. Yet the American people are still waiting for Congress to act.

Mr. Speaker, what is more important than education? What is more important than smaller classrooms? What is more important than more teachers teaching our children? Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the American people are still waiting for Congress to act.

AMERICAN STEEL IN A CRISIS

(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, American steel is in a crisis. Yesterday the House of Representatives defeated a resolution to study the crisis. American steelworkers and their families do not need studies. They need action to stop the dumping of steel in this country. The dumping of steel is causing prices to drop, it is threatening the jobs of American steelworkers, it is threatening local economies, it is threatening our strategic industrial base, and, therefore, long-term threatens this country's ability to defend itself.

Americans need action to stop the dumping of steel. They need quantitative restrictions on allowing steel into the U.S. market. They need the application of countervailing duties. We do not need more studies. We need action. Stop the dumping of steel in this country. Save the steelworkers' jobs. Protect the American economy.

EDUCATION FUNDING

(Mrs. MINK of Hawaii asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I serve as a cochair on the Democratic side of the aisle together with the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) on the Task Force on Education. We have served for over a year and a half. That agenda was created because we were responding to the needs of the people throughout the country. One of the top things they talked about was the need for additional teachers, additional qualified teachers and to do something about our crumbling classrooms and the inadequate infrastructure. This is something that has been on our agenda for over a year and a half. This year we did not even see the education budget come to the floor so that we could debate it, so that we could ask this country to fund this program. Now we are