PRIVATIZATION SCHEMES TRADE AWAY SOCIAL SECURITY'S GUARANTEE FOR A WALL STREET GAMBLE

(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, investing Social Security in the stock market concedes to the hysteria manufactured by Wall Street. They exaggerate Social Security's actuarial imbalance and call it a crisis. There is no crisis. With current tax and benefit rates remaining constant, Social Security will pay 100 percent of the benefits of future recipients until 2032 without any change whatsoever. That is according to the most conservative estimates which assume extremely low economic growth rates and high unemployment.

What private sector initiative can promise the same? What other program backed by the full faith and credit of the United States? None. Only Social Security is guaranteed.

Privatization schemes trade away Social Security's guarantee for a Wall Street gamble. What goes up must go down. All forms of privatization constitute a cave-in and a back-track.

Members of Congress will soon be offering a resolution that says Congress must guarantee that all obligations to current and future Social Security beneficiaries will be paid in full. Americans need to hear Congress reaffirm its commitments to its citizens.

Stand up for Social Security.

THE PROBLEM IN EDUCATION IS NOT A QUESTION OF MONEY

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, will we ever learn from history?

Last year the liberal Democrats said, ''We need to spend more money on education because it will improve the education of our children.'' And so Congress voted to do so. The year before that, the message was exactly the same: Spend more money. And Congress did.

And the year before that, we heard the same arguments: Spend more money, and children will do better in school. And Congress did.

And the year before that, the liberals were in full cry demanding that more money be spent on education because that will surely improve student performance. And indeed Congress bowed to those demands.

But somehow we have still failed schools, and student performance is as dismal as ever.

My question is to the other side: At what point do they conclude that the problem in education is not a question of money? Is the other side utterly incapable of thinking seriously about the question, or will no amount of failure, absolutely no amount of evidence, ever have the slightest impact on their thinking?

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of any thinking time they may have.

BEAM ME UP—TEACHERS IN AMERICA CANNOT EVEN MENTION GOD?

(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, Mildred Rosario, a sixth grade teacher in the Bronx, was fired. Mildred was fired for attempting to comfort her students over the drowning loss of a fellow classmate by simply saying he was in heaven.

Mildred was fired for saying, I quote, he was in heaven.

Unbelievable.

In America teachers can pass out condoms in school. Teachers can pass out needles. Teachers can even have forums and discussions on devil worship. But in America teachers cannot even mention God.

Beam me up.

A Nation that can discuss devil worship in our schools but cannot even mention God is a Nation that has lost both its sense of values and its sense of common sense.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back any problems we have in our schools.

THE PRESIDENT IS OPPOSED TO EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, it is not very useful or helpful to debate another man's motives. After all, how can one possibly know the true motives in another man's heart? But how else can we explain the President's opposition to perhaps the best single thing this Congress has done for our Nation's children this year in the area of education?

Yesterday the President indicated that he plans to veto the Coverdell legislation that would allow parents, guardians, even corporations and unions to set aside up to $2,000 per year in tax-free savings accounts.

Think about this: The President is opposed to education savings accounts. This is something that middle-class parents have been calling for for years. What could possibly explain the opposition of most of the Democrat Party to this pro-education bill? Could it be that this party is utterly, totally, inextricably beholden to the teachers' unions, special interests that fight every single reform that might threaten their power?

This is special-interest politics at its worst, and our children are the ones who are being short-changed by it.

WHERE DO THE REPUBLICANS STAND?

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, Republicans continue to do everything they can to block the teen smoking and the campaign finance legislation. They want to preserve soft money and keep the obscenely large contributions from big tobacco and other special interests rolling in to fill their campaign coffers.

We know on Wednesday Senate Republicans killed the comprehensive bill to help stop teen smoking, and the GOP's efforts showed where the Republicans stand: in the pocket of the big tobacco companies who want to snuff out any real efforts to prevent kids from smoking.

And now we see the same thing happening with regard to managed care reform, patient protections. We have not been able to get a hearing on patient protections; we have not had any effort really to try to bring a bill to the floor that would reform managed care in the way that most Americans want to see something happen this year in Congress, to make it possible for us to have quality health care in this country.

What we are seeing here on a regular basis is Republican efforts to kill every major piece of progressive legislation, whether it is the tobacco settlement, it is campaign finance reform, or it is managed care reform.

AMERICA NEEDS REAL EDUCATION REFORM

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

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, what would it take to convince education bureaucrats that reformers are pro-education? Would an effort to give parents more control over their children's education do it? Would a program that gives children trapped in terrible schools the opportunity to go to a better school do it? How about reforms in place around the country that offer disadvantaged children real hope for the first time?

No, none of these are satisfactory to the education bureaucrats, because they oppose everything we are attempting to do—from charter schools to parental choice to improve education. The only way to convince them is simply keep sending more money to spend from Washington, D.C.

We Republicans reject this failed philosophy. We are going to pass legislation to give control, as Governor John Engler says, to parents who love their children, and take it away from bureaucrats who love their paychecks.