

It is eroding our steel industry. It is hurting our steelworkers. And I am hoping that the Members will heed the message that the gentleman from Ohio is bringing before us and we hope the administration will wake up to this call before it is too late.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding to me.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for his comments. He is absolutely right. The tools are there. We need the will to use them. And, obviously, it is not just steel jobs, but there is an enormous ripple effect, because the steel families will purchase goods in the communities they live in, they support the schools, the United Way, it has an enormous impact.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER).

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from Ohio for his leadership on this issue. This is an issue that impacts not just the State of Ohio but the south side of Chicago and the south suburbs of northwestern Indiana which historically has always been a major steel producing area.

It is unfortunate that because of the inaction of the Clinton administration, Acme Steel has declared bankruptcy. Birmingham in my district is shortening their work hours. Belson Scrap and Steel has reduced their payroll by 10 percent. All because we have seen a doubling of Japanese steel imports in the United States, and just in the last year almost a doubling of Korean steel imports in this country.

Steelworkers are losing their jobs. And while steelworkers lose their jobs, the Clinton administration is doing nothing. I believe it is time for action. I think it is time that this Congress make it very clear that we expect the President and the Clinton administration to take leadership to help steelworkers. Otherwise we are going to see more steelworkers lose their jobs because of inaction by the Clinton administration.

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

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

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

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

There was no objection.

CONGRESS SHOULD FOCUS ON EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to urge the leadership of the House to focus on education before we leave this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we have important duties to do in order for us to be able to be partners with our local communities, with parents, community schools with the State governments, to make sure that our children have the resources and the skills that they need when they graduate so that they can be successful in this new world economy.

We know that we need higher standards and lower classroom sizes. And, in fact, we have the opportunity in the next few days to be able to help contribute to making that happen. I am extremely concerned about the efforts now that appear to be moving in exactly the opposite direction from where we should be as it relates to education.

As someone who has worked for a number of years and spent a lot of time in this Congress focusing on technology, I am very concerned that we are not moving ahead to modernize our schools, provide the construction funds, and provide the technology dollars that are needed to prepare our children so that they will be able to have the skills that they need to be successful.

It does not matter if I am talking to the business community in my district or if I am talking to a PTO or if I am talking to a neighborhood organization, always I hear from people that we need to be focused on increasing our skills, our math and science skills, be able to provide the tools to children in the classroom so that in fact they have what they need to be successful. Employers know that. We know that, just as we listen to people in the community. And yet we do not see the actions coming from this Congress that will support those kinds of things happening in the community.

Let us make a commitment this evening that we are going to make a commitment to our children, we are going to make a commitment to parents, to communities, that we are going to do what is necessary to provide resources in partnership with our local schools and with the State governments to make sure that our children have what they need.

We need to make sure that when a young person is in a classroom today, they have access to the technology they need, to the information, to the world that is available now through the Internet and to allow them to be able to truly receive the kinds of skills that they need in smaller classes and with higher standards so that they can be prepared.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY).

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, in the last 2 years, I have

spent an awful lot of time in my schools in my district. After the first month, I decided to do a survey just to look at all my schools that needed help and repair.

I come from a middle-income suburban area, and I have to say that I was totally shocked at what I found. What hurt even more is when the survey came in, all of my schools needed some sort of help as far as repair. They have put it off constantly over the years.

I have one school in Hempstead that to this day, I went back just a week ago to look at it again, because I could not believe my eyes every time I go into there. They have a boiler from 1908. They cannot find anyone to repair it anymore, and yet they do not have the money to do this. They have open classrooms. This school was built way before World War II, and here we have our children in open classrooms. Kids with learning disabilities in the hallways. Children with hearing problems not having the right facilities.

As someone who grew up with learning disabilities, I certainly know how important it is to have a secluded quiet area. Technology has to come into the school. We are nowhere near it.

So what we can do? Certainly, I agree with the President's initiatives to bring our schools up to where they should be today. What concerns me the most is we know we need school construction to give a safe environment for our children. But also more importantly, we need to send a message to our children that we care about them. Also sending a message to our teachers.

Mr. Speaker, going back, I have met so many teachers over the last 2 years. These are teachers that care very much. But when we have the classrooms so large and we have kids coming in in an environment which I consider not safe, not sound, we have to do all we can.

I came to Congress to reduce gun violence in this country, and as soon as I got here, education became my number one issue. If we start working with these young people, have smaller classes, give them hope, give them a good education, we are not going to see drugs in the school, we are not going to see violence in the school. Is that not the goal of all of us here?

I certainly support the initiative that we have to do with the President, and hopefully we will see it pass before we go home.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that if we expand educational opportunities to all Americans, especially young people, we can reduce crime, drug use and gun violence in our society.

I do not believe that education is a partisan issue. But I am very concerned that partisanship in these last days of the session may prevent us from improving the education system. We have a golden opportunity to help young