personally with our delegation. We were not able to do that. Otherwise, the trip was a resounding success. I thank my colleagues for participating.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 775, THE VOTING IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2001

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

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join today with our colleague, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), and others in introducing the Voting Improvement Act of 2001, H.R. 775, as we will call it.

The past election produced a great deal of confusion, turmoil, and uncertainty. Although there were a number of factors in producing that confusion, one major factor in Florida and other States was the continuing use of outdated and even antiquated punch card voting systems.

The bill we are introducing today tackles this problem immediately and directly by establishing a grant program for the States to replace all punch card systems before the next Federal election in 2002. In short, this bill provides a practical solution for solving some of the more troublesome voting equipment problems.

As the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) has noted in introducing the bill, punch card systems have the highest rate of error among all voting methods. One study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the California Institute of Technology recently estimated that the nationwide error rate for punch cards is 2½ percent, and in a national election that would mean that nearly 1 million votes are thrown out and never counted due to mistakes caused by punch card systems. Clearly, we need to make replacements of these antiquated systems a very high priority.

In addition to immediate equipment replacement, this bill establishes an ongoing grant program to assure that new voting systems are developed and deployed so that voters have up-to-date systems in the future.

The bill also assures that voter education and training of poll workers are given increased attention and support, and H.R. 775 establishes a permanent bipartisan commission to act as a nationwide resource for information gathering and studying the best practices for ballot design and other basic election needs.

Mr. Speaker, the Voting Improvement Act is one of several proposals being introduced for overhauling our election laws and making certain that we never repeat the chaos of the past election. All of these demand careful review and the development of a bipartisan consensus for sound reform. This bill sets clear priorities and offers practical solutions that must be part of any final reform plan.

I urge our colleagues to join us in this effort in backing H.R. 775.

□ 1600

REFORM EDUCATION IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, in the President's address last night he reaffirmed the fact that education is one of his top priorities. It appears from the speech that the President made that the only priority which ranks above education is the tax cut that is being proposed.

I salute the President for his selection and for his devotion and dedication to education as the number one priority. I think it is very important that he has taken note of the fact that this has been the priority of the American people for the last 4 years or 5 years.

Education has ranked as either the number one priority or somewhere in the top two or three priorities for the last 5 years. So the President is acknowledging the fact that in a democracy, the directions really come from the bottom.

He is not alone. The previous President chose to call himself the Education President, President Clinton. At one point he said he wanted to be the Education President. And he and the younger Mr. Bush are not the only ones.

Father Bush, I think, first coined the phrase Education President. The father of the present President said he wanted to be the Education President.

Before that, Ronald Reagan launched the movement to reform education in America with a report called A Nation At Risk, A Nation At Risk. We are now in our fourth President who has chosen to make education a number one priority. We should be making some tremendous progress in terms of the improvement of education in our Nation.

I regretfully report, however, that this is not the case. Despite the fact that lip service has been paid to the reform of education in America by the last four Presidents, the progress has been fairly slow. The flaw is in the lack of resources.

When A Nation At Risk was issued as a report by President Ronald Reagan, President Reagan offered no program with any dollars. He offered strictly jawboning, lectures about how important it was to improve education.

President George Bush, following President Reagan, did offer a program, but it was a very sparse program in terms of dollars. There were a lot of words and a lot of lectures again, but very little was offered in terms of resources.

President Clinton offered a dramatic blueprint for the reform of education. President Clinton did build on some of the activities of President Bush, Father Bush. Father Bush had launched the governors campaign to improve education. There was a huge governors conference and the governors came together, and they set forth goals to be achieved.

There was a step-by-step progression forward, which President Clinton as a governor, Governor Clinton of Arkansas, had been involved in, and President Clinton did build on what President Bush had started. President Clinton also added some dollars to the master plan.

I think, relatively speaking, if you compare the record of President Clinton on education to the record of his predecessor, Father Bush, to the record of Ronald Reagan, President Clinton had a very outstanding record in terms of resources committed as well as the necessary job owning.

But even the Clinton administration did not dare, for whatever reason, which I do not care to go into today, set forth a bold blueprint and the resources to match it, which would deal with the problem in a constructive way. Why? Why is it? Repeatedly there is a sense within America that ordinary people, the public opinion polls keep showing that there is a gut reaction, a gut feeling that nothing is more important than education. There is a feeling that we are not doing enough to improve education in America.

Why is that? The gut reaction and the common sense feeling does not translate into really bold action. We have had bold action within the last 5 years. We have had bold action in terms of a transportation plan.

One of the boldest initiatives taken in the domestic front was the bill which authorized $218 billion over a period of 6 years for transportation projects, road building, bridges, et cetera, et cetera. So we did some big spending on a domestic issue.

We have been spending large amounts of money, of course, on defense. And continually under all of these Presidents, the defense budget has done very well. But in the domestic arena, we moved in a very bold way to fund a transportation act which provided $218 billion over a 6-year period. That is the kind of action that I always dreamed of, and I think it was necessary.

I maintain it still is necessary if we are really going to come to grips with what has to happen in the area of education.

Education suffers from a lack of resources, and that is the primary problem. We cannot escape that. No amount of jawboning and no amount of theorizing, no amount of testing will escape the fact that there is a definite lack of resources.

Let me just set the stage and establish some parameters which are both local and national. At the local level, in New York City, we have just received the results of a 7-year court case. A ruling has been made after a 7-year trial by a Supreme Court judge

that New York State has systematically been short-changing New York City in education funding over the years. The order of the judge is that New York State must take steps immediately to provide greater resources to New York City.

It is at the local level. The Nation's largest city, 1.2 million children, about 1,100 schools, more than 60,000 teachers. It is at the local level, but I think it has good, strong implications for the entire Nation.

The lack of resources is pinpointed by Judge Leland DeGrasse's decision, which declared that New York City schools have been grossly neglected and underfunded.

I maintain at this point that despite all the rhetoric and discussion about education at the national level through the last four Presidents, the problem in America is that the schools of America are grossly underfunded. Now, many of the Members of Congress and many members in government are high places, live in neighborhoods where their schools are doing all right, but I am talking about across the Nation as a whole.

There are too many schools that need considerable resources that they are not receiving. They need the resources in the areas of physical infrastructure. They need resources in other areas.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, I think that this applies to all of America, Justice Leland DeGrasse's decision in the case of New York City versus the State reads as follows, I am just going to read a section from his conclusion, this court has held, I am quoting from Justice DeGrasse's decisions, this court has held that a sound basic education mandated by the education article consists of the foundational skills that students need to become productive citizens capable of civic engagement and sustaining competitive employment.

In order to ensure that public schools offer a sound basic education, the State must take steps to ensure at least the following resources, which as described in the body of this opinion, for the most part, currently are not given to New York City's public school students.

The following resources are not provided for New York City's students. This is the finding of a judge after 7 years of trial.

Number one, sufficient numbers of qualified teachers, principals and other personnel; number three, appropriate class sizes; number three, adequate and accessible school buildings with sufficient space to ensure appropriate class size and implementation of a sound curriculum; number four, sufficient and up-to-date books, supplies, libraries, educational technology and laboratories; number five, suitable curricula, including an expanded platform of programs to help at-risk students by giving them more time on tests; number six, adequate resources for students for extraordinary needs; number seven, a safe, orderly environment.

Education discussions become extremely complicated. People think that there is a morass out there, and there is no way out of this endless discussion of what it takes to reform education in America.

Here we have a judge that has listed the simple elements, the components of what is needed to establish a sound basic education system. Those are the terms that he uses repeatedly.

I think in America we can, first of all, expect from every jurisdiction, every school district in America, every State, every jurisdiction should seek to establish a sound basic education. That is a terminology used in the State constitution. Not all States may use that term, but basically when States talk about the right responsibility for providing an education, it basically means the same thing, a sound basic education.

Let me go back for a moment and repeat his definition of a sound basic education. That is an education that allows students to become productive citizens, productive citizens. How does he define a productive citizen? A productive citizen is a citizen capable of civic engagement and sustaining competitive employment. It sounds too simple to be true. But this is what it boils down to.

We need to produce students who are capable of civic engagement and sustaining competitive employment. Both of those are rather complicated. Not complicated, it is easy to understand the concept to fulfill that concept. I do not want to oversimplify it.

To be capable of civic engagement; what does that mean? Surely it means that students produced by our system ought to be able to evaluate the pronouncements of officials seeking election and be able to vote in intelligent ways in election. It surely means that they ought to be evaluate the system that we have structured to provide for the election of our officials and be able to come up with system that is are fair and just.

Civic engagement means more than the old civic books which talk about how a bill becomes law in Congress. I have those little booklets I give to the kids on how a bill becomes law in Congress, very similar to how a bill becomes law in the State legislature.

Those little steps of the introduction and the action in the committee and the action on the floor and all of that is elementary and very inadequate in terms of telling students about what is necessary to have appropriate civic engagement.

How do we get elected? We have elections. We have primaries that elect people in the parties. We have elections between the major parties on Election Day. We all go to the polls. The polls are fair. They are policed by policemen and monitors. Both sides can have people who are judging whether or not the election is being conducted fairly, and it all appears to be a wonderful exercise that we can all applaud.

Students are not told about the fact that in all the counties of America you have different systems for electing. They are not told about the fact that machines have to be purchased because of varying circumstances. Some machines are very old and do not function very well. They are not told about the fact that from one county to another, you may have different ballots and some ballots are more difficult than others.

Human beings who are political entities, Republicans and Democrats, make up the ballots. And once you have the election and you have to have a count, there are human, subjective judgments that enter in, and you may have to have court cases, and, finally, the case may get to the Supreme Court that voting in our democracy is not as simple as it may be.

Mr. Speaker, to have students educated in a way which makes them capable of civic engagement, we have to do more in that area, and understand that it is not as simple as it has been made to appear over the last 100 years in our civic textbooks.

In the area of sustaining competitive employment, things are very complicated. There was a time when sustaining competitive employment meant all you had to do was to know how to read a few signs and follow instructions and follow a few written instructions, but mostly oral instructions, and the straw boss, or the foreman, in the plant would tell you which widget you have to put on which line as it moved and how many boxes you have to pick up. For a long time, the young people coming out of our schools were absorbed by the manufactured industries.

□ 1615

Most of them, for many years, did not even complete high school, and it was not necessary in order for them to obtain competitive employment. Sustaining competitive employment 30 years ago was very different than sustaining competitive employment now.

So sustaining competitive employment now, if the State is responsible for making it possible for students to sustain competitive employment, then the State must provide the kinds of tools and equipment that are in a present working environment.

The computer is dominant in the present working environment, whether one is talking about an assembly line in a factory or inside an office where the production of data and the distribution of data, the retrieval of data is the only concern. The computer science digital devices, they have all taken over.

If one has schools that do not have educational technology that is sufficient, computer labs, then one is not providing sustaining competitive employment.

So a decision like this challenges the system. When a judge says one must produce students who can become citizens capable of civic engagement and

sustaining competitive employment, one is laying down a formidable challenge to the education system of today.

A challenge in America today I think is how do we meet the challenges of our complex modern world. What kind of education system do we produce. We are a very powerful, smug, fat, comfortable empire at this point. Rome was just a village compared to the United States of America. Nothing has ever existed like the United States of America. Never have so many been so comfortable. Never have so many had benefits provided for them. Never have so many enjoyed the fruits of productivity in the area of technology and science and the fruits of productivity in agriculture.

America is great partially because of the fact that there is a common sense out there which says education is important. Something in the air that Thomas Jefferson breathed made Thomas Jefferson decide I will go and establish the University of Virginia. The University of Virginia later became the model for all of the land grant colleges. We have every State of the Union that produce something similar to the University of Virginia. We are better in terms of the land grant colleges helped by the United States Government.

The Federal Government established the Morrel Act. The Morrel Act provided the funding for land grant colleges. Land grant colleges define themselves in much the way the judge is defining basic education here, not in terms of Latin and philosophy and Greek, but whatever is necessary to allow citizens to become productive.

So agriculture, engineering and topics that usually were not taught in higher education institutions were the primary curricula of the land grant colleges.

So the land grant colleges were a part of the American instinct to push for more education, and our laws which made every State take on the responsibility for education. There is nothing about a responsibility to provide education in the United States Federal Constitution. But every State has something in their State Constitution which takes on the responsibility for the provision of education. Very American.

Later on, after World War II was ended, that same instinct, the same drive from the bottom to assert that education is number one priority led to the creation of the Bill of Rights for the G.I. bill, which allowed every returning American soldier to get the funding for an education from high school equivalency diplomas and high school diplomas, all the way up to college, college degrees.

Our universities and colleges were filled up with G.I.s going to school. They were later able to take on the revolution of technology.

Automation came along, and a number of new developments came along after World War II that we were able to sufficiently master because we were producing out of our universities and colleges a broad base of very highly trained people who could take that on.

So in America, we have had that push and that drive for education before. The question is now are we too smug, are we too petty, are we too driven to penny pinch that we cannot conceive of anything as great as the G.I. bill which said every soldier can go to school. If one wants to be a barber, one can get money to get trained as a barber. If one wants to be a mechanic, one gets money to be trained as a mechanic. If one wants to be a doctor of philosophy, one can get the money. The government will pay for one to become a doctor of philosophy.

We do not have that kind of spirit which says that, in order to earn a living in the future, every student is going to have to be exposed to computers and have some kind of basic computer literacy; reading, writing, arithmetic, and computer literacy. If one is going to have computer literacy, then education is going to cost more than it costs before.

Here we are with President Bush producing a plan which says he will leave no child behind. I have read the President's outline. I have a copy right here. ''The bipartisan education reform will be the cornerstone of my administration,'' by George W. Bush. It is an impressive outline of what he intends to do.

The President has not yet introduced a bill. The Republicans who are on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, I serve on the Committee on Education and the Workforce where this bill would have to be, this function, most of it will have to come through our committee. The President has introduced no bill yet. But his outline is interesting.

I would applaud President Bush in his outline for emphasizing at the very beginning the fact that we need to focus most of our resources that are available on the schools that need the most, on the failing schools, on the schools which have the most at-risk students, the most disadvantaged students. I would applaud that. It seems that that is common sense, one might say.

Why should one applaud the President for immediately proposing that our primary first dollars be focused intentionally on the schools that are in the greatest need? Why would not that be understood by everybody who is interested in improving education in America? It is not a self-evident fact. It is not endorsed by all the members of the President's party.

The great battle between the Democrats on the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Republicans on the Committee on Education and the Workforce both in the House of Representatives and, I think, in the other body the same problem has arisen, is that the Republicans on the committee want to take the limited dollars that we have available in title I and other education programs and spread them out further. They want to have flexibility. They want to have block grants.

So the President's first statements, which call for intensifying and focusing more of the dollars on the schools in greatest need runs contrary to the position that the members of his own party have taken in the House of Representatives.

Let me recapitulate, Mr. Speaker. I really am talking about the education imperative. I am agreeing with the President of the United States that we ought to have education as one of our number one priorities. I think it should be the number one priority ahead of the tax cut even.

I think that the President's proposals deserve careful analysis, and I would start by applauding the first parts of his proposal which call for focusing on failing schools, disadvantaged students. Our resources should go there first. That seems to be a self-evident conclusion, but it is not.

The Republicans in the House of Representatives on the Committee on Education and the Workforce and some Democrats in the House have not seen fit to make that kind of dedicated proposition, support that kind of dedicated proposition.

In fact, when I talk about school construction and the fact that the first dollars for school construction ought to go to the areas which still have coal burning furnaces in their schools, or asbestos, overcrowding so great that the schools cannot provide lunch for the youngsters except on a three-cycle program where they start feeding the first cycle at 10 o'clock in the morning because of the overcrowding. They force students to eat lunch at 10 o'clock in the morning. They have just had breakfast already, so why should they be forced to eat lunch? I said we should give the priority to those areas. Most of those kinds of schools and situations are in the inner cities.

I have had Democratic colleagues who talk about, no, we do not want any construction bill which does not give equal treatment to all districts, you know. So I have a bill which calls for funding all school districts according to the number of school-age pupils.

All districts feel that they have a need. Some may need money for computerization and improving the safety facilities around the school. Some may need money for remodeling the auditorium, the gymnasium. Others may need money for life and death matters like getting rid of a coal-burning furnace which is jeopardizing the health and safety of the children or getting rid of asbestos. Others may need money to build new schools because of the fact that the overcrowding is strangling the whole process of education.

So President Bush, I will unite with him, and I hope that my Democratic colleagues in the House of Representatives, in general, beginning with those

on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, will unite with the President on the proposition that resources ought to be better focused.

Whatever we have to offer ought to be focused on the schools that are failing and the areas which have students with greatest need. Title I was conceived that way. The Federal Government became a partner in education to help with poverty areas whereas districts were too poor to educate youngsters.

Lyndon Johnson fashioned the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and title I as a primary provision of that act which funnels funds into districts according to the number of children who qualify for free lunches. Free lunches are provided by the United States Department of Agriculture. If one is eligible for those free lunches, that is the definition of the level of poverty that one must have in order to qualify for title I funds.

So we have a yardstick, a barometer for measuring where the problem is. The correlation between poverty and lack of achievement is well established.

The number one cause of poor school performance is poverty. Now, let me not be misquoted that all poor children are in a position where they cannot perform; that there are no schools in poor neighborhoods where children do not perform very well. There are numerous exceptions. The poverty does not fix the children into a pattern where it is impossible for them to perform well.

One of the best schools in my district, PS–161 on Crown Street, I was surprised to find out that 90 percent of the children, more than 90 percent of the children in that school qualified for free lunches, which means that they come from poor homes. Yet, that school performed as a second or third best sixth grade reading class in the whole State of New York.

The State of New York, of course, is very variant. The State of New York has very rich communities, very rich school districts. I think the school district in New York State that spends the most money per pupil spends $24,000 per pupil. $24,000 per pupil is spent in the richest district. In New York City, we are spending between $6,000 and $7,000 per pupil.

Nevertheless, there are children performing in some of these poor schools who can outperform schools in richer school districts. So it does not lock them in, but generally, generally poverty and low performance go together. The correlation has been proven over and over again.

So I congratulate President Bush on saying we should focus the money. I will unite with President Bush in a bipartisan cooperation. I call on all my colleagues to unite with President Bush to push for the concentration and the focus of Federal resources in the areas that need money, that need resources most.

□ 1630

Let us not have competitive grants in education anymore. Any additional money, and we need far more money, should not be funding that is put out there and then a proposal must be submitted and those who submit proposals will have to compete. They will have a peer review process, and the best written proposal will get the money. What we find is that the districts in America who have the best proposal writers are walking off with the available funding.

After-school centers, for example, 21st century learning centers they call them, they provide after-school money, Saturday tutoring, summer school money, very exemplary programs. I do not think anybody in the Congress, Republican or Democrat, who would say these programs do not work. If we are able to get after-school centers to provide that extra tutoring and Saturday tutoring, the things that go into those programs, then children can succeed, and we have seen the progress that students make. But the funding of the Federal Government for the 21st century learning centers does not even reach one quarter of those in need at this point, and those that are reached are not the most needy because it was a competitive grant and proposals had to be submitted and what we find is the best proposal writers are prevailing.

All future grants in education should be given out on the basis of need. In other words, we can target the areas where the need is greatest by following the formula for free lunches. The school districts which have the largest numbers of pupils who receive free lunches are the poorest districts. We should not have them compete with other districts for after-school learning centers. We should say there is where the need is and additional funding goes to meet this need.

Community technology centers. Community technology centers were proposed by the Congressional Black Caucus. We called them storefront computer centers because what we wanted to do was to have a situation where the deficiency in the homes of poor children would be compensated for by having the availability of computers in places where members of the family as well as the students could go to practice. They need access to a computer. Among other things, they need access to a computer in order to be able to master computer literacy. So a computer storefront center concept was a response of the Clinton administration to a request made by the Congressional Black Caucus.

I applaud the Clinton administration for their response. I applaud the Republican majority for agreeing to the funding. But the computer storefront centers in the bureaucratic process and the bureaucratic approach became computer technology centers. Already we had ratcheted them up to another level beyond the simple storefront centers that we talked about. The very title that came out for the RFP, the request for proposals, went out to everybody for computer technology centers. Already the proposal was more complicated than a simple gathering of computers at a storefront place, with some personnel to keep it open late at night and on Saturdays. It became something more difficult.

The proposal writers went to work all over America. Now, there are some school systems and some schools themselves that have excellent proposal writers. If there is a proposal, with guidelines, regardless of the circumstances on the ground, they will produce a magnificent proposal. And when the peer review readers get that proposal, they will mark it 100. It has no relationship with the actual need.

Those who are most in need usually do not have excellent proposal writers. Those schools have teachers and personnel who have moved on, and the schools that have the least experienced personnel, the ones least likely to have good proposal writers, or the districts who are struggling to meet the needs of putting people in the classroom every day, they cannot afford to hire somebody who becomes a specialist in proposal writing.

So what is happening in the Clinton administration, where we had funding for some good programs, all the way from Gear Up, community technology centers, and the Safe Schools and Drugs Act, there were a number of different programs that have been funded on the basis of competitive submissions and that process has led to the pupils and the schools and the district of greatest need not having received those programs.

So one thing the President can do, and we will certainly cooperate with him, is to have a provision which requires that programs that are deemed to be necessary to help improve the performance of disadvantaged and at-risk students are programs that should be targeted to those areas without a competitive bidding process.

We have many other programs that do get a distribution of their funds based on need or formula. We could have a formula which says if there are certain numbers of students which receive the free lunches or who are eligible for Title I funding, then that helps to drive and determine where the need is and that is where we should place the programs that we deem are necessary to improve education. So I agree with that point that the President starts with, and we certainly hope we can make that work in concrete terms.

One of the problems we will be up against is that the members of the committee who are Republican have a Republican position in the House in general that is going in the other direction. They do not want to target the money into the poorest districts. They want to have block grants. The block grant goes to the State and the State governor determines where the money goes. The Federal Government is out of it. That is disaster, in our opinion.

Block grants have flexibility. We can have a grant which is for a specific program, like Title I; but the flexibility is so great until they can skim off money for administration, they could use some of it to improve the parking lot in a richer district. All kinds of things can happen when we grant flexibility to the States. It can go in the direction which is opposite where the President has chosen for it to go.

Second point. President Bush says we will concentrate resources, and after we concentrate resources we will test. As a result of the testing process, we will make judgments. After 2 years, any school that is still failing will be required to allow its students to choose a public alternative. Public school choice will be mandated after 2 years. After 3 years, any school that is still failing will be closed down and declared ineligible for Federal funding and will be privatized. The schools would have an option. They can give the students vouchers and send them off to private schools, or they can become charter schools, or they can become contracted to profit-making contractors who would run the schools. Three years.

I agree that we should focus on failing schools. I do not agree that 3-years-and-a-school-is-out is an appropriate process. Three strikes and you are out. Three years and you are out. I think that two problems exist there. Three years is not enough time. We do not transform institutions in 3 years. We do not solve problems involving human beings that fast in 3 years. That is a pretty harsh judgment to make: either improve, come up to standard in 3 years, or we close it down.

We do not say that to any other set of institutions. We would have closed down the CIA and the FBI if we judged that harshly: either improve or perform. The CIA did not see the Soviet Union collapsing. Half of its resources were devoted to the Soviet Union, and they did not see the economy of the Soviet Union collapsing until I think the networks announced it to them. The CIA allowed Aldrich Ames, the person who was in charge of counterespionage, to sit there for years and destroy their effectiveness in terms of counterespionage. But we have not cut the CIA budget. We have not done anything to an institution that had a gross failure.

We have had gross failures. The FBI now has grossly failed in the area of their own counterespionage operation. Nobody has dared to say we should get rid of the FBI because of the fact that the chief of counterintelligence was himself the mole and directing the operation for so many years, 15 years. We do not judge institutions anywhere else in our democracy so harshly.

Why do we say to a school in a neighborhood struggling to educate its youngsters that they must either improve or we take all the Federal money away in 3 years? They have 3 years. So I think we ought to have some flexibility.

We will work with the President on that area, and maybe we can have some flexibility, between 5 and 7 years, some kind of barometers of progress where school improvement at a certain rate we can assume is going to keep going and not harshly move in to take over after 3 years. The problem with the 3-year mandate is that there are many of us who suspect that it is a setup for failure; that by mandating 3 years, we set the school up to become privatized, with the real objective to privatize the schools of America.

It is no secret that the members of the majority party want to go to vouchers, although not for their own school districts. When I question members of the majority party who advocate vouchers for poor districts, vouchers for the inner city, they do not want vouchers. They do not go to their own constituency and their own neighborhoods and say we are in favor of vouchers, because most of their neighborhoods where their children go to school have good schools. They have good public schools. Our goal is to have public schools as good as the ones that the majority of the Members of Congress have in their neighborhoods. Public schools.

However, the push for vouchers cannot be resisted. The push for privatization cannot be resisted. The President now and the majority party in the House of Representatives, the majority party in the Senate, all are pushing for privatization. So what better situation to allow for a massive privatization of the schools in America than that to set up the schools for failure and say that they must succeed in 3 years or they must be privatized; they will be out of business?

The other part of that is in 3 years what kind of resources does the President propose to provide? In 3 years, what kind of funding will the Federal Government provide for these schools? How will we increase what exists already? The President proposed in his speech last night that education would be the area of domestic programming to get the largest increase in his budget. He proposes to increase education funding by 10 percent. That is 10 percent over what exists now.

We have actually had a rate of funding over the last 4 years greater than that. The increases in funding for education have been greater than 10 percent per year over the last 4 years. So the President would slow down the process, not increase it. He has made education the number one priority in terms of rhetoric, but in his first discussion of dollars he is slowing down the commitment to the provision of the necessary resources for the improvement of education.

Here is the rub: I went to the White House as part of the Congressional Black Caucus meeting with the President and I spoke on education. I said, ''Mr. President, there are some good features in your plan. We would like to have a dialogue with you about it, but there are no figures, no dollars.'' At that time he had no dollar figures. He only came up with those last week, and last night he reaffirmed the fact that he is going to increase education by 10 percent.

□ 1645

In the Congressional Black Caucus, we had a resolution passed like 2 years ago when they first began to talk about a surplus and we said that whatever the surplus is, let us devote 10 percent of the surplus, the present education budget, let us add onto that each year 10 percent of the surplus. If the surplus does not pan out to be as high as they thought it would be, it is 10 percent of whatever it is. The projections for the surplus at that time were $200 billion, what it is roughly now, around $200 billion, the same figure. That meant 10 percent for education would be $20 billion; $20 billion per year added to the education budget.

Does that seem like an exorbitant amount? No. What you can do is in this time of most fortunate times of prosperity, deal with the capital expenditures. You do not have to increase the operating budgets of any schools. The aid would not be such that you would make the schools dependent. Spend for school construction. Spend for school computers, equipment, the capital expenditures. Now let us have every district be freed of the need to expend for capital items and especially let us set free those districts that need decent schools, buildings, safe buildings, buildings conducive to learning. Especially let us get the schools wired for computers and let us put computers in the schools. All of those things do not require that the Federal Government get involved in discussions of curriculum in the local school, discipline, administration. You do not have to get involved in local school matters. As the President said, the money came from the people. It is their money. Anyhow, we are not benevolently passing back money that does not belong to the people. Give it back to the people in the area of highest priority in terms of capital expenditures for education and get out. You are not required to stay in after you give help for school buildings. There is nothing to keep you there interfering with the way the schools are run. If you give money for computers, there is nothing to require you to stay there and interfere with the way the schools are run.

A $20 billion increase in education per year over the next 10 years would create the kind of education system in America that would carry us forward into the 21st and 22nd century and make us completely inviolable, because it is education. Our greatness, our superiority in the military sector, in the industrial sector, commercial sector, in the cultural sector is dependent on a very highly educated population, a base of education which has people at every level educated. That must continue. If we fail to take this opportunity, if we are petty now and small-minded, have no vision and can only

see an increase of 10 percent of the current budget, rather than 10 percent of the surplus, then we are going to lose a golden opportunity to guarantee that what happened to the Roman Empire will never happen to the American empire.

Our empire is far more shaky than you think it is. We are alone in the world of 5 or 6 billion people and we have less than 300 million people who enjoy a very high standard of living. We have allies in industrialized areas. If you put us altogether, maybe we have a billion people who enjoy a very high standard of living, but what about the other 5 billion? Do you think you are really going to be able to exist unless we take our superior education, our productivity, our inventiveness, our ingenuity and keep spreading the prosperity of it, the benefits of prosperity and the benefits of inventiveness and the benefits of technology throughout the entire world. We have to have an educated population to do this. Everybody must be seen as a potential resource in the effort to keep America great in this area.

We are showing strains at every level. There is a great shortage of teachers. Thousands and thousands of teachers are needed right now and they are not available in certain areas. The projection is that it will be hundreds of thousands of teachers needed in the next 5 to 10 years and they will not be there. We have shortages in other areas. Policemen. In the area of government service, the quality of people, there is a problem. In the quality of people in the military, there is a problem. We had an aircraft carrier launched a couple of years ago, a new aircraft carrier launched and they were short 300 people. They could not get 300 people to fill the necessary positions on the ship because the ship was such a high technology, the aircraft carrier had such high technology devices until they needed a very well educated population. They could not find the people. Those shortages in the military continue to exist. Ever more complicated weapons are invented and we are not matching that with a massive education program to be able to pull from the bottom what we need in terms of education.

The caliber of people in high places obviously is a problem. I do not think 20 years ago we would have had a captain or an admiral or anybody in charge of a ship in the Middle East who would be so careless as to allow his ship to be put in a position where a man in a fishing boat could bring a bomb and blow a hole in the ship and the lives of 12 to 15 sailors were lost. That bomb incident in the Middle East, I do not think we would have had a person in charge of a ship who was that dumb, who was that unqualified. I do not think we would have had the submarine accident that happened in Japan, that you would have people in charge of a ship who were as dumb as the people or as careless, unqualified as the people in that submarine who let that happen. From all the facts that I hear, the human error, the sloppiness is part of a pattern. The sloppiness in the CIA that produced Aldrich Ames, the sloppiness in the FBI that produced Mr. Hanssen, the sloppiness, the erosion of quality in the Navy that produces these accidents. It is all over. We have glitches in every level of our society because the complexities of operating things are so great until you need not just people at the very top who are excellent people but you need them all the way down the line.

The man who put the oil in the airplane is the one I worry about when I get on the plane. Him and the mechanic who tightened the bolts on the little screws that had to be tightened, all those details are what makes a plane go. I do not worry about the pilot because we spend more money to train pilots than we do on anybody else, any other category of worker in the Nation. The pilots are well trained. But I worry about all those other people we are dependent upon. Education in America has to produce the high quality at every level. We have to get rid of our pettiness and go forward. We have to understand that this is no place to exercise some of our weaknesses, to let some of our weaknesses rise to the top.

The Education Committee that I serve on is also called the Workforce Committee, Education and the Workforce. It used to be called the Education and Labor Committee. It is very antilabor, so much that they changed the name. They got rid of the word ''labor.'' But nevertheless all the functions related to working people in America must come from the same committee. We have a hostile atmosphere there toward working families. We have a move on now to roll back the standards in ergonomics, to change the way labor unions can provide money in political campaigns. There is an attack on working families through labor unions. That is where the people who are going to make our society run have to come from. They have to come from working families. Middle-class families are going to continue to produce doctors and lawyers and people in the higher professions, the business graduates. We need more computer scientists, we need people to operate the ships. We need whole categories of people that must be producing. The only place they can come from are working families. The attacks that are being made on labor are ridiculous because of the fact that we are undermining a segment of the population, working families, that is critical.

In the area of minorities, we are still making critical mistakes in the area of minority education and the way we deal with minorities. We do not understand that the youngest population that we have are among the African Americans and the Hispanics. They have the youngest people. These are the people who are now at school age, who are going to be the workforce of tomorrow when many of the other folks in the majority population have begun to retire. The way we treat minor and children of minority families is critical.

I want to end with one last statement on a recent development within our Education and Workforce Committee. We are going forward in the committee with the assignments for the new 107th Congress. This button I have on relates to a problem that has arisen in the reconfiguration of our committee subcommittees, the subcommittees laid out by the majority. The majority Republicans decide. We hoped that they would have done this in consultation with Democrats, but the pattern nowadays is that they do not consult with the minority, the Democrats are never consulted on these things, so they came with a proposal for a Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness. I think the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness is very much in order, very much in line with where we have to go. I am here saying that education is the hope of America, that the only way our society is going to survive is by focusing intensely on our education system and guaranteeing maximum education for all. I think that the change of a name of a committee that used to be the Higher Education Committee to the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness is appropriate. We were excited about that. But in the process of doing that and creating other committees, they took out of the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness all of the higher education titles related to minority schools. The historically black colleges and universities, title 3(B), the Hispanic serving institutions and the tribal colleges, all serving minorities, they were taken out of the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness. They were put into another committee which is called Committee for Select Education. In Select Education, you have the problems of juvenile delinquency prevention, child abuse prevention and a number of social programs and problems that are very important. We would like to see them dealt with. But why do you take out of the Committee on Competitiveness the minority colleges, the minority colleges, which have a great role to play in making America competitive in the 21st century? Where are we going to get the computer scientists from?

We have title 1(B) now, H1B, I think, which brings in foreigners to take positions in the computer science industry, in the information technology industry. We should have more and better computer programs in these historically black colleges and universities and in the Hispanic serving institutions and the tribal colleges. When we discuss 21st century competitiveness, we do not want to have a situation where the historically black colleges and the Hispanic serving institutions, the tribal colleges are not on the table, they are not being discussed. They go into another committee.

In boxing, if you have a bout scheduled after the main event, you get very little attention. No matter how much effort the boxers put forth, after the main event nobody is interested. The main event is the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness. We would like to have the historically black colleges and universities there. We would like to have the Hispanic serving institutions there. We would like to have the tribal colleges there. All of the members of the Education Committee who are minorities, we happen to have on that committee four people who are African Americans, three people who are Hispanic Americans, two who are Asian Americans and one who is a Native American. We all pleaded with the Republican leaders of the committee to not do that because it appeared, one, to push the minorities out of the process of preparing for 21st century competitiveness, it appeared that way, and in reality we know from experience that when you separate out things, they are not treated equally. When they get more attention as an event that takes place after the main event, if they are not at the table when the funding is being discussed, when the appropriations are being discussed, they will not prevail.

That is just one of the kinds of blunders that we must worry about as we go into the 107th Congress. There is no crisis on the horizon which raises our level of adrenalin. We do not feel any intermediate emergency. We are a pretty smug, comfortable people, the American Nation at this point. It is an opportunity. We should not relax.

When President Bush talked about the angel in the whirlwind in his inaugural address, the angel in the whirlwind which always seemed to be there to guide America through crisis. If we stop and think, that has been the case. We have gone through numerous crises in this country. We have had leaders produced at just the right time, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Roosevelt whose decisiveness and vision and cleverness matched Adolf Hitler. Not only did he get us out of the Depression but he led the way to the defeat of fascism.

We have had critical periods in our history and had to rise to the occasion. Usually they were very physical kinds of challenges. The challenge we face now is different and it requires some creativity and some vision in terms of here we are in the midst of a peacetime prosperity with resources that are unparalleled. Never before in the history of mankind has a Nation existed as rich and powerful as America. If all we can do now is to declare war on our working families and go after their labor unions and undermine the structure for providing jobs and higher wages, if all we can do is do negative things like classify minorities in a special way, if those are the things we do, we will destroy our opportunity to overcome the problems that the Roman Empire finally faced.

We do not have to decline. This empire can go on and on forever, but it has to have a firm commitment and dedication to education. We must put the money and the resources behind our rhetoric.

President Bush, I congratulate you on the rhetoric. Now we have to get the resources for education to make education our number one priority in reality.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 333, BANKRUPTCY ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2001

Mr. SESSIONS (during the special order of Mr. OWENS), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 107–4) on the resolution (H. Res. 71) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 333) to amend title 11, United States Code, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REVISIONS TO ALLOCATION FOR HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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

Mr. NUSSLE Mr. Speaker, in accordance with section 219 of H. Con. Res. 290, I hereby submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD adjustments to the section 302(a) allocation to the House Committee on Commerce, set forth in H. Rept. 106–577, to reflect $15 million in additional new budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 2001 and $250 million for the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

Section 219 of H. Con. Res. 290 authorizes the Chairman of the House Budget Committee to increase the 302(a) allocation of the Committee on Commerce for legislation that provides Medicaid coverage for women diagnosed with cervical and breast cancer through the screening program of the Centers for Disease Control. Under the terms of section 219, the amount of the adjustment is in the amount of budget authority and outlays provided by such legislation, but may not exceed $50 million in new budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 2001 and $250 million in new budget authority and outlays for the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

H.R. 4386, which became P.L. 106–345, provided funding for the specified purpose. Costs begin in fiscal year 2001 at $15 million in new budget authority and outlays and total $250 million in new budget authority and outlays over the period 2001–2005.

If you have any questions, please contact Dan Kowalski of my staff at 67270.

Mr. Speaker, in accordance with section 220 of H. Con. Res. 290, I hereby submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD adjustments to the section 302(a) allocation to the House Committee on Agriculture, as revised, to reflect $995 million in additional new budget authority and outlays for the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

Section 220 of H. Con. Res. 290 authorizes the Chairman of the House Budget Committee to increase the 302(a) allocation of the Committee on Agriculture for legislation that provides for the stabilization of receipt-based payments to counties that support school and road systems and that provides for the dedication of a portion of those payments to local investments in Federal lands within such counties. Under the terms of section 220, the amount of the adjustment is in the amount of budget authority and outlays provided by such legislation, but may not exceed $200 million in new budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 2001 and $1.1 billion in new budget authority and outlays for the period of fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

H.R. 2389, which became P.L. 106–393, provided funding for those specified purposes. Costs begin in fiscal year 2002 and total $995 million in new budget authority and outlays over the period 2001–2005.

If you have any questions, please contact Dan Kowalski of my staff at 67270.

STATUS REPORT ON CURRENT SPENDING LEVELS OF ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FY 2001 AND THE 5-YEAR PERIOD FY 2001 THROUGH FY 2005

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, to facilitate the application 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act and sections 202 and 203 of the conference report accompanying H. Con. Res. 290, I am transmitting a status report on the current levels of on-budget spending and revenues for fiscal year 2001 and for the five-year period of fiscal years 2001 through fiscal year 2005. This status report is current through February 27, 2001.

The term ''current level'' refers to the amounts of spending and revenues estimated for each fiscal year based on laws enacted or awaiting the President's signature.

The first table in the report compares the current levels of total budget authority, outlays, revenues, the surplus, and advance appropriations with the aggregate levels set forth by H. Con. Res. 290. This comparison is needed to implement section 311(a) of the Budget Act and sections 202 and 203(b) of H. Con. Res. 290, which create points of order against measures that would breach the budget resolution's aggregate levels. The table does not show budget authority and outlays for years after fiscal year 2001 because appropriations for those years have not yet been considered.

The second table compares the current levels of budget authority and outlays of each authorizing committee with jurisdiction over direct spending programs with the ''section 302(a)'' allocations for discretionary action made under H. Con. Res. 290 for fiscal year 2001 and fiscal 2001 through 2005. ''Discretionary action'' refers to legislation enacted after the adoption of the budget resolution. This comparison is needed to enforce section 302(f) of the Budget Act, which creates a point of order against measures that would breach the section 302(a) discretionary action allocation of new budget authority for the committee that reported the measure. It is also needed to enforce section 11(b), which exempts committees that comply with their allocations from the point of order under section 311(a).

The third table compares the current levels of discretionary appropriations for fiscal year 2001 with the revised ''section 302(b)'' suballocations of discretionary budget authority and outlays among Appropriations subcommittees. This comparison is also needed to implement section 302(f) of the Budget Act because