

month. MCI World-com charges customers 7.2 percent of their long-distance bill. Sprint charges 6.3 percent. One-third of this fee pays for the E-rate.

The cost of the E-rate program to most consumers is 30 to 40 cents a month—about the cost of a postage stamp, Mr. Kennard frequently says.

The program had a rocky start. Faced with criticism in Congress and a report of poor management by Government auditors, Mr. Kennard cut back the financing last year to \$1.7 billion from the original \$2.25 billion.

But across the country, from the biggest cities to the most remote communities the response from schools and libraries has been enthusiastic. Complaints from long-distance customers who are footing the bill have dwindled.

Joseph Salvati, coordinator of the E-rate program for New York City public schools, said 7 to 12 classrooms in every school in the city would be wired for high-speed Internet service when school opens for the new year. The city received about \$70 million for the program through last June and expects another \$70 million in the new school year, Mr. Salvati said.

Elva Scott, the volunteer librarian in Eagle, Alaska, an isolated community with 500 residents near the border with the Yukon Territory, said her library's grant allowed her to offer residents 30 minutes of free time on the Internet every month and more time at a charge of \$3 for every 30 minutes.

"Before this," Ms. Scott said, "we were really out of the loop."

Republican opponents clearly misjudged the public's willingness to pay a small amount of money to accomplish what is seen as an important social goal. Encouraged by the political support and a new management structure, Mr. Kennard returned in May to the \$2.25 billion annual level.

His position was bolstered last month when the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit rejected a challenge to the program on the ground that the fee imposed by the F.C.C. was an unconstitutional tax.

But in Washington, even the strongest supporters of universal access to the Internet still worry about whether the communications commission should be running a major education program rather than Congress or the Department of Education or the education authorities in the states and cities.

"It's a wonderful program," said Patricia Aufderheide, a professor of communications at American University here and the author of a book on the 1996 telecommunications law. "But it's certainly making education policy in a backward way."

Mr. Speaker, I think people ought to know that the phone fee for school Internet service seems to be too popular to overturn.

Mr. Speaker, I will also enter into the RECORD another entry that I made on July 17, 1998, in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD already. I think it is time to look at it again. It is called "The Massacre of the E-Rate Continues." At that time I thought some humor would help wake children up to what was really going on. It is called "The E-Rate KILLER."

MCI
Wants E-Rate to die
Children cry
Big shots lie
Pigs kidnap the sky
MCI

Wants E-Rate to die
Deadbeat dinosaur
Monster Corporate Idiots
MCI
Never shy
Greedy grinch
Stealing all the pie
MCI
With justice no civil tie
MCI
Filthy sty
In the star spangled eye
MCI
Wants E-Rate to die
MCI
Makes children cry.

THE MASSACRE OF THE E-RATE CONTINUES

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the massacre of the infant E-Rate continues. Certain greedy corporations have chose to persecute and betray the children of America by denying them vital access to education technology in their schools and libraries. After the Telecommunications Act of 1996 enriched these giant corporations by removing certain regulations and allowing an unprecedented increase in their profits, MCI and others have chose to renege on the deal. The telecommunications corporations gave their word that they would support an earmarking of a portion of the Universal Access Fund just for Schools and libraries. Now corporations and misguided political leaders have forced the Federal Communications Commission to cut the original funding goal by fifty per cent. On behalf of the 30,000 schools and libraries that applied for funding, and all of the children of America we demand that full funding for the E-Rate be restored immediately. The children of America have a message for corporations like MCI:

THE E-RATE KILLER

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I think we ought to be reminded that that kind of appeal was necessary to bring common sense back to the policymakers who were rallying against MCI, as well as the big corporate powers.

So we can win some of these battles. My point is we can win. Let us remember these battles that we have won. There was a point where they wanted to cut the Public Broadcasting funds. I think we came and talked about Big Bird and Sesame Street, and they backed down on that. We have won battles. We have forced retreats.

In this situation it may not be a situation of forcing a retreat or winning a battle. It is a matter of getting it on the table, construction for schools, school construction, school modernization, funds to facilitate greater school security, funds to eliminate unhealthy and unsafe conditions. If that gets on the table when the discussion takes place about the \$1 trillion surplus, then we will have won the battle.

I propose \$110 billion over a 10-year period to keep pace with and be comparable to the Republican tax cut proposal, but if you get less, we still have won the battle. But let us go forward and understand that we cannot give up. The force is with us; the education president is with us. This education president can be persuaded, as he has in the past, he can be persuaded to expand his horizons, and we hope we can help persuade him to expand the school construction proposal.

The working families and unions are with us. I have here, the hard hats are with us, so we want the hard hats and all the forces combined to fight harder and understand this is a battle we can win, this is a war we can win. The force is with us. Education is an investment that America needs. It will be a great blunder not to have all possible effort to improve education taking place.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MCHUGH (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today on account of family matters.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. McNULTY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. SCOTT, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. HOYER, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. BLUMENAUER, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. RUSH, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. LEE, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. KINGSTON) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. DIAZ-BALART, for 5 minutes, September 9.
Mr. NETHERCUTT, for 5 minutes, September 9.