

of the floor managers. It was legislation that I had drawn up in accordance with the directions of Senator Dole, then-leader. We had a vigorous debate for some 3 days, and it is interesting. There we had in place a half million men and women in the Armed Forces. We had seen the most atrocious form of aggression by Saddam Hussein down through the gulf region, primarily Kuwait. Yet, that debate took 3 days. And by only a mere margin of five votes did the Senate of the United States express its approval for the President of the United States, in the role as Commander in Chief, to use force in that situation.

I thank the Chair. I thank my colleague.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Members permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GORTON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

RECOGNIZING THE TUKWILA SCHOOL DISTRICT'S "NEW FRIENDS & FAMILIES" PROGRAM

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, today I recognize the Tukwila School District from my home state of Washington and the district's "New Friends & Families" program.

The Tukwila School District has seen its ethnic diversity grow by more than 1,000 percent in the last seven years. Out of the district's 2,500 pupils, 50% are students of color, 20% are enrolled in bilingual education, and all told, they speak about 30 different languages. To meet the challenge of integrating this immigrant population into the school system and the community, the Tukwila School District, the City of Tukwila, and the local Rotary Club created "New Friends & Families." It is a one-night, once a year program designed to engage these hard-to-reach immigrant and refugee students and their families to make them aware of community services and to encourage parental involvement in their children's education.

Clearly, when more than 20% of Tukwila's students are unfamiliar with their new surroundings, they face a serious impediment to quality learning. The "New Friends & Families" program has met this challenge head on with local creativity, local initiative, and local resources. This shows that local communities know best how to deal with unique local problems. By teaming up with local government and local businesses, the school district has found innovative ways to turn its challenges into successful education.

It is programs like "New Friends & Families" that illustrate that local innovation works in our schools. The answer to improving our local schools is not more intrusion and red tape from Washington, DC bureaucracies but rather, more freedom and more flexibility for local educators to use federal resources to meet the unique needs of each community in teaching our kids. During last week's recess, I visited Foster High School in the Tukwila District and presented my first "Innovation in Education Award" to Superintendent Michael Silver in recognition of the creative work he and his district have accomplished through "New Friends & Families."

To recognize the importance of local communities in educating our children, I will be presenting this "Innovation in Education Award" once a week to recognize individuals, schools, and educational programs in Washington state that demonstrate the importance of local control in education. I will also take to the floor of the Senate every week to share with my colleagues these examples of locally driven successes in education in an effort to remind all of us working here in Washington, DC that local communities really do know best.

For the past 35 years, Washington, DC's response to crises in public education has been to create one new program after another—systematically increasing the federal role in classrooms across the country. While the federal government has a role in targeting resources to needy populations and in holding schools accountable for results, it should not tie the hands of districts like Tukwila. That only serves to stifle the local innovation that is fundamental to educational success. I have long been an advocate of local control in education and I plan to introduce legislation this spring that will transfer more control from federal agencies back to local educators where it belongs.

(The remarks of Mr. JEFFORDS and Mr. SPECTER pertaining to the introduction of S. 445 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF '96

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 is another year older and another year stronger. As Congress recognizes the third anniversary this month, it now becomes appropriate to reflect on some of the Act's goals and on some of its accomplishments.

First, let me remind my colleagues that the Telecommunications Act was 10 years in the making. It took time for Congress to understand exactly what was needed to reach consensus and balance among all sectors of the

industry and to update America's telecommunications public policy. Congress took a deliberate path to make sure that, at the end of the day, consumers would have new and real choices. Time is still needed before passing final judgment, but clearly the Act has produced positive, tangible results.

I am proud to say that I worked closely with Senator Pressler, then the Chairman of the Commerce Committee, Senator STEVENS, Senator HOLLINGS, and others on the act. It took time, it took patience, it took compromise. But in the end, the act boldly embodied Congress' vision for competition and for choice. More choices and better choices in a new age of communication.

When the act was drafted, a number of delicate balances were struck to transform our monopolistic market into many competitive ones. The bottom line for Congress was based on a simple principle: consumers benefit from competition. As simple as this sounds, creating competition in the local telephone market is a fairly complicated process. Competitive carriers require things like collocation, dialing parity and unbundled network elements. Congress knew it would not be easy. That is why the act was structured to provide a centerpiece, a set of instructions on ways for opening the local markets to force competition.

Mr. President, the act is working. Americans are beginning to see the fruits of the seeds sown three years ago.

Many critics point to the lack of local competition or the absence of incumbent local carriers in long distance as the only way to measure or grade the bill. This is wrong. Consumer choices, new choices, and new technologies are the true tests of success.

As far as local competition goes, several state public utility commissions are working closely and collaboratively with incumbents and new entrants. A multitude of competitors have gained authority to provide local telephone service. This choice is a reality for businesses nationwide, and it will be a reality for residents too—not just for basic dial tone but for advanced services such as broadband access to the Internet. It takes significant capital and commitment to build the necessary infrastructure, but numerous companies and Wall Street are answering the challenge by investing billions of dollars to build this foundation for competition. This level of resource deployment does not happen overnight, but it is happening, and in ways Congress intended—with cable television companies revamping their networks to provide two-way telephone service and with utilities and fixed wireless companies getting into the business. In fact, I would say this shifting of assets in under three years is a

fitting testament to the act's ability to move America's telecommunications policy forward—a true commitment and investment by Wall Street.

Mr. President, I firmly believe the act's goals of local competition and consumer choices will be fulfilled, and America will be better off. The best way to ensure that investment continues is to keep the law in full force.

When the act passed in 1996, Congress also knew that it would take a while to sort out the rules to produce local competition. More importantly, Congress knew that whatever rules the FCC adopted would be challenged in court. Congress was correct on both counts. This does not mean the law is flawed. To the contrary, this reflects the complexity of the issues and the intensity of the competition. Remember, it took a decade to write the law, and it will take time to implement it. I believe, though, that the majority of Members who worked on the act understand its success cannot be measured over a one or two year period. Courtroom battles did cloud the course toward local competition. This litigation did slow the pace for customer choice, but I am pleased to report that just 2 weeks ago the Supreme Court upheld most of the FCC's local telephone interconnection rules and affirmed that the local phone companies must open their markets in a meaningful way. It is my hope that opportunities for competition will now move forward swiftly and be afforded a proper chance to flourish in the marketplace.

Mr. President, Americans today are witnessing a convergence of technologies that was but a dream in 1996. Cable lines will provide American households with local telephone service and high speed Internet access. This is good. Traditional telephone companies will offer cable video service. This is good. More Americans are using wireless phones for personal and professional convenience. This is good. More Americans have personal computers with an ever-growing range of capabilities. This is good. The Internet is exploding as a means of commerce, research, or for just saying hello to a far-away friend. This is good. Television viewing will become an interactive experience with digital transmission, enabling consumers to personalize their own video programming or to go directly to a web site. This is good.

Mr. President, all of these significant and solid activities tells me something—Congress got it right 3 years ago. Patience will lead to other applications in the future that I, and some of my other colleagues, cannot even imagine right now. Mr. President, this is the kind of communications marketplace Americans deserve.

During this continued period of transition, it will be important for Congress to make sure that the Federal Communications Commission is prop-

erly structured. That it has the right tools to foster and further the ongoing evolution. Chairman Kennard's analogy—old regulatory models are a thing of the past, much like the old, black rotary phones—rings true. The FCC indeed must change, and Congress should start empowering the FCC rather than criticizing its individual decisions.

Mr. President, the Telecommunications Act is beginning to deliver the benefits of competition to the American consumer. The process of achieving the act's central goals is well on its way. I do not believe any of us want to turn back the clock to 1996 and take away all the new technologies, new companies, and new choices that have emerged and are now coming our way. Let's not put stumbling blocks on this path to progress. Let's keep America moving forward.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
SANDRA K. STUART ASSISTANT
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the outstanding work of the Honorable Sandra K. Stuart as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs. After nearly five years in this position, Ms. Stuart is leaving government service to pursue other opportunities in the private sector. She definitely will be missed by many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

I have enjoyed working with Ms. Stuart on a wide range of matters affecting the Department of Defense. I always found her to be extremely knowledgeable and very effective in representing the Department's views. Despite the sometimes contentious nature of national security matters, Ms. Stuart always maintained a friendly and constructive approach to her work which served our Nation very well.

Ms. Stuart had the difficult tasks of coordinating the Department of Defense's legislative agenda. She has deftly balanced a wide range of Defense-related issues, including Bosnia, missile defense, health care, readiness, acquisition reform, and modernization. Because Ms. Stuart earned the trust and confidence of those with whom she worked, she was able to promote the Department's views very effectively in Congress.

Ms. Stuart's experience with the Congress predated her current position as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs. Before joining the Department of Defense in 1993, Ms. Stuart served as Chief of Staff to Representative Vic Fazio of California who recently retired from Congress. In addition to managing his Congressional staff, Ms. Stuart handled appropriations matters before the House Committee on Appropriations.

Ms. Stuart's legislative experience also includes work as an Associate Staff Member of the House Budget Committee and as the Chief Legislative Assistant to Representative BOB MATSUI of California.

Ms. Stuart is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and attended the Monterey College of Law. She is the mother of two sons, Jay Stuart, Jr. and Timothy Scott Stuart. She is married to D. Michael Murray.

Ms. Stuart earned the respect of every Member of Congress and their staffs through hard work and her straightforward nature. As she now departs to share her experience and expertise in the civilian sector, I call upon my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to recognize her outstanding and dedicated public service and wish her all the very best in her new challenges.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, now that we are back to doing the people's business, it may be of interest that despite the so-call budget surplus, the federal debt continues to increase by an average of \$248 million a day. Some "surplus"!

Congress and the Administration have been BUSILY creating new federal programs which in turn appear to absorb more taxpayer money than produce desired benefits for the American people. If we continue with this spend—spend—spend mentality, the American people's average portion of the federal debt will further escalate from its present sum of \$20,650.78.

With these thoughts in mind, Mr. President, I begin where I left off in the 105th Congress:

At the close of business yesterday, Monday, February 22, 1999, the federal debt stood at \$5,617,212,277,099.84 (Five trillion, six hundred seventeen billion, two hundred twelve million, two hundred seventy-seven thousand, ninety-nine dollars and eighty-four cents).

Five years ago, February 22, 1994, the federal debt stood at \$4,540,132,000,000 (Four trillion, five hundred forty billion, one hundred thirty-two million).

Ten years ago, February 22, 1989, the federal debt stood at \$2,722,208,000,000 (Two trillion, seven hundred twenty-two billion, two hundred eight million).

Fifteen years ago, February 22, 1984, the federal debt stood at \$1,454,396,000,000 (One trillion, four hundred fifty-four billion, three hundred ninety-six million).

Twenty-five years ago, February 22, 1974, the federal debt stood at \$467,489,000,000 (Four hundred sixty-seven billion, four hundred eighty-nine million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,149,723,277,099.84 (Five trillion, one hundred forty-nine billion, seven hundred twenty-three million, two hundred