

to investment in a healthy, safe and well educated Nation. Providing children access to health care, a safe environment, and a quality education is the kind of investment that will truly secure our Nation's future.

That is why I am asking my colleagues to support the Nuclear Weapons Convention resolution that I introduce today urging the President to initiate multilateral negotiations for an early nuclear weapons convention.

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IN MEMORY OF OFFICER BEAN,  
ONE OF SACRAMENTO'S UNSUNG  
HEROES

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

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House today to note the passing of one of Sacramento's many unsung heroes.

A week ago Officer Bean was buried, the victim of a ridiculous act by one of California's many residents who were out on parole. Officer Bean was a 27-year-old officer in the Sacramento Police Department, unmarried, full-time student, who had set aside his other lifetime goals to contribute to the peace and security of our community. On patrol one night he stopped a car; and, by happenstance, that person had a weapon, took a shot that went underneath his vest, and he is now dead.

I did not want to have any more time pass before noting his passing and the appreciation that each of us have in our respective communities for our unsung heroes.

Men or women, Democrat or Republican, Sacramento is the worse off for what happened, and I just felt it was appropriate to note that.

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SUPPORT THE EDUCATION  
FLEXIBILITY ACT

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I address the House today to support the Education Flexibility Act, a bill sponsored by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) and the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE). It is a bipartisan bill aimed at giving greater flexibility to local schools to do their job, the important job they do of educating our children.

During the past couple of months I have visited 10 or 12 schools in my district, and visited the school districts there to sort of find out what they think of the Federal role in education. The Federal role in education usually accounts for about 4 to 8 percent of the budgets of the average school district, and I wanted to know if they thought that was helping.

The answer I got back was, yes, the money helps, but there is too much red tape and there is too much regulation. They want greater freedom so that they can exercise their skills and use the teachers and principals and parents and everybody involved in education on the local level. There is too much Federal red tape, and the Education Flexibility Act would target that red tape.

Right now we have a pilot project that allows some 12 States in the country to take advantage of education flexibility. This bill would expand it to all 50 States. And what it would do is give local school districts the ability to get waivers from those Federal regulations.

But the important thing about education flexibility is that it combines flexibility with accountability, which is the way it ought to be done. You can get the waiver, the local school districts can get the waiver from the Federal requirements, but only if they have local standards that they can demonstrate that they are meeting.

The key word in there is local. Not national standards. They can have their own standards, but they have to have that accountability/flexibility mix. The Education Flexibility Act that is being proposed and introduced this week offers that mix and is a key to helping our schools move forward with the important job they do of reforming the education system and educating our children.

I think it is very important that we go further than the Education Flexibility Act. Right now there is far too much red tape and far too many regulations in hundreds of different areas generated from the Federal Government. That does not really help our local schools but only ties them in knots.

I do not want the people working in the schools in my community to spend all of their time filling out forms and justifying their existence to the Federal Government. I want them to be educating the children there and doing the job that really matters. Right now, far too often, they are filling out the forms and trying to qualify for the money and continually justifying what they are doing. We need to change that. We need to shift to local control.

From one end of this country to the other exciting things are going on in States and school districts. They are making the reforms necessary. They are moving toward accountability. And right now the Federal Government is too big of a noose stopping them from making progress on that. We need to make changes like the Education Flexibility Act.

As a Democrat, I have always been a strong supporter of education, and I support my fellow Democrats in supporting spending the money necessary to help with education and supporting public education. Public education is

responsible for over 90 percent of the children in this country getting educated. It needs our support.

But we cannot simply spend money on it. We must show that we are willing to move in two other critical directions. One is accountability and the other is flexibility, which means local control. Giving the power back to the individual school districts and the individual schools, and ultimately to the teachers and parents who are closest to the product, closest to our children and closest to educating them and who know best how to do it.

We need to make those changes so that we can have the world class public education system we need. The Education Flexibility Act that we introduce this week, as I mentioned, primarily sponsored by the gentleman from Indiana and the gentleman from Delaware, is a critical step. I urge all of my colleagues to support Ed-Flex, pass it as soon as possible, and then go further to encourage the flexibility and accountability that we need in our local schools.

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REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 669, AMENDING PEACE CORPS ACT TO AUTHORIZE APPROPRIATIONS FOR FY 2000 THROUGH 2003 TO CARRY OUT THAT ACT

Mr. DIAZ-BALART, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-30) on the resolution (H. Res. 83) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 669) to amend the Peace Corps Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2000 through 2003 to carry out that act, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject matter of my special order regarding the late "Vinegar Bend" Mizelle, as well as the special order of my colleague from North Carolina (Mr. BURR).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

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IN MEMORY OF WILMER "VINEGAR BEND" MIZELLE

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

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, my good friend from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) has already touched on Vinegar Bend's