November 17, 1999

Originally designed for the military under ATL Ultrasound, SonoSite’s ultrasound system pioneered a new way. But let me be up front about this topic. While learning does begin at home, we live, unfortunately, in a time when homes are not prepared to meet this challenge. Therefore, people like yours truly and myself believe that Highland Community College must join hands and help parents and families prepare themselves to make it happen. I know that with love and intellectual development, we can provide a great start to our children’s future.

Let me tell you about these children: Children who don’t have the basic literacy skills when they enter school are 3 or 4 times more likely to drop out in later years. Children’s chances for success in school are greatly influenced by the educational attainment of their parents. A parent’s education level is the single best indicator of a child’s success in school. Parents who have books in the home and read to their children have children who are better readers and better students. When parents are involved in helping their school-age children with their schoolwork, social class drops out as a factor in poor performance.

Yes, large numbers of our children are at-risk. Again, I ask the question, “What will our communities do to help them?” As a result of the discussion that takes place in the home due to parents who do not have the necessary instructional skills, we also find that we have large numbers of children who face major barriers as they grow toward adulthood.

My topic today is “Learning begins at home.”

REMARKS OF DR. RUTH MERCEDES-SMITH

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to take this opportunity to address this speech given by Dr. Ruth Mercedes-Smith, President of Highland Community College on Freeport, Illinois, to my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD.