

The program educates and empowers secondary school students in Los Angeles county to be an active part of the solution to minimize use of landfill space and understand their role in reducing pollutants from entering our waterways by proper disposal methods. Through a hands-on approach, students learn that the local environment is part of their everyday life, and that everyday decisions, choices and actions make a difference to the health of our environment.

TreePeople, is one of Los Angeles' oldest and most successful locally based nonprofit environmental education group. Since 1996, it has worked under the direction of the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Environmental Programs Division to create Generation Earth, the state's most effective secondary school environmental education program.

Generation Earth is a highly successful program with measurable milestones backed by research reviewed by educational experts. The classroom curriculum was designed to fit any academic discipline. It meets the curriculum objectives of language arts classes, math, science, social studies and history.

By providing opportunities for young people to improve their quality of life and challenge them as they apply lessons learned in school, Generation Earth is an important catalyst for the people of Los Angeles. Thanks to Generation Earth, Los Angeles County teenagers are beginning to learn that they can make a positive difference in their surroundings.

I hope my colleagues will join me in commending Generation Earth for its leadership in developing a successful comprehensive approach to environmental education.

RECOGNIZING THE PARTICIPATION OF MS. JOANNA MANUEL IN THE VOICES AGAINST VIOLENCE CONGRESSIONAL TEEN CONFERENCE

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, last month, 342 teenagers from throughout the country came to Capitol Hill to attend the Voices Against Violence Conference regarding youth violence. During the two days, the teenagers had unique opportunities to express their views on youth violence to Members, learn from national law enforcement and youth programming experts, and participate in workshops covering a variety of issues including diversity training, peer mediation, and hate crime prevention strategies. Supporting agencies and organizations included the U.S. Department of Justice, the National Crime Prevention Council, the American Mental Health Association, MTV, and the Children's Defense Fund.

I felt it was important for a young person from Guam to participate in this conference to ensure that the diversity of perspectives of youth violence included teens from the furthest American jurisdiction. I was proud that Ms. Joanna Manuel, a sophomore attending Simon Sanchez High School, was Guam's represent-

ative to the conference. During her visit, Joanna gained practical knowledge about violence prevention initiatives and helped to explore the causes, needs and solutions to the problems of youth violence which continues to impact our society. Joanna proved to be a valuable contributor and an able spokesperson for Guam's youth.

The two day conference resulted in the introduction of House Resolution 357, which represents the views of the 342 conference participants and provides their collective views of the causes and solutions to youth violence. The measure was introduced by Democratic Leader RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, myself, and 94 other co-sponsors.

I am hopeful that Joanna will continue to be involved in the issue of youth violence and help raise community awareness and activity. It is evident from the outcome of the Voices Against Violence conference, that we can look to America's youth for solutions and guidance to understand why violence happens and what we can do to avert it.

For the record, I am submitting an essay written by Ms. Joanne Manuel giving her views on the causes of violence among teenagers.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE CAUSES OF VIOLENCE AMONG TEENAGERS TODAY?

As anyone who listens to the radio, watches television, or reads the newspaper knows, violence has become a cause for nationwide and worldwide concern. Of particular concern is the alarming increase in violence among children and youth. The rates of youth-initiated violent crimes are rising dramatically, as are the numbers of young victims. Many teens are pressured into doing things they don't want to do. One of the hardest parts of growing up, is the same today as it has been for years, peer pressure. It is a part of every teenager's junior and high school years. Some peer pressure is actually quite good in working towards developing a teen's recognition of right and wrong. Negative peer pressure, the kind we most commonly associate with the concept, can be devastatingly corruptive. Positive and negative pressure are two totally different things. Positive pressure includes encouragement to try out for the school play, or challenges to study harder. Negative peer pressure includes encouragement to use drugs, to smoke, or other things that harm. Positive pressure has many benefits such as helping teenagers develop a sense of morality. Part of being a teen involves learning to make decisions. One of the things that affects decision-making is pressure from friends. Teens should make decisions based on their own morals and values. Daily, teens are persuaded to participate in activities that statistics report may harm their well-being. These activities include: smoking, drinking, using drugs, having premarital sex, and even cheating on schoolwork. Many teens are pressured into taking drugs and smoking by "friends." Teens today need to learn to make their own decisions and say no to drugs, smoking, and other things they know can harm them. Our communities and schools have to work together to help prevent negative peer pressure between teenagers. There are many other things that cause violence among teens today. Troubled teens are gradually increasing these days and many are caused by problems stemming from home. Counseling is a great way to find the problem and solve it before other prob-

lems arise. While I was in middle school, we had a peer counseling system. Students who needed help or just needed someone to talk to would go to the counselor's office and fellow students would talk and lend a helping hand. It was a great system and it worked. I think that the government should set aside some money to establish and maintain this type of system in every school in the nation and maybe even worldwide. We all have to work together to make a brighter future for all of us and the generations to come.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS
SLIPPING IN HONG KONG

HON. JOHN EDWARD PORTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I am greatly concerned over the growing reports from Hong Kong that freedom of the press is increasingly at risk under Chinese rule. When Hong Kong was turned over to China in July of 1997, it was to become one country but remain two systems. Unfortunately, after less than two and a half years, we are already seeing example after example of Beijing's power and its communist values being exhibited throughout Hong Kong and imposed on the citizenry.

The most recent example of this clampdown was the abrupt reassignment of the well-respected, outspoken director of the government owned Radio/Television Hong Kong, Cheung Man-yeet last month. Ms. Cheung was named economic and trade representative to Japan, a post equivalent to that of ambassador. This action took place just days after she drew a rare public rebuke from the Chinese Deputy Prime Minister, Qian Qichen. Recently, the station had also aired a senior Taiwanese official seeking to explain President Lee Teng-hui's shift in policy toward China.

The Hong Kong government is becoming increasingly critical of all local media. Statements from the chief of executive of Hong Kong, Tung Chee-hwa such as "while is freedom of speech is important, it is also important for government policies to be positively presented," show the direction in which freedom of the press is headed.

This "reassignment" of a qualified journalist is a scary first step. The international community must stand up and take notice when the slipping away of a vital freedom begins. The freedom of the press is the cornerstone of a strong democracy. If Hong Kong loses its free press, I have great fear for what is next.

THE TRUE GOAL OF EDUCATION

HON. JAMES M. TALENT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I insert the following eloquent speech entitled "the True Goal of Education" into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.