

and parents can produce first-rate students.

And, indeed, I am very proud of the accomplishments of Maine schools.

Dozens of schools across the country have participated in the current Ed-Flex Partnership Program. They have proven that test scores and learning increase most rapidly when guided by locally designed programs, not by Federal ones. We need to expand the Ed-Flex Program so that students in every State can reap these same benefits.

Public schools in Maine and across the Nation have made a good-faith effort to repair the deteriorated foundation of our system of public education. There is, however, much more that needs to be done. Our States cannot do it alone. They need assistance but not the dictates of Washington.

The Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999 directly addresses the need for change within public schools by putting the power to plan, brainstorm, build, and implement back in the hands of State and local communities. Expanding the opportunity for the Ed-Flex Program will give every State the chance to experiment and innovate and to chart a path for better schools. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this very important initiative.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. BREAUX addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. BREAUX. I thank the Chair and welcome the Presiding Officer in that very important position that he has undertaken. We all have had an opportunity to do it in our careers.

I ask unanimous consent to proceed for up to 5 minutes. I take it we are in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

(The remarks of Mr. BREAUX pertaining to the introduction of S. 469 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. BREAUX. I yield the floor.

Mr. GREGG addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business. Are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business, and there is a grant of 5 minutes per Senator.

Mr. GREGG. I thank you.

Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Ed-Flex bill we are going to take up next week, which has been brought to the floor by Senators FRIST and WYDEN and which is an excellent piece of legislation, a commonsense idea. The Ed-Flex bill simply gives freedom to the States to assist local school districts in meeting the particular needs of their particular students.

As a former Governor, I was very frustrated when I would receive Federal funds that were chock full of strings and Federal directions—strings that limited the ability of local school districts to address the educational needs of their students.

Had Ed-Flex been an option when I was Governor, schools could have chosen whether they would use Federal funds to hire more math teachers or instead if they wanted to use them to hire more reading teachers. Those choices should have been dependent upon the particular needs of each school.

They should have been dependent upon the particular needs of the students. Instead, those choices were being made by the Federal Government.

Under the current system, 38 States are prohibited from issuing the type of waivers the Department of Education can issue under the Ed-Flex Program. New Hampshire is one of those States. This means that someone at the Department of Education who doesn't even know the name of one student at, for example, the Rumford Elementary School in Concord, NH, has more authority over whether the Rumford Elementary School principal and the Rumford schoolteachers can decide whether they need math help or reading help for that student than the principals and the teachers have. It is difficult to fathom that some of my colleagues believe that the Federal bureaucrat, however well-intentioned, rather than a Concord school district principal or a Concord elementary district schoolteacher or a parent is a better judge of what a child needs in the Rumford Elementary School than they are.

It is hard for me to understand how we can turn to a Federal bureaucracy to make decisions about local schools rather than have the local schools make decisions about how the education should proceed.

This philosophy of Federal control over local education is insulting to the principals, to the teachers, to the superintendents, to the school board, to the parents. And more importantly, it is counterproductive because it doesn't put the resources where we need them. It doesn't help the student with the needs that that student has been identified as needing by the local school district, but rather with a set stringent regulated framework which has been determined by a Federal bureaucracy.

Furthermore, this philosophy of Federal control is unjustified. Twelve Ed-Flex States, in the words of Secretary Riley, have used their authority to grant waivers "judiciously and carefully." There is no compelling reason to delay expansion of Ed-Flex authority to all the States. In fact, Secretary Riley, President Clinton—both of whom are former Governors—and the

National Governors' Association support expanding Ed-Flex to all 50 States. I congratulate the President and I congratulate Secretary Riley for his support of this initiative.

With that said, Ed-Flex is a modest but important first step to driving more flexibility and control to the locals, thereby giving them the schools to improve education. However, it still leaves the bulk of decisionmaking and control regarding Federal education programs in the hands of the Department of Education rather than with the States and local communities. I hope that later on in this year we will address those additional regulations.

At this time, we are taking up Ed-Flex. That, at least, is a first step and a positive step. Ed-Flex is a bipartisan, widely supported bill with proven effectiveness. We should take this opportunity to provide much needed flexibility to the States.

Finally, I take this opportunity to commend Senator FRIST and Senator WYDEN for their diligent, bipartisan effort to expand Ed-Flex to all 50 States. They led the fight last year to ensure that all States benefit from the increased flexibility and innovation that Ed-Flex provides. I thank them for their efforts to bring Ed-Flex again to the floor of the Senate.

I believe the very fact that Ed-Flex will be considered on the Senate floor next week sends a clear signal to the American public that the top priority of this Senate is education and educational programs that are sensitive to the needs of the parents, the students, and the local schools. Ed-Flex is proof positive that the Senate is prepared to hit the ground running and promote proven educational reform measures such as the expansion of the Ed-Flex Program. I hope that in a strong, bipartisan manner we can work together to pass Ed-Flex and give the Governors, the local schools, the parents, teachers, and the principals this much needed tool which will free them from much unneeded Federal regulation.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, may I make a parliamentary inquiry? How are we operating at the moment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business and the general grant is each Senator speaking has 5 minutes.

Mr. BIDEN. I see the distinguished Senator from Maine is on the floor, ready to speak. The statement may take me as long as 10 minutes. I ask unanimous consent I be able to proceed for 10 minutes.

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

RABBI HERBERT E. DROOZ: "THE RABBI SPEAKS"

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, it is with great honor, yet immense sadness that I stand today to pay tribute to a man—

Rabbi Herbert Drooz—whose spirit, vision, and voice will live on for generations to come in my State of Delaware.

As a respected religious leader and social activist for 30 years, he was a builder—literally and figuratively—who dreamed big and made big things happen.

When I got back to Delaware from law school—I went out of State, we didn't have a law school in the State at the time, in 1968—Rabbi Drooz was one of the first civic activists that I came in contact with. He oversaw the building of a new synagogue for the reform congregation of Beth Emeth, that he led, which is now the largest synagogue in Delaware, along with the construction of the school on Lea Boulevard, not far from where I had gone to school in Wilmington, Delaware. These two buildings stand as not only monuments to his vision and his dedication to religious service, but they also had the very practical impact of enhancing the region and the neighborhood, and causing people to invest not only physically and financially, but psychologically in our city.

He built a community esprit de corps as well—founding the Delaware Chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, which recently was renamed the National Conference for Community and Justice, which is one of the most significant civic organizations and moral barometers in my State. At the University of Delaware, my alma mater, he organized the popular student Hillel group. When I was a student at the University of Delaware in 1961 to 1965, it had a very small Jewish student body. It now has a vigorous, engaged and involved Jewish student body, and the Hillel group at the University is, again, a major force for justice, focusing on the moral dilemmas of our time.

What most Delawareans remember about Rabbi Drooz was his voice. He was known as the Rabbi who speaks. Every Sunday morning, you could turn on WDEL radio station, one of the largest radio stations in my State, and hear his words of wisdom and compassion, on a program that was titled, "The Rabbi Speaks."

He spoke to and reached out to more than Delaware's proud Jewish community. He was one of the first people who went the extra mile to reach out to the non-Jewish community.

He spoke during times of social unrest in my State. He spoke about more than religious issues. In 1954, he used his leadership and oratorical skills to speak out forcefully against the racist hatred exhibited by a militant in the southern part of my State, in a city called Milford, who tried to defy the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. the Board of Education*, to end racial segregation in our public schools. It may come as a surprise to many, but to my great shame, my

great State has the blot upon its history that we were segregated by law, and in 1954 it was not particularly popular to speak out on that issue.

His words from the Beth Emeth pulpit still ring out.

He questioned, quote:

Why no leader has risen from among the citizens of Milford to combat this merchant of hate from another. We have been tardy. Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously, brother against brother?

The Rabbi speaks, indeed. He spoke, and he spoke at a time when few were willing to speak.

In 1966, he joined with bishops from the local Catholic and Episcopal dioceses in leading the Methodists and Presbyterians in opposing American involvement in the war in Vietnam—not very popular at the time and not always popular among his congregation.

Rabbi Drooz led the Rabbinical Association of Delaware for two terms as President. He spoke out as a board member on the board of the Fair Housing Council, Pacem In Terris, the American Red Cross, the Mental Health Association, and Delaware's Urban Coalition.

Everything that mattered, every issue that required some moral bearing, every issue that people tended to shy away from because they were controversial, Rabbi Drooz spoke out.

A point of personal privilege, Mr. President. You know as a former Governor and a former mayor and a Senator now, occasionally things get said about us that are totally untrue. We never fail to forget those voices in the community who have significant standing, who are willing to risk their reputations to speak out for us.

Rabbi Drooz spoke out for JOE BIDEN, too. He spoke out for me at a time that could have stopped me in my tracks from winning the election in 1972.

Please allow me this point of personal privilege to tell this brief story. Just days before that election, I was falsely accused of being anti-Semitic in an unfounded charge by a disgruntled, former campaign worker. I was 29 years old. Hardly anybody knew me. Those who knew me knew, and my record as a Senator has demonstrated, I am far from an anti-Semite. As a matter of fact, I am accused these days by my opponents of being the other way.

At the time, as a 29-year-old guy from a family with no influence or money running for the U.S. Senate in a year when George McGovern was being trounced in my State. I was accused in this sort of Pearl Harbor sneak attack the weekend before the Tuesday of being an anti-Semite, and it was printed in our largest paper.

Rabbi Drooz immediately went into action on the Sunday prior to the election. Rabbi Drooz organized a meeting of Delaware's Jewish community, enlisting the support of the very influential Governor of Pennsylvania who

happened to be Jewish, Milton Shapp. Rabbi Drooz spoke out for JOE BIDEN and supported me against this untrue, unfair accusation. Needless to say, he was effective in setting the record straight, or I would not be standing here today. The mere fact that Rabbi Drooz said, "I know JOE BIDEN," was good enough for the entire community in my State.

I will forever hold Rabbi Drooz in the highest esteem for his courage, his leadership, his boldness and for getting me back on my feet at a time when I needed his courage, leadership and boldness the most.

After I became a Senator, on a regular basis I would brief Rabbi Drooz on the situation in the Middle East. He would put together people for me to speak to. Seldom did we disagree, but when we did, there was no question about my independence, and he never questioned whether or not I should be.

Rabbi Drooz was a fighter to the end. Alzheimer's stole his mind, but not his spirit. Just six months before he died, as an octogenarian, he agreed to participate in a study for Alzheimer's to test new medication.

Mr. President, in conclusion, I point out that I truly believe his spirit lives on in his son Daniel and his daughter Johanna, his brother Arnold and his six grandchildren. They are respected in the community and continue to participate in the community.

I say goodbye to Rabbi Drooz. Shalom and peace be with you, my friend, and may all that you did for the good of Delaware be remembered.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized under the previous order for 1 hour.

MR. DURBIN. Thank you, Mr. President.

EDUCATION IN AMERICA

MR. DURBIN. Mr. President, during the course of this 1 hour I will be yielding to other Members on this side of the aisle. We will be discussing a range of topics, primarily focusing on questions of education.

Let me say at the outset, Mr. President, last week I journeyed back to my home State of Illinois—a welcome interlude from our impeachment proceedings—to address issues which I consider to be very critical to the future not only of my State but this Nation. In the span of 4 days I visited a variety of communities and had nine different meetings with educators, teachers, administrators, students, parents, and interested people in the community to talk about the state of education. It was an eye-opener.

As we started to discuss education from a brand-new perspective, to throw out some of the assumptions and some of the rules, to take a look at education today, I found that there were