

building and modernizing our schools. As a former teacher and the husband of a teacher, as a former legislator, I know firsthand the burdens and constraints that overcrowded classrooms and antiquated buildings place on our student, teachers and administrators.

Mr. Speaker, when I taught, I had so many students it was impossible to foster the proper learning and mentoring relationships that are necessary to provide quality education. In my district today, schools are struggling just to provide space. There are deplorable conditions. One school in any district does not have proper air conditioning, even sometimes no heat. One particular broom closet was vacated to provide a small library for our elementary students. One school in my district had to go to a local prison track for their track team to utilize for their team.

Mr. Speaker, these are unacceptable conditions today in which we seek to prepare our students for tomorrow and for our future. We have a great opportunity in this Congress to make these schools a national priority.

CONGRESS MUST UPHOLD THE
DELICATE BALANCE OF THREE
SEPARATE BUT EQUAL
BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

(Mr. METCALF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, this Congress has every legitimate reason to be deeply concerned about the President's barrage of, count them, 280 Executive Orders. Congressional authority is clearly at risk. Nowhere is it written that the President has any authority to issue Executive Orders. Our Founding Fathers reserved the responsibility of spending taxpayers' money to the people's representatives.

Mr. Speaker, the delicate balance of the three separate, but equal, branches of government is at stake. We cannot allow the President to issue Executive Orders that require the expenditure of Federal funds unless those funds are appropriated by Congress.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, I introduced H. Con. Res. 30 which reasserts the role and responsibility of Congress to enact the laws and appropriate Federal dollars. It seeks to curb the infringement of executive power on legislative authority. Furthermore, H. Con. Res. 30 will clarify any confusion regarding Executive Orders by emphasizing Congressional authority granted under Article 1, Section 8, of the Constitution.

Please join me in cosponsoring this bipartisan resolution.

PRESERVING SOCIAL SECURITY
AND MEDICARE AND PAYING
DOWN THE NATIONAL DEBT

(Mr. WISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, the Congress this year will undertake the most sweeping domestic legislation probably in 40 or 50 years and certainly, in the case of Social Security, the most sweeping changes since Social Security was created in 1935. So I think there ought to be some basic premises here, particularly as we look at, of all things, a budget surplus, something no one ever expected to see.

First, take 62 percent of that surplus and invest it in Social Security and in preserving Social Security. Preserve it for the 400,000 West Virginians that depend upon it.

Second, take 15 percent of that budget surplus, totaling 77 percent now, and save Medicare, for which 300,000 West Virginians depend upon for their basic health care, those over 65 and those who are disabled.

Third, take that surplus and pay down the national debt.

Mr. Speaker, now this is a program that America can rally behind: 62 percent for Social Security to preserve it, 17 percent to preserve Medicare and, finally, paying down the national debt. Let us get moving.

HAITI: A CLIMATE OF
INSTABILITY

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week Haitian Senator Toussaint was gunned down in front of his home in a gruesome, politically-motivated murder. Toussaint had been a member of the OPL, the political party that has controlled parliament in Haiti and is the opposition party for current President Preval and former President Aristide, and it is no coincidence that the loss of Senator Toussaint also means the loss of OPL's majority status in the Haitian Senate.

Mr. Speaker, it is also no coincidence that in Haiti those who are targeted for surveillance, intimidation and even worse are Haitian and American individuals who are working in support of the rule of law; free, fair elections; and economic improvement in that impoverished country.

The United Nations has called attention to the crises, noting there is increased polarization in the country and new risk to constitutional government, but there has been precious little word out of the Clinton administration.

Mr. Speaker, the crown jewel of their foreign policy is badly tarnished, and we need a new approach to Haiti's failed democracy. We are filing such legislation today, and I urge Members to read it and support it.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND
MODERNIZATION

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the Democratic proposal on education and specifically the modernization of our schools.

Improving education in America requires all levels of government to pull their load. Today, local and State school systems are working very hard to improve education, but there is a Federal role. We ought to be providing assistance to local school districts who are trying to modernize their schools.

This problem takes on many faces. Perhaps the most obvious one is the face of temporary buildings in front of school systems. We have lots of temporary buildings that were supposed to be there for 1 year. They are now there for 10 and 15 years, and they are proliferating. They are growing these little pods. It is almost like Monopoly to see these little toy schoolrooms being built.

We need to address that problem.

We have systems that have major ventilation problems and major heating system problems and major air conditioning problems and leaking roofs, and we need to address that problem as well. And we have school systems that lack modern technology. Over half the schools in this country are not wired to assume the technology that exists today.

We need to modernize our schools. We need the Democratic plan.

DEMOCRATIC AGENDA CO-OPTED
FROM THE REPUBLICANS

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues know, yesterday the Democrats had a little love fest over in the Rotunda to talk about their agenda, and I was interested in this. I like to watch Democrats. After all, they are very interesting people when we really study them. And of course so much of their agenda they have co-opted from the Republicans. Our best agenda, for example, balancing the budget, paying down the debt, excellence in education, "S" for saving Social Security, "T" for lowering taxes.

The Republican's best agenda; that is what the Democrats are using.

But then they could not stop there. They had to put in something for the whacky fringe left element of their policy, spending 38 percent of the Social Security dollars. That is right. They are bragging, hey, we are going to save only 62 percent of Social Security, using 32 percent for non-Social Security items.

The whacky fringe left also is pushing busting the budget caps. Of course, the President, he did give his word, but so much for that.

Then federalizing public education. I am sorry that the school districts in their areas did not do the responsible things and build school buildings, but I do not want the Federal Government coming into my district and telling us how to build, how to educate our children.

Mr. Speaker, we do not need Washington bureaucrats; we need local control of education.

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POPULATION PRESSURES IN SCHOOLS MEAN STATE AND FEDERAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I would invite my colleague to visit some of the schools in my district in Brooklyn and Queens. I think what they will find are some great teachers and some eager students. They will probably find them not only in classrooms, but they will find them in gymnasiums, they will find them in storage closets, they will find them in lunch rooms, stuck in nooks and crannies in virtually every building.

Why is that? It is because in places like Community School District 24 and 27 in Queens, Districts 21 and 22 in Kings County, we have populations in those schools in the neighborhood of 120 to 140 percent of capacity.

This is an extraordinary blessing. These students represent the best hopes for our country and best hopes for our community. But with that blessing comes a certain responsibility that we must face, not only in localities but here in Washington. That is to support school modernization. If we can build roads that go by these schools, we should be able to build roofs and extensions on these schools and make sure they are wired for the Internet.

School modernization represents our national defense for the generations to come. We should support it heartily on both sides of the aisle.

A NATURAL DIVIDE BETWEEN REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS

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

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, this is a natural divide here today. We hear it on the other side of the aisle. I think both parties are sincere about protecting and strengthening social security and Medicare. Both want to im-

prove education. How can we not be for improving education? I think on our side of the aisle, at least, we want to strengthen national defense.

The divide, really, is between more spending and bigger government on this side, and tax relief and more opportunity and more freedom for the American people on this side. We believe strongly that we can protect and strengthen social security if given the chance, despite the rhetoric on the other side, and at the same time agree that the American people are overtaxed and they deserve more of their hard-earned money back, and the freedom and opportunity to spend it on their families and their communities.

If we keep it here in Washington, we give the other side the chance, and all they are going to do is spend it unnecessarily on wasteful spending.

RISING DEMANDS ON SCHOOLS, NOT IRRESPONSIBILITY, CAUSE HIGHER SCHOOL UPKEEP COSTS

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

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I would say to my friend, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), people in Tennessee have not been irresponsible in spending education funds. I would recommend to him that he ought to look at the problems in Atlanta and other places in Georgia in keeping up with some of the rising demands in our schools.

The reality is that some 14 million of our students, of the 52.7 which are enrolled in public schools around the Nation today, go to school each and every day with some major infrastructure problem. We can argue Republican and Democrat, we can argue State and Federal, but the reality is, 14 million kids day in and day out have to worry about a roof falling in.

Maybe it is me, but I think we have a role in ensuring our kids can go to school in safe and clean and learner-friendly environments. Maybe it is me, in thinking that the Federal Government, if we can build prisons, that we ought to be able to build schools.

It is my hope that we can get beyond this partisan and inflammatory rhetoric that seems to, quite frankly, come on both sides, and do what is right for our children. We support tax relief, we support strengthening defense. But let us be honest, they did not support school modernization last year. With a new day here in the Congress, we have moved beyond all the partisan bickering and division that separated us last year.

Let us do what is right. I say to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER), I will support marriage tax relief if he will support building new schools in Illinois and Tennessee.

ENDING THE MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to, of course, point out to my friend across the aisle that this House passed legislation to provide for school construction in the 90-10 tax cut plan last year, and Republicans voted for it.

I have an important question before the House today. That is, do the American people feel that it is right, that it is fair, that married working couples pay higher taxes under our tax code just because they are married? Do the Americans feel that it is right that 21 million average working married couples pay, on average, \$1,400 more in higher taxes just because they are married, higher taxes than identical working couples working outside of marriages?

Of course Americans do not feel that is right, that is fair. It is just not right and fair that married working couples pay more. In fact, we should make elimination of the marriage tax penalty a priority in this Congress. The \$1,400, the average marriage tax penalty, that is one year's tuition in the Joliet Junior College in the district that I represent, or 3 months of day care at a local child care center. It is real money for real people back home.

Let us lower taxes, and let us make elimination of the marriage tax penalty a family priority this year.

QUALITY SCHOOLS SHOULD BE A BIPARTISAN GOAL

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk a little bit about the district that I represent. I represent southern Nevada, which is the fastest growing district in the United States. I have 5,000 new residents pouring into southern Nevada every month.

We have the fastest growing school-age population in the United States. We need to have school construction in order to keep up with the unprecedented growth. We have 1,200 students for every school in southern Nevada. That is twice the national average. We have 210,000 people in our school district. These students are being educated in trailers, they are being educated in portables.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that this is not an appropriate place for our students in America to be educated. They are crying out for better educational opportunities.

I believe education is a nonpartisan issue and should be approached in that manner. Our goal should be to prepare our students for the next millennium,