

due to the strong American dollar and declining values of foreign currency. In Thailand, the baht is off 58%. U.S. economic sanctions also hurt exports because it takes trade away from Indiana farmers.

THIRD STOP: GRAIN BARGE

I'm on my way! Part of Thailand's trade was cut back due to trade with Russia who is exporting crops for the first time since the Soviet breakup. This takes income from Indiana farmers.

FOURTH STOP: THAILAND TABLE

I'm at this table as supper, but my friends may be used for everything from food to gasoline. Farmers here will use us to feed poultry, their main farm product. Because 96% of the world lives outside of the U.S., we need to export Indiana goods to those markets to prosper. Trade with other countries is critical to being competitive in today's world.

It's been a wonderful trip! Everyone gained something. Thailand gained with food that they couldn't have grown and Indiana farmers gained with income in an unsteady market.

HOOSIER FARMERS—GLOBAL IMPACT

(By Wyatt James Roth, Pulaski County)

"Good morning, class," exclaimed social studies teacher, Mr. Beach. "Today's lesson should prove both interesting and educational for you. We have with us today, Mr. Toshitomo Kobiyashi, from Japan. He and I will be talking to you about agricultural products that we sell to Japan and how they help not only his country, but ours as well. First of all, let me explain that when we sell products to Japan or any other country, the process of a product leaving our country and going to another place is called exportation. Indiana farmers depend on the export of their farm products such as corn, soybeans, and wheat, along with beef and pork, for their livelihood."

"Yes, Mr. Beach, and we in Japan are very thankful for these products. My people used to rely on rice as a major source of food. This is still there, but we have also developed other tastes, one of which is the taste for red meat. We buy breeding stock from Indiana farmers, which is the reason I am in Indiana. I was sent here to buy hogs for breeding so that we can supply our people with pork."

"Mr. Kobiyashi, why doesn't your country raise all of these products in Japan so that you don't have to buy them from us?"

"Good question, young man! Japan is too small and too heavily populated to grow everything in its own country. That is why we depend on the United States so much for these products."

"Yes, class," added Mr. Beach, "Indiana farmers and Japanese consumers both benefit from our agricultural trade. Our farmers sell their products for cash and Japan buys them for consumption. This is called supply and demand."

"Ah, yes, Mr. Beach. It is a good trade. Thank you for having me and thanks to the Indiana farmers for the products that they grow. As we say in Japanese, Sianara!"

1998-99 DISTRICT ESSAY WINNERS

- District 1: Wyatt Roth, Katie Jaskowiak.
- District 2: Peter Rummel, Sarah Showalter.
- District 3: Brian Blume, Ashley Sizemore.
- District 4: Kurt Biehl, Ashley Height.
- District 5: Cody Porter, Annie Morgan.
- District 6: Drew Relssaus, Katherine Delph.
- District 7: Anjelica Dortch.
- District 8: Nicholas Reding, Katie Kugele.

- District 9: Joey Smith, Jennifer Tarr.
  - District 10: Josh Robinson, Karla Roberts.
- COUNTIES REPRESENTED

- Allen: Rashon Thomas.
- Cass: Brian Blume, Allison Henry.
- Decatur: Nicholas Reding.
- Dubois: Roger Lueken, Laura Begle.
- Elkhart: Peter Rummel.
- Franklin: Zachary Grubbs, Katie Kugele.
- Hamilton: Drew Reissaus, Lisa Denning.
- Howard: Matt Bell.
- Jasper: Ryan Anderson, Ashley Sizemore.
- Jay: Davis Bowen, Joanna Knipp.
- Lake: Danny Pace.
- Lawrence: Wendy McDonald.
- Madison: Aaron Justison, Carey Justison.
- Marion: Christopher Patton, Katherine Delph.
- Monroe: Anjelica Dortch.
- Newton: Brian Tatum, Kassie Koselke.
- Noble: Joshua Butler, Sarah Showalter.
- Ohio: Karla Roberts.
- Orange: Jennifer Tarr.
- Pulaski: Wyatt Roth, Julie Sehstedt.
- Starke: Karl Hall, Amy Pflugshaupt.
- St. Joseph: Joshua Lichtenbarger, Katie Jaskowiak.
- Vermillion: Cody Porter, Annie Morgan.
- Wabash: Kurt Biehl, Ashley Height.
- Warrick: Joey Smith, Maggie Springstun.
- Washington: Josh Robinson, Jennifer Goering.
- Wayne: James McGuire, Victoria Rommer.●

EDUCATION-FLEXIBILITY ACT

● Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I was pleased to join 97 of my colleagues to vote in favor of the Education Flexibility Partnership Act, or Ed-Flex, last week. This bill expands the current federal Ed-Flex pilot program to all states and allows them to waive certain federal education requirements for local schools, so long as schools are accountable for making education improvements, and does so without altering federal requirements concerning health, safety and civil rights. It is my hope that Ed-Flex can help increase student achievement by serving as a catalyst for innovative school reform at the state and local levels.

Mr. President, while I am pleased the Senate passed the underlying Ed-Flex bill, I am disappointed that the bill includes amendments that would force local schools to choose between smaller classes and students with special needs. These amendments could undermine the important class size reduction program agreed to on a bipartisan basis last year. I was also deeply disappointed with the defeat of the Kennedy/Murray class size amendment, which would have built on the down payment of 30,000 teachers agreed to last year and finished the job by authorizing class size funding for the next six years.

My own State of Wisconsin has been a leader among the states trying to reduce class size in the early grades. Wisconsin's Student Achievement Guarantee in Education or SAGE class size reduction program, has proven conclusively that smaller classes make a dif-

ference in our children's education. SAGE officials want the Federal Government to be a partner in Wisconsin's effort to reduce class size. Federal funds are an important complement to Wisconsin's ongoing SAGE program and will ensure that SAGE continues to thrive. The rejection of the Kennedy/Murray amendment sends a discouraging message to schools in my State and across the nation that are just beginning to make decisions about how to implement the class size funds agreed to last year.

It is very unfortunate, Mr. President, that two critically important federal programs, funds for special education and to reduce class size, were pitted against each other during the Ed-Flex debate. I am fully committed to funding for special education, but not at the expense of funds to reduce class size. The promise of these critically important education funds affecting our nation's children should not fall victim to partisan maneuvers. Congress should not be choosing one over the other—both special education and class size are national education priorities. American parents should know those in Congress who pit these programs against each other are the friend of neither.

Finally, Mr. President, while I understand that Ed-Flex is not a panacea for America's education problems, I do believe it will improve the federal, state and local partnership needed to ensure our children receive the best quality education possible. I am confident that the conference committee will protect the class size funds agreed to last year and that Congress will vote on an improved version of Ed-Flex in the near future.●

TRIBUTE TO ALFRED TESTA, JR.

● Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Alfred Testa on his departure as the Director of Manchester Airport. Fred has been the Director of Manchester Airport since 1991. He has brought about tremendous and exciting change to the airport during his tenure and I am proud to have worked with him during his distinguished career.

Fred came to Manchester after serving as Deputy Director of T.F. Green Airport in Warwick, Rhode Island. He is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island with a B.A. in Political Science and earned his J.D. at Suffolk University Law School. He is an Accredited Airport Executive with the American Association of Airport Executives and is a regular lecturer on airport development, management and marketing.

Fred has been the driving force behind the substantial growth at Manchester Airport. When Fred began as