

TAX RELIEF FOR MARRIED
AMERICANS

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

Mr. WELLER. Madam Speaker, let me ask a basic question of fundamental fairness: Is it right, is it fair, that under our Tax Code, 25 million married working couples on average pay \$1,400 more in taxes just because they are married?

Is it right that under our Tax Code that a husband and wife who are both in the workforce are forced to pay higher taxes if they choose to get married and the only way to avoid the marriage tax penalty is either to get divorced or just not get married?

Madam Speaker, that is wrong, and I am so proud this House of Representatives passed overwhelmingly legislation to wipe out the marriage tax penalty for 25 million married working couples. This week we are going to pass legislation, agreement with the House and Senate, which will wipe out the marriage tax penalty for 25 million married working couples. I was proud to see that every House Republican supported H.R. 6, and 48 Democrats broke with their leadership to support our efforts.

I want to extend an invitation to my Democratic friends on other side of the aisle to join with us and make it a bipartisan effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty. It is unfair; it is wrong. It is wrong to tax marriage. Let us eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that she will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING
IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF
EDUCATION IN UNITED STATES
HISTORY

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 129) expressing the sense of Congress regarding the importance and value of education in United States history.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. CON. RES. 129

Whereas basic knowledge of United States history is essential to full and informed par-

ticipation in civic life and to the larger vibrancy of the American experiment in self-government;

Whereas basic knowledge of the past serves as a civic glue, binding together a diverse people into a single Nation with a common purpose;

Whereas citizens who lack knowledge of United States history will also lack an understanding and appreciation of the democratic principles that define and sustain the Nation as a free people, such as liberty, justice, tolerance, government by the consent of the governed, and equality under the law;

Whereas a recent Roper survey done for the American Council of Trustees and Alumni reveals that the next generation of American leaders and citizens is in danger of losing America's civic memory;

Whereas the Roper survey found that 81 percent of seniors at elite colleges and universities could not answer basic high school level questions concerning United States history, that scarcely more than half knew general information about American democracy and the Constitution, and that only 22 percent could identify the source of the most famous line of the Gettysburg Address;

Whereas many of the Nation's colleges and universities no longer require United States history as a prerequisite to graduation, including 100 percent of the top institutions of higher education;

Whereas 78 percent of the Nation's top colleges and universities no longer require the study of any form of history;

Whereas America's colleges and universities are leading bellwethers of national priorities and values, setting standards for the whole of the United States' education system and sending signals to students, teachers, parents, and public schools about what every educated citizen in a democracy must know;

Whereas many of America's most distinguished historians and intellectuals have expressed alarm about the growing historical illiteracy of college and university graduates and the consequences for the Nation; and

Whereas the distinguished historians and intellectuals fear that without a common civic memory and a common understanding of the remarkable individuals, events, and ideals that have shaped the Nation, people in the United States risk losing much of what it means to be an American, as well as the ability to fulfill the fundamental responsibilities of citizens in a democracy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the historical illiteracy of America's college and university graduates is a serious problem that should be addressed by the Nation's higher education community;

(2) boards of trustees and administrators at institutions of higher education in the United States should review their curricula and add requirements in United States history;

(3) State officials responsible for higher education should review public college and university curricula in their States and promote requirements in United States history;

(4) parents should encourage their children to select institutions of higher education with substantial history requirements and students should take courses in United States history whether required or not; and

(5) history teachers and educators at all levels should redouble their efforts to bolster the knowledge of United States history among students of all ages and to restore the vitality of America's civic memory.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on S. Con. Res. 129.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 129, which is identical to House Concurrent Resolution 366, a resolution introduced in the House before the Independence Day recess.

I would like first to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), the House majority leader, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), chairman of the House Committee on Education and Workforce, whose cooperation has expedited the consideration of this resolution. I would also like to thank Senators LIEBERMAN and GORTON for their support of this resolution and commend the Senate for passing it on the Friday before the 4th of July holiday.

I am pleased to be here today with my colleague from California as cosponsor to offer this resolution to draw attention to the troubling historical illiteracy of our Nation's next generation of leaders. Senate Concurrent Resolution 129 expresses the sense of Congress regarding the importance and value of education in American history.

The need for this resolution is demonstrated by a Roper Center survey commissioned by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni. The Roper Center surveyed college seniors from the Nation's best colleges and universities as identified by the U.S. News & World Report's annual college rankings.

Specifically, the top 55 liberal arts colleges and research universities were sampled during the month of December 1999. The results of this survey revealed that seniors from America's elite colleges and universities received a grade of D or F on history questions drawn from a basic high school exam. Seniors could not identify Valley Forge, words from the Gettysburg Address, or even the basic principles of the United States Constitution.

Despite this lack of knowledge, according to reports by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, many of today's colleges and universities no longer demand that their students study U.S. history. Students can now