

made a sacrifice for us. They paid taxes at my local school when school was really a nice building there, one of the nicest buildings in my community. I am grateful for that. If I ever complain about it, I hope someone will remind me, because I have a great debt to them. But I also have a debt to all the young people who are not my children because we only have three and they have been blessed to go through the public schools but I owe a debt to all the rest of the children. Because someday as one of my friends who was very successful, he will never have to worry about his Social Security because he is well off, but he made a statement serving on a task force that I had appointed my first year as superintendent to improve education. He said, I want every child to get a good education. I do not care where they come from. I do not care what their ethnic background is. I just want them to make a lot of money so I can draw Social Security.

He said that for a lot of folks who were not there because he did not need the Social Security. But he was making a statement of values, a statement of values. We should never forget. We have an obligation to a lot of folks who made a lot of decisions for us before we were here and we do not need to pull up that net or that rope behind us for all those children who are out there.

□ 1730

We need to make sure they have a quality facility with the things they need, the things the teachers need to help. We need to make sure in this Congress we stand up and provide the leadership. We do not need to lay down and play dead for special interests.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Because if we lay down and play dead, our children die, and it is as simple as that. You are right, we cannot afford to lay down and play dead, because we have so many people who are depending on us. When you asked that question, when you made that statement, rather, you wondered how many of us would be here if we did not have the teachers that were involved in our lives and the education. I can tell you, I know I would not be here.

Someone once said that every successful child, if you look at the history of any successful child, you will realize that there was at least one cheerleader for that child standing on the sidelines rooting them on. And, guess what? In many instances they were teachers standing on that sideline, but not only standing on the sideline, but getting on the field and holding hands and nurturing and encouraging and running with them and telling them what they could do.

So that is what it is all about. I am so glad that the gentleman did take this time to dedicate to it. There are so many subjects we could have been talk-

ing about, but here we are talking about the field of education.

One quick other thing. When we talk about exposing our children to opportunities and exposing them to the kinds of things that they need, just a few weeks ago in our district, in the 7th Congressional District of Maryland, which is basically Baltimore City, what we did was we got a few computers, five computers, I think it was, from EPA, and we presented them to an elementary school.

I am going to tell you, the kids, you would have thought we had given them \$1 million. But in talking to the principal of the school, she said you know what our biggest problem is? She said our biggest problem is that the children do not want to go home. They stay in the computer room.

She said something else that really touched me. She said, you know, we used to have an attendance problems with our little boys. She says now our attendance situation is something like 99 percent for our boys. Why? Because, again, they are teaching to their strengths. They are teaching to their strengths, and that makes a difference.

It is not only that you expose children to various opportunities, but you also need to know what direction are they going in. Some of them may want to be an artist, some may want to be a doctor, some may want to be a lawyer. But it is those teachers, I am telling you, that see it early on, and they can make a lot of judgment calls early on and begin to guide those children in the right direction.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. I thank my friend from Maryland. I thank him for joining in this special order this evening.

In closing, I would say that our communities need help in not only building quality public schools that have good discipline and foster positive learning environments for our children, they need resources for teachers to make sure we have reduced class sizes and the tools in it.

The final point I would make, having served last year on the Speaker's Bipartisan Working Group on Youth Violence, we came out of that talking about some of the things we could do to help make a difference. One of the reports that came out of that was character education. We put in a bipartisan bill on that now, to talk about those things we can do, schools can do, parents can do, communities could do, to make a difference in our school.

I think nothing is more important in our Nation for the public wealth than for the training of youth in wisdom and virtue. Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. That is not unique. That was said by Ben Franklin. It is still true today, as much as it was over 200 years ago. That is important.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for joining me this evening, and would like to call on

this Congress to truly make education its highest priority this year, as we turn the corner on the 21st Century.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING A REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO THE SAME DAY CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Mr. DREIER (during the special order of Mr. ETHERIDGE), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-732) on the resolution (H. Res. 550) waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

THE DEVASTATION OF CANCER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, before giving my special order on cancer, I yield to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) to speak about a good friend of mine and his and this entire body.

TRIBUTE TO RON LASCH

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding. I will be brief, but I especially thank him for yielding, because I know this evening he is going to be talking about something very important and very personal to him.

I did want to take just a moment or two to pay tribute to, as the gentleman from Texas said, a good friend of ours, a loyal employee of this House of Representatives, somebody who served this House extraordinarily well for so many years, Ron Lasch.

It was just a little over 41 years ago that Ron Lasch came to the House of Representatives as a young page. I know, because I was also here at that time as a page. I was a page over in the U.S. Senate at that time when Ron came under Mr. Whitnall's sponsorship to the House of Representatives.

Along with Don Anderson, who, of course, went on to become the Clerk of the House of Representatives, we all graduated in 1960 from the page school. Most of us went on with our lives and did other things, went away to college and began families, went into the service, but Ron Lasch, along with Don Anderson, stayed here in the House of Representatives. I mention that because he has given an extraordinarily large part of his life and his service to the House of Representatives.