

into providing early diagnoses and finding a cure proved to be very hopeful for many of us parents.

Mr. Speaker, Congress must remain committed to funding cancer research programs, especially for pediatric cancer. As we participate in the Childhood Cancer Gold Ribbon Day, let us remember the youthful victims of cancer.

Congress must fully fund pediatric cancer research to ensure that they become youthful survivors instead of youthful victims.

#### IN MEMORY OF CARLOS CACERES COLLAZO, U.S. CITIZEN KILLED IN EAST TIMOR VIOLENCE

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

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, the news last week of the brutal murder of the three United Nations workers in West Timor, Indonesia at the hands of an angry mob has faded to the back pages of the country's daily newspapers.

But for the family the only U.S. citizen killed in that attack, Carlos Caceres Collazo, a native of San Juan, Puerto Rico, the agony of the tragedy is still sinking in.

Carlos Caceres Collazo joined the United Nations High Commission on Refugees in 1995 and chose to work in the dangerous field of providing humanitarian aid to refugees in troubled spots such as East Timor.

The tragic death of this bright man, a graduate of Cornell University Law School and the University of Florida, underscores the frailty of human life, but it also highlights the strength and valor of answering the call to those who serve those in need.

Mr. Speaker, I never met Carlos Caceres, but it comes as no surprise to me to learn that he, like so many Puerto Ricans before him, gave his life to defend the rights of others continuing a tradition of public service.

#### TOP ISSUE FOR REPUBLICANS IS EDUCATION

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

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, last evening we had a chance, once again, to demonstrate that one of the top issues, if not the top issue, of the Republicans is education. We were in this Chamber debating an excellent bill proposed by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman GOODLING) of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

He served for many years as a teacher, then principal, then superintendent; and he has put his knowledge to good use in his work here as chairman of the

Committee on Education and the Workforce.

This bill will improve reading training of children, but above all, through a stroke of genius, he has also included provisions that parents will receive training in reading if they are illiterate.

Mr. Speaker, in my years of education, I discovered that the single greatest factor in the success of the student is an interested and involved parent. But if the parent cannot read, how do we expect the child to learn how to read?

The bill of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) will ensure that both will happen, and it also builds into it accountability to make certain that the government's money is not wasted. This bill does much more than just that, but I wanted to highlight this issue. I encourage all of my colleagues to vote yes on this excellent piece of education legislation.

#### IMPROVEMENTS IN MILITARY RETIREE HEALTHCARE

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

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of improvements in military retiree healthcare. While we can never adequately thank the millions of men and women who have proudly worn the uniform in defense of America, we must honor our commitments to them.

Several provisions of the fiscal year 2001 Defense authorization bill, which is currently in conference committee, are important steps in honoring that commitment.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see that both Chambers passed proposals to provide a prescription drug benefit to Medicare eligible military retirees. Currently, military provided health benefits for beneficiaries over 65, fall far short of what larger employers, including the Federal Government, provide to their retired civilians.

Including a drug benefit for military retirees is a necessary step in keeping our promises to the men and women who risk their lives for our freedom. As I like to say, every day when I get up, I thank God for my life and I thank our Armed Forces for my way of life.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the conference committee to include these common sense proposals in the Defense authorization bill, and in doing so, we will honor the heroes who protected freedom in America and ensured democracy for the world.

#### 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, there is a fundamental question this House of Representatives has worked so hard to address, and that is, is it right, is it fair that under our Tax Code 25 million married working couples on average pay \$1,400 more in higher taxes.

Let me give an example of a couple back in Joliet, Illinois, Shad and Michelle Hallihan. They have a combined income of about \$65,000. They are public school teachers. They own a home. They have a little baby, Ben, a child.

They suffer the marriage tax penalty. In fact, their marriage tax penalty making \$65,000 a year is about \$1,400. Every House Republican, 51 Democrats joined with us, we voted to eliminate the marriage tax penalty. Unfortunately, Bill Clinton and AL GORE vetoed our effort to wipe out the marriage tax penalty for people like Shad and Michelle Hallihan. AL GORE says that people like Shad and Michelle who make \$65,000 a year, own a home, have a child, suffer a marriage tax penalty of \$1,400 a year are rich and should not be helped. That is wrong.

My hope is today, as we vote to attempt to override Bill Clinton's and AL GORE's veto, that our effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty and that more Democrats will join with us on this fundamental issue of fairness.

We will work to help people like Shad and Michelle Hallihan, two public school teachers who pay higher taxes just because they are married.

#### URGING COLLEAGUES TO OVERRIDE VETO OF MARRIAGE PENALTY RELIEF

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) in rising to urge my colleagues to override the President's recent veto of marriage penalty relief. The Marriage Penalty Relief Act passed by significant margins in both the House and the Senate. It is overdue for tax relief to our middle-income families, who are dependent on two-wage earners, who are hardest hit by this penalty. It is especially hard on that second wage, often the wife's salary, because their income is taxed at higher marginal rates, often from 15 percent to 28 percent. You can see how tough it is.

As the President makes up his long list of end-of-the-year spending priorities, let him remember and let us remember the 25 million married couples who are struggling to make ends meet. Instead of dedicating the surplus to more spending ideas and bigger government plans, we should return some of it to the American people who earned it, while continuing to pay down the debt.