

their biggest challenges are inadequate classroom funding and student discipline problems. More and more excellent teachers are leaving their field due to the stress brought on by school violence and discipline problems."

Henry Young of Muncie, Indiana made this point: "Proximity generally facilitates perception of needs. Accordingly, states may well be better informed of regional exigencies than federal management. However, local management of public schools . . . is the better level of government to direct public schools."

From Anderson, Indiana, Sandra Wilson wrote, "One recruiter, which contracted one of my children, took his red pen out and corrected the letter of reference the high school English teacher had written. I had not pre-read this letter and obviously that was my mistake assuming an English teacher would be grammatically correct as well as being able to spell correctly . . . Teachers need to be accountable. They need an end product accountability. If a teacher is teaching English, should not the students be learning English?"

Mrs. Ann Weldy of Markleville, Indiana asked two insightful questions: "How can teachers discipline well when they are not allowed to teach character building? How can we effectively discipline children, in order to create a better society, when the system is poor at disciplining itself?"

David Shepard, Professor Emeritus at Ball State University in Muncie stated, "The present program of aid to education certainly does not put money into the classroom but into the education bureaucracy and into more and more methods courses at the expense of content courses."

Said David Webster of Hope, Indiana, "I am an elementary teacher in a public school. For 26 years, I have been entrusted with the lives of fifth graders. There are many individuals and groups continually striving to help children have the best education possible; however, I am becoming increasingly concerned about upper elementary class sizes."

Mr. Rufus Cochran states, "If you truly care about the state of education, consult classroom and special education teachers . . . Disruptive children and their parents are running our schools, because schools have been either stripped of their authorities or strongly discouraged from discipline for fear of lawsuits."

Mr. Speaker, although these suggestions come from different areas of the district, they focus on similar themes. To be successful, education reform should drive more dollars to the classroom, strengthen school safety and discipline, enhance local control, and enact accountability measures. I am proud to say that I and my colleagues on the Committee on Education and the Workforce have made great strides in these areas.

To empower teachers to maintain classroom discipline, I introduced legislation to provide limited civil litigation immunity for educators who engage in reasonable actions to maintain an orderly, safe, and positive education environment. As an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the provision passed overwhelmingly.

To strengthen state and local involvement in education, Congress passed the Education Flexibility Act which allows eligible states and

school districts greater flexibility in trying innovative education reforms using federal funds. This bill was signed into law on April 29, 1999.

Building on the success of this law, the House of Representatives also passed the Academic Achievement for All Act which allows even greater state and local flexibility in exchange for greater academic achievement.

On October 12, 1999, the House of Representatives passed the Dollars to the Classroom Resolution which calls for at least 95 percent of federal funds to go directly to classroom expenditures. Currently, as little as 65 cents of every federal tax dollar actually makes it to the classroom!

In the Teacher Empowerment Act and the Student Results Act which fund teacher training and services for disadvantaged children respectively, we successfully included provisions which will ensure greater quality and accountability in our schools. These bills, which passed in the House of Representatives await consideration in the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, we have worked hard to pass an impressive package of education bills which will empower parents, teachers, administrators, and communities to make needed changes to our education system. We have heard from our constituents whose ideas form the foundation of our legislative agenda. I would like to thank these constituents and others who have written and given me insight into the classroom.

IN RECOGNITION OF GREGORY
PLAGEMAN, JR., OF DAVIE,
FLORIDA

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2000

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Gregory Plageman, Jr., of Davie, Florida. Gregory was recently honored by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission after risking his own life to save the life of Pearl Steinberg. Indeed, Gregory committed a tremendous act of heroism of which he should be extremely proud.

The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission awards a bronze medal to individuals throughout the United States and Canada who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others. Since the program's inception in 1904 by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, the Commission has recognized acts of outstanding civilian heroism, providing financial assistance to the awardees and the dependents of those awardees who are killed or disabled by their heroic actions. Gregory's story of bravery truly exemplifies the tenets espoused by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission.

On June 24, 1999, 85-year-old Pearl Steinberg remained in her car after it had knocked over a gasoline pump at a local service station. Immediately engulfing the car, flames entered the rear of her car through a broken-out window. Upon witnessing this, Gregory forced open the car door, partially entered the automobile, and released Pearl's safety belt, pulling her out of the car and leading her to safe-

ty. The flames grew to 18 feet above the gas pumps within minutes, completely devouring the vehicle. Without Gregory's selfless act of bravery, Pearl Steinberg would likely have sustained fatal injuries.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Gregory Plageman, Jr., for his heroic efforts in risking his own life to save another's. This was a truly selfless act of courage—an act that Gregory and the entire southern Florida community can be proud of.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2000

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent on a matter of critical importance and missed the following votes:

On the amendment to H.R. 853, to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, introduced by the gentleman from California, Mr. DREIER, I would have voted "nay."

On the amendment to H.R. 853, to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. GEKAS, I would have voted "nay."

On the amendment to H.R. 853, to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, introduced by the gentlelady from Texas, Mrs. JACKSON-LEE, I would have voted "yea."

On passage of H.R. 853, to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, introduced by the gentleman from Iowa, Mr. NUSSLE, I would have voted "nay."

IN HONOR OF THE GEORGE K.
ALMIROUDIS CHIAN GERIATRIC
FOUNDATION, LTD. AND HIS EMINENCE
METROPOLITAN
DIONYSIOS OF CHIOS, PSARA,
AND OINOUSSES

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2000

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I pay special tribute to the George K. Almiroudis Chian Geriatric Foundation, Ltd. on the occasion of their first honoree dinner. I also salute their guest of honor, His Eminence Metropolitan Dionysios of Chios, Psara and Oinousses.

The mission of the George Almiroudis Chian Geriatric Foundation, Ltd. is to provide emotional, physical, financial and psychological support to Hellenic American senior citizens residing in senior residences and nursing homes in the United States. This foundation will also support the residents of the Zorzis Mihalinos Nursing Home of Chios.

This year, at their first annual dinner, the Foundation will honor Metropolitan Dionysios of Chios, Psara and Oinousses, born in Kalimeriani in Evoia. In 1952 he was ordained deacon and in 1956 he received his Bachelors Degree in Theology from the Theological University of Athens. For eight years he served