

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

OFFSET OF FEDERAL TAX RE- FUNDS FOR STATE AND LOCAL TAX DEBTS

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2001

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to be introducing legislation that would establish a federal tax refund offset program for state and local governments. Specifically, this program would require the federal government to withhold refunds from those individuals and corporations that still owe state or local government tax obligations.

Today, the reverse situation exists. A number of states allow their own state agencies, local governments and the Internal Revenue Service to submit a list of delinquent taxpayers. The state then matches these delinquent accounts against taxpayers who may qualify for a state tax refund. If a match is found, the state reduces the refund by the amount of the delinquency and remits the funds to the claimant. These programs have proven to be low-cost and highly effective. Congress recognized the effectiveness of these programs and directed the Internal Revenue Service to establish a similar program to cover claims by other federal agencies, as well as for past-due child support obligations. Last year, Congress expanded the program by directing the Treasury Department to accept claims by states for income tax obligations.

The legislation I am introducing today builds on these successful programs by permitting local governments to participate. The local governments could submit their outstanding tax debts to the Department of the Treasury for an offset against any federal tax refund, just as federal agencies and states do now. This legislation would also permit a claim to be made for any legally enforceable tax obligation owed to the state or local government.

In an era of tight state and local government budgets, it is patently unfair to have the tax-paying citizenry bear the costs and burdens of those who do not pay their fair share. As President Kennedy recognized, "[t]o the extent that some people are dishonest or careless in their dealings with the government, the majority is forced to carry a heavier tax burden." (April 20, 1961) The legislation that I am introducing today will provide a means to help distribute that burden more equitably.

I urge my colleagues to support it.

NOVEMBER SCHOOL OF THE MONTH

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2001

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I have named Carle Place Middle School in Carle Place as School of the Month in the Fourth Congressional District for November 2001.

Neil J. Connolly is Principal of Carle Place, and Dr. Patricia B. Hansen is the Superintendent of Schools for the Carle Place Union Free School District. There are approximately 260 students in 7th and 8th grades.

The outstanding academic records at Carle Place demonstrate the vibrancy of learning inside this school firsthand. The faculty and staff are focused on sending their students to high school wholly prepared and ready to keep learning.

One group of national renowned winners at Carle Place are the budding journalists involved in The Carle Place Middle School Newspaper, The Path. For two years running, The Path's excellent team took top honors from the American Scholastic Press Association newspaper competition.

Expanding on those good deeds, Carle Place Middle, in conjunction with Carle Place High, is the number one contributor to Make-A-Wish Foundation in the entire country, exceeding \$379,500 since 1988.

At Carle Place, students are focused on helping others. When young people dedicate their time and effort willingly, a lifetime of caring for your fellow man is solidified.

You name it, Carle Place students are there, nabbing top honors in the Long Island Science Congress Junior Division, Scholar Athletes, National Junior Honor Society, language arts competitions, and excelling in the Fine and Performing Arts programs.

Congratulations to Carle Place Middle School students, faculty and administration on this achievement. Keep up the good work.

SALUTE TO UNION RIDGE SCHOOL, SELECTED A BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2001

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievements of Union Ridge School, which was named a Blue Ribbon School, by the Department of Education's Blue Ribbon School Program. This year, Union Ridge was one of 223 public schools recognized by the program.

Selection of Blue Ribbon Schools is based on a rigorous evaluation process. Schools are evaluated by the program's reviewers and by a thorough self-evaluation involving administrators, teachers, students, parents and community. This is a highly competitive program that recognizes schools that are making a major positive impact in their communities and in our country.

Union Ridge School is a one-school elementary district in Harwood Heights, Illinois, with students ranging from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. The school serves an urban, "blue collar" community and has established a long-standing tradition of setting high expectations for all learners. The school has implemented a variety of programs designed to promote diversified education, including formal bilingual and English as a Second Language programs.

Union Ridge is a Blue Ribbon winner because it has realized its educational goals through the efforts of a creative and dedicated staff. Their innovative instruction combines engaged learning and challenging experiences for students of differing abilities and backgrounds. The school promotes awareness and a commitment to educational diversity.

Union Ridge School has established itself as a centerpiece for learning. Its goals and priorities have been planned to be consistent with community values. Union Ridge is an example of what all schools across the country strive to do—to provide a quality, diversified education that enriches the lives of students and the surrounding community.

I congratulate Union Ridge School, the 11 other Blue Ribbon winners in Illinois, and all the Blue Ribbon Schools in the country on their achievement. There is nothing more important than preparing young minds to create a better America. I commend Union Ridge School for its efforts toward that end.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF SONOMA COUNTY YWCA

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2001

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Sonoma County YWCA on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary. Since November, 1976, the YWCA has led the battle against domestic violence in our community.

Begun by a group of women who met at the Santa Rosa library 25 years ago, the organization initially thought it would offer shelter for all homeless women but soon realized there was an urgent need to protect women fleeing for their lives. The first safe house was opened a year later with seed money from the county Mental Health Department.

The Sonoma County YWCA now has an annual budget of \$2,000,000 and offers child

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