

Few doubt that Al Qaeda does not possess large quantities of Russian SA7s and even more effective U.S. Stingers. A successful attack against a Boeing 747-400 with full capacity could cost almost five hundred lives. Aside from large-scale casualties, such a successful attack would have a devastating impact on the U.S. Aircraft industry, on travel and tourism, and on the entire economy. It would be a multifaceted catastrophe.

Now that we understand that pleas are vulnerable, the United States Government must take every step to protect and defend American citizens. The advanced technology needed to protect American commercial airplanes exists and is operation on U.S. military transports. The new system are advanced and are much more successful than the previous system of diversionary flares. The most modern systems, such as those installed on U.S. C17s and C5As, identify when a plane is threatened, detect the source of the threat, jam the guidance system of the incoming missiles and steer it off its flight path. Similar systems are currently used on low-altitude military aircrafts.

The rapid deployment of this system is essential for the safety of U.S. commercial flyers and is the clear responsibility of the U.S. Government to implement. I propose fully funding the retrofitting of SAM defensive systems and beginning that process this year.

No one in this body would question that preserving and protecting the people of the United States is our most important and sacred constitutional responsibility. At this critical time in our Nation's history we have two simultaneous crises and concerns: national security and economic security. The bill I introduce today addresses both of these issues. This legislation would take the preventive step of reducing risk to millions of travelers and create thousands of jobs through the retrofitting of the defensive technologies.

Additionally, this bill will boost our airline industry. Recent surveys have shown that between one-fifth to one-third of Americans are restricting their flying because of fears of terrorism. Our government and the airline industry are working closely together to restore full consumer confidence in the safety of our commercial air system. Implementing a robust and effective defense system for our commercial jet fleet would further accelerate the process of making Americans feel safer when they fly, and help the economic recovery of U.S. air carriers. The estimated cost of \$10.2 billion for a system of 6,800 commercial jets at a unit price of \$1.5 million will be offset by these economic benefits. The unit cost could drop even lower in mass production.

Mr. Speaker, I fully realize that a ten billion expenditure is significant. But it is not prohibitive. The only thing that would be prohibitive would be for this Congress to be negligent in our responsibility to protect the people of our great Nation. Let us not gather together in grief the morning after a catastrophe and wonder what we could have done to prevent it. We know what can be done. Let's do it.

HOPE PLUS SCHOLARSHIP ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Hope Plus Scholarship Act, which extends

the HOPE scholarship tax credit to K-12 education expenses. Under this bill, parents could use the HOPE Scholarship to pay for private or religious school tuition or to offset the cost of home schooling. In addition, under the bill, all Americans could use the Hope Scholarship to make cash or in-kind donations to public schools. Thus, the Hope Scholarship could help working parents finally afford to send their child to a private school, while other parents could take advantage of the Hope credit to help purchase new computers for their children's school. I urge my colleagues to join with me in returning education resources to the American people by cosponsoring my Hope Plus Scholarship Act.

INTRODUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the International Environmental Defense Act of 2003.

The purpose of this bill is to clarify the authority of the Secretary of Defense to respond to environmental emergencies. It is cosponsored by my colleagues from Colorado, Representative Joel Hafley. I greatly appreciate his support.

In times of natural disaster or other emergencies, the United States for decades has come to the aid of those in need—whether the crisis is the result of an earthquake in Turkey, an erupting volcano in South America, or deadly floods in some other part of the world.

When the need arises, the U.S. Government provides humanitarian assistance through the U.S. Agency for International Development, the State Department, the Defense Department, and other federal agencies. It also contracts with private voluntary agencies to provide such assistance and coordinates the U.S. response with that of other countries.

The American military has an outstanding record of participation in these activities. All Americans take pride in the humanitarian assistance provided by the men and women of our armed services.

I strongly support this policy. It is the right thing to do, and in the best interests of our country as well as of people everywhere. Humanitarian assistance is critical to help communities or regions or whole countries recover from devastating natural or man-made events.

But global emergencies come in other forms as well—including environmental emergencies such as oil or chemical spills or other similar occurrences. They may not have the immediate impact on people of homes destroyed in an earthquake or of crops lost to drought. But by polluting waterways, killing fish or other species, or contaminating the air, water, or land, environmental disasters can have devastating effects on the health and well-being of people, wildlife, and ecosystems.

So, wherever they occur, environmental emergencies have the potential to affect the national interest of the United States. And our government—including our military forces—should have the same ability to respond as in the case of other emergencies.

Current law authorizes the Department of Defense to use its funds for the transport of humanitarian relief, allowing U.S. military personnel to help provide foreign countries with emergency assistance such as helicopter transport, temporary water supplies, and road and bridge repair. For example, U.S. military personnel were part of the U.S. response to Hurricane Mitch in Central America and recent earthquakes in El Salvador and India.

But when it comes to environmental emergencies, under current law the military now has less ability to help. Those are the situations that are addressed by the bill I am introducing today.

The International Environmental Defense Act would fill a gap in current law so U.S. military transport could be used not only for humanitarian, but also for environmental emergencies. The bill does not require that this be done—but it would authorize the Defense Department to do so, just as current law authorizes but does not require the transport of humanitarian assistance to respond to other emergencies.

As an illustration of the limitations of the current law, consider a recent case about which I have first-hand knowledge.

In 2001, there was a very serious oil spill in the Pacific Ocean that threatened to contaminate the Galapagos Islands. The government of Ecuador and people everywhere were very concerned that this could imperil the world-famous wildlife of the islands and the rest of that unique ecosystem. They hastened to organize a response.

As part of that response, the Ecuadoran Government was in contact with a company in Colorado that makes a product to absorb oil from sea water. But complications arose, and the company contacted my office to see if we could help resolve them.

As we explored the situation, we learned that while the government of Ecuador was interested in acquiring the Colorado company's product, they also wanted to arrange for the United States to transport it to Ecuador by military aircraft, because that would be quicker and cheaper than other alternatives. But when we contacted the Defense Department to see if there was a possibility that could be arranged, we learned about the limitations of current law. In short, we learned that while military transport might be possible to provide humanitarian relief, that option was not available to respond to an environmental emergency.

The bill I am introducing today would change that—not by requiring the military to provide transport in such a case, but by providing that option in case the U.S. Government should decide it would be appropriate. Perhaps this would have been useful authority for the military to have when the Prestige broke up off the northwest coast of Spain in November 2002.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a far-reaching bill. But I think it would provide useful authority for our country to respond to environmental problems that, ultimately, can affect us and the rest of the world.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JANET
IRVINE

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize Janet Irvine of Fruita, Colorado. Through a program called Adopt-a-Platoon, Janet has adopted three platoons of our nation's soldiers in Afganistan that she corresponds with on a regular basis. Today, I would like to pay tribute to Janet's efforts and goodwill before this body of Congress and this nation.

The Adopt-a-Platoon program was first established in 1998 as a way for citizens to boost moral and show encouragement for American soldiers serving in Bosnia. Today, Adopt-a-Platoon is playing an integral role in boosting the morale of over 12,000 soldiers that are currently fighting the war on terrorism in Afganistan. Over the past year, Janet has become one of the organizations most loyal volunteers, mailing countless letters and baking innumerable batches of cookies to show her grateful appreciation for our soldiers serving abroad.

Although Janet dedicates much of her own personal time and energy toward supporting our nation's military, she has also encouraged others to assist in her efforts. The Fruita Monument High School's Interact Club and the students of Sue Chamberlain's and Marty Hardrick's classes at Shelby Elementary have also assisted in the effort, writing scores of letters showing their support and appreciation. The significance of her efforts have not gone unnoticed by the soldiers she writes to, and many have written back to express their personal gratitude.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great appreciation that I recognize Janet Irvine before this body of Congress and this nation. Janet's selfless support and encouragement of the men and women serving overseas in our nation's military is making a very personal contribution to our effort to rid the world of terrorism. Her commitment and dedication has served as an inspiration to us all, and it is an honor to represent such an outstanding American in this Congress. Keep up the good work, Janet.

INTRODUCING A RESOLUTION CONCERNING NATIONAL RUNAWAY PREVENTION MONTH

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce a resolution that recognizes the goals and ideals of National Runaway Prevention Month, which is sponsored by two organizations that work with runaway youth: the National Network for Youth and the National Runaway Switchboard.

This resolution will bring national attention to the important issue of runaway kids and remind parents of the importance of effectively communicating with their children. All of the conditions that lead young people to leave their homes are preventable when families are

strong and when young people can find the support they need.

Runaway situations among our nation's young people are a widespread problem. One out of every seven children and youth in the United States runs away from home at some time before the age of 18. Although some return home after a short time, others remain on the streets and never go home. Studies have shown that 1.3 million runaway youth are on the streets each day.

Because today's young people are tomorrow's adults, preventing youth from running away is a family, community and national priority. Our country needs an educated workforce, charismatic leaders and a stable society.

Each November, nationwide activities take place to increase public awareness of the life circumstances of at risk youth. This resolution will show that Congress supports those educational activities aimed at ensuring safe, healthy and productive youth. I am hopeful that recognition of this issue will prevent other young people from running away and stress the importance of families and communities.

EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT TAX
CUT ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Education Improvement Tax Cut Act. This act, a companion to my Family Education Freedom Act, takes a further step toward returning control over education resources to private citizens by providing a \$3,000 tax credit for donations to scholarship funds to enable low-income children to attend private schools. It also encourages private citizens to devote more of their resources to helping public schools, by providing a \$3,000 tax credit for cash or in-kind donations to public schools to support academic or extra curricular programs.

I need not remind my colleagues that education is one of the top priorities of the American people. After all, many members of Congress have proposed education reforms and a great deal of time is spent debating these proposals. However, most of these proposals either expand federal control over education or engage in the pseudo-federalism of block grants. Many proposals that claim to increase local control over education actually extend federal power by holding schools "accountable" to federal bureaucrats and politicians. Of course, schools should be held accountable for their results, but they should be held accountable to parents and school boards not to federal officials. Therefore, I propose we move in a different direction and embrace true federalism by returning control over the education dollar to the American people.

One of the major problems with centralized control over education funding is that spending priorities set by Washington-based Representatives, staffers, and bureaucrats do not necessarily match the needs of individual communities. In fact, it would be a miracle if spending priorities determined by the wishes of certain politically powerful representatives or the theories of Education Department functionaries match the priorities of every community in a

country as large and diverse as America. Block grants do not solve this problem as they simply allow states and localities to choose the means to reach federally-determined ends.

Returning control over the education dollar for tax credits for parents and for other concerned citizens returns control over both the means and ends of education policy to local communities. People in one community may use this credit to purchase computers, while children in another community may, at last, have access to a quality music program because of community leaders who took advantage of the tax credit contained in this bill.

Children in some communities may benefit most from the opportunity to attend private, parochial, or other religious schools. One of the most encouraging trends in education has been the establishment of private scholarship programs. These scholarship funds use voluntary contributions to open the doors of quality private schools to low-income children. By providing a tax credit for donations to these programs, Congress can widen the educational opportunities and increase the quality of education for all children. Furthermore, privately-funded scholarships raise none of the concerns of state entanglement raised by publicly-funded vouchers.

There is no doubt that Americans will always spend generously on education, the question is, "who should control the education dollar—politicians and bureaucrats or the American people?" Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in placing control of education back in the hands of citizens and local communities by sponsoring the Education Improvement Tax Cut Act.

INTRODUCTION OF FEDERAL LABORATORY EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS ACT OF 2003

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Federal Laboratory Educational Partners Act of 2003, a bill that would permit the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and other Department of Energy laboratories to use revenue from their inventions to support science education activities. The bill is cosponsored by my colleague from Colorado, Representative BOB BEAUPREZ. I greatly appreciate his support.

The Federal Laboratory Educational Partners Act would amend the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980. Under the Stevenson-Wydler Act, federal labs can use licensing royalties, sometimes called Bayh-Dole revenues, for five purposes. These include rewarding laboratories' scientific employees; furthering scientific exchange among laboratories; educating and training laboratories' employees consistent with the labs' research and development missions; covering expenses incidental to the laboratories' administration and licensing of intellectual property; and conducting scientific research and development, again consistent with the labs' research and development missions.

My bill would amend the fifth purpose to add educational assistance as another permitted use of licensing royalties.