

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Thank you.

OUR NATION'S SCHOOLS

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Mr. President, 2 years ago my colleagues, Senators KENNEDY, PELL, SIMON, WELLSTONE, and KERRY joined me in asking the General Accounting Office to study the condition of America's schools. Since then, the GAO has surveyed 10,000 schools in over 5,000 school districts. They have visited 41 schools and interviewed State officials responsible for school facilities in all 50 States. They have now written six reports documenting the condition of America's schools.

Today, Mr. President, I am pleased to present the final two reports in the series. The first, "America's Schools Report Differing Conditions," documents crumbling school facilities in every State, in every region of the country, in every type of community, and in every type of school serving every kind of American child. The second report, "Profiles of School Condition by State," presents all the information that the GAO has compiled on the condition of school facilities in each State, building conditions and readiness for computers, as well as State funding needs and the level of State support for school facilities.

Mr. President, these reports document a problem that transcends geographic and demographic boundaries. Crumbling schools is not just an inner-city problem, it is not just a problem for poor children or for minority children. Crumbling schools are everywhere. It is an American problem. And it relates directly to our future ability to maintain the quality of life that Americans expect.

I have charts here that paint the picture of the schools' conditions in the four regions of our country. In every region, the GAO reports that whole buildings are inadequate, that building features, like roofs, walls, and windows, are inadequate, and that the environment for learning, like the lighting, ventilation, and indoor air quality is inadequate.

In the Northeast, 30 percent of the schools report inadequate buildings, 59 percent report inadequate building features, and 57 percent report inadequate environmental conditions.

In the Midwest, 31 percent of the schools report inadequate buildings, 57 percent report inadequate building features, and 57 percent report inadequate environmental learning conditions.

In the South, 31 percent of the schools report inadequate buildings, 53 percent report inadequate building features, and 54 percent report inadequate environmental conditions.

And in the West, 38 percent of the schools report inadequate buildings, fully 64 percent report inadequate building features, and 68 percent report inadequate environmental conditions. Mr. President, crumbling schools span our country.

In the urban areas, 38 percent of the schools reported at least one inadequate building. In rural areas, it is 30 percent. In the suburbs, it is 29 percent. This problem is not just confined to urban, rural, or suburban schools. It is across the board. Inner city schools are in disrepair, but so are suburban schools, as well as rural schools.

My home State of Illinois is a microcosm of the Nation. We have Chicago, farmland, wealthy suburbs, and the poorest slums. Schools are crumbling across my State. Mr. President, 31 percent of Illinois schools report at least one inadequate building, 62 percent report at least one inadequate building feature, 70 percent report at least one inadequate environmental condition.

In Illinois' wealthier communities, schools are full of computers and are designed to meet every student's and teacher's needs. The situation is different in all too many other communities. There, computers sit idle because the electrical power to run them is not available, or because there is nowhere to put them, or no one who knows how to use them.

Five years ago, in his book, "Savage Inequalities," John Kozol described the unbelievable conditions of some of Illinois schools. He reported schools "full of sewer water," without playgrounds, science labs, or art teachers. He went to schools where the stench of urine permeated the halls. He wrote of schools that were, in his words, "extraordinarily unhappy places."

Today, Mr. President, the GAO reports that these conditions still exist, in all 50 States—in States that place a high priority on education, as well as those that do not.

I point out that these facility problems are not cosmetic. A study released last month found a direct correlation between crumbling schools and student achievement in the North Dakota schools. This study is the latest in a string of reports that consistently prove that students can't learn if their schools are falling down.

When we send our children to crumbling schools, we subtract from their opportunities. A generation ago, a college graduate earned about twice as much as a high school dropout. Today, the ratio is nearly 3 to 1.

The income gap between educated Americans and uneducated Americans is growing. Gone are the days when strength and hard work were enough to raise a family. In the information age, education is a prerequisite to employment. A good education has become a form of currency that buys quality of life. According to the Department of Labor, by the year 2000, half of all new jobs will require an education beyond high school.

When we send our children to crumbling schools, we subtract from America's opportunities. Education benefits the Nation as much as it benefits the individual.

When students do not learn, we all contribute to the costs of remedial edu-

cation. We pay for government-sponsored health care, welfare, child care, job training. We pay for crime prevention to house millions of prisoners, more than 80 percent of whom are high school dropouts.

Every year the Federal Government spends nearly half a trillion dollars on antipoverty, crime prevention, and health care programs.

Investing in education would save much of these costs and much of this money. Yet we have neglected the needs of our elementary and secondary schools, and it has shown up in our children's test scores. It affects their ability to concentrate and to learn and to receive the kind of education they need to keep America competitive in the 21st century.

The time has come for a new school facilities paradigm. Local school districts are simply overwhelmed. The local tax base often cannot itself keep up with routine maintenance costs—let alone the costs of upgrading schools for 21st century learning, or to ease overcrowding. Of course, local bonds issues fail regularly.

State governments, the GAO reports, are not fixing the problem. In 1994, they spent only \$3.5 billion all told—a far cry from the \$112 billion need that the GAO has documented.

I believe that the time has come for a partnership between all levels of government. The national interest compels us to support elementary and secondary educational opportunities on a consistent national basis, and in ways that do not interfere with local control of education.

Just as the Federal Government pays for the Interstate Highway System, but the construction decisions are made at the State and local levels, the Federal Government can support education infrastructure without getting involved in the kinds of decisions that belong at the State and local levels.

I have sent every Senator and Governor the GAO results for their State and for the country. I welcome their input. It is time for us to open a dialog about this issue because I believe that together we can address this problem and we can fix our schools.

When America was faced with a challenge of adapting to the industrial age, we did, and we emerged as the world's economic, military, and intellectual leader. Now, we are moving into the information age. We have to adapt again. Investment in the infrastructure needed to support the technological change the world has witnessed is an inefficient and appropriate place to start.

These reports today complete the first comprehensive school facility survey in over 30 years and the most exhaustive study ever. Their work provides the foundation for the new kind of Federal, State, and local partnership that we need to make our schools work for the 21st century.

Mr. President, crumbling schools is a ticking time bomb. In this global economy, in the information age, we should

be able to devote some small measure of our national resources to prepare our children with a chance to learn.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, the Nation's schools are facing enormous problems of physical decay. According to two GAO reports released today, "School Facilities: America's Schools Report Differing Conditions" and "School Facilities: Profiles of School Condition by State," 14 million of the Nation's children in one-third of our schools are learning in substandard school buildings. About half of the schools have at least one unsatisfactory environmental condition, such as poor air quality.

Massachusetts is no exception—Forty-one percent of Massachusetts schools report that at least one of their buildings needs extensive repair or should be replaced; 75-percent report having at least one inadequate building feature, such as a plumbing or heating problem, and 80 percent have at least one unsatisfactory environmental factor.

It is difficult to teach or learn in dilapidated classrooms. Student enrollments will reach an all-time high next year and continue to rise. By this fall, 51.7 million students will be enrolled in elementary and secondary schools—surpassing the previous record of 51.3 million in 1971, and enrollment will increase to 54.1 million by 2002. We cannot tolerate a situation in which facilities deteriorate while enrollments escalate.

GAO estimates that American schools would need \$112 billion just to repair their facilities. Yet the Republican budget cuts education by \$25 billion, or 20 percent in real terms, over the next 6 years, with no provision at all for maintaining or upgrading facilities. In the Republican appropriations bill scheduled for consideration in the House this week, Federal aid to Massachusetts schools would be cut by almost \$40 million next year, compared to the President's budget.

Obviously, the Federal Government cannot meet all the needs of all the Nation's schools. But education is a national priority and a national investment. Clearly, Congress should not be slashing aid to schools when their needs are so vast.

LICKING VALLEY GIRL SCOUT COUNCIL GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARDS

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I want to draw special attention today to six young women from northern Kentucky. These six young women from the Licking Valley Girl Scout Council are recipients of the Girl Scout Gold Award—the highest achievement a Girl Scout can earn. Each one has demonstrated outstanding achievements in the area of leadership, community service, career planning and personal development.

Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. serves over 2.5 million girls and has awarded more

than 20,000 Girl Scout Gold Awards to Senior Girl Scouts since the inception of the program in 1980. Recipients of the award have not only earned patches for the Senior Girl Scout Leadership Award, the Senior Girl Scout Challenge, and the Career Exploration Pin, but also designed and implemented a Girl Scout Gold Award project.

But perhaps most importantly, these six Gold Award recipients have made a commitment to community that should not go unrecognized.

Jacqui Meier, Julie Ann Greis, Angela Schierberg, Christina Teeters, Christie DeMoss, and Mindy Hiles have put an extraordinary amount of work into earning these awards, and in the process have received the community's and the Commonwealth's respect and admiration for their dedication and commitment.

For 85 years, the Girl Scouts have provided "an informal educational program to inspire girls with the highest ideals of character, conduct, patriotism, and service so they will become resourceful, responsible citizens." The Licking Valley Girl Scouts alone serve over 5,000 girl and adult members.

Mr. President, I know my colleagues share my enthusiasm and admiration for the Girl Scouts' commitment to excellence. And, I know you will agree with my belief that this award is just the beginning of a long list of accomplishments and successes from these six Girl Scouts.

COMMENDING INDIVIDUALS WHO HELPED RESOLVE FREEMEN STANDOFF

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to commend to the Senate some valiant individuals who demonstrated courage, patience, and understanding while working to end the standoff between the Government and the so-called Freemen.

We in Montana are not accustomed to the national spotlight. We are content to mind our own business. But we have received a great deal of publicity the last 2½ months for the standoff of the so-called Freemen.

The standoff took a long time, and was never without a serious threat of danger. Everyone involved with bringing these fugitives to justice deserves our respect.

First off, I would like to applaud two individuals who dealt with the situation years before the national media took an interest in the Freemen. Charles Phipps, Garfield County sheriff, and Nick Murnion, Garfield County attorney, had to endure death threats, imminent peril and, finally, intense media scrutiny. Through it all, they handled themselves and their jobs with calm rational professionalism and great courage.

I would also like to thank several Federal officials who were instrumental in bringing this confrontation to a peaceful resolution. Sherry Matteucci,

U.S. attorney and Jim Seykora, assistant U.S. attorney. And working for the Federal Bureau of Investigation were: Weldon Kennedy, Robert Bryant, Robert Blitzer, Thomas Kubic, Robin Montgomery, James Cleaver and Thomas Canady. These people's dedicated service can best be seen in the final peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Their work on this case is a textbook example of how to get the job done right. I salute these individuals who gave and risked a lot to see that the Freemen were brought to justice without the loss of life.

And finally, I would like to thank the people who have been patient for over 2 years. They have exhibited a shining example to the rest of the country, and they welcomed the influx of law enforcement officials with open arms. These people are the residents of Jordan, MT, and the surrounding area. They are regular Montanans. I had the chance to visit with many of them. They were not particularly happy about all the fuss they were getting, but they knew that it would eventually pass. Without their patience and resolve, we could not be enjoying the results that we do today.

Now that the standoff is over, life in eastern Montana will return pretty much to normal. Folks can go back to the lives they have come to miss over the past few months. But as we do so, it is important that we learn from this experience. And due to the efforts of the individuals I named, my State, our country, is a little better and a little wiser.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I think so often of that November evening long ago, in 1972, when the television networks reported that I had won the Senate race in North Carolina. It was 9:17 in the evening and I recall how stunned I was.

I had never really anticipated that I would be the first Republican in history to be elected to the U.S. Senate by the people of North Carolina. When I got over that, I made a commitment to myself that I would never fail to see a young person, or a group of young people, who wanted to see me.

I have kept that commitment and it has proved enormously meaningful to me because I have been inspired by the estimated 60,000 young people with whom I have visited during the 23 years I have been in the Senate.

A large percentage of them are greatly concerned about the total Federal debt which back in February exceeded \$5 trillion for the first time in history. Congress created this monstrous debt which coming generations will have to pay.

Mr. President, the young people who visit with me almost always are inclined to discuss the fact that under the U.S. Constitution, no President can spend a dime of Federal money that