

But my mind wanders back out here to Washington, and I could not help but think what these issues mean to that baby that was sitting on Sue's lap, where we have already borrowed \$20,000. We, our generation, has borrowed \$20,000 that we are going to pass on to that baby.

That is not right and it is not fair. This issue is not just about numbers and budget. It is a moral issue. How can we as a Nation, how can we as a generation, possibly justify that we are taking that child's money, that poor old baby sitting on my wife's lap, how can we justify taking that baby's money and spending it on our programs today, and how can we justify saying we are balancing the budget by taking \$104 billion out of the Social Security Trust Fund knowing full well that what that means is that when that baby reaches the work force, when it is time for that baby to have the opportunity to live the American dream, to have a chance at the American dream, that young child—what we are doing is we are saddling them with a situation where the Government is going to demand even more in taxes before they get to spend money on their children. It is just not an acceptable way to go.

I just conclude today by urging our colleagues to join us in supporting the Social Security Preservation Act. I would reach across the aisle, encourage our Democrat colleagues to join us on this bill. This is not a partisan issue. Preserving and protecting the Social Security system should be something that both Republicans and Democrats are very interested in, and I look forward to working with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

#### CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. I thank the Speaker very much for his kindness and I rise today to speak about children. Sorry my colleagues have left the floor of the House, and I appreciate their comments about a very important issue, and that is creating opportunities for our children. And might I say that although I will be speaking today about technology and joined by many of my colleagues, I would appreciate a slight bit of deference to just acknowledge that there is a disagreement when it comes to the balanced budget amendment.

We all want to get to the same place, and that is to balance the budget. I must add that in protecting Social Security I would bring attention to the gentleman's comments that when you include Social Security in the balanced budget amendment you then prohibit and inhibit the flowing of Social Security checks to our seniors throughout

this Nation if they then have to face the burden of the balanced budget on their backs.

So I know we will have a vigorous debate, we want to have a future for this Nation, and I think it is key that we recognize that we might have different perspectives, and clearly I think we should exempt Social Security from that so that we can have an upright and a fair discussion on this issue and, in fact, preserve a future for our children.

Having said that, I am gratified today for the reason that I have come, and that is to capture the spirit of the President's message, but the work of so many of my colleagues and myself acknowledging the importance of the access of the Internet to all of our children. So I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to introduce a sense of the Congress resolution regarding the outstanding achievements of NetDay, the NetDay organization.

I, along with many Members of the House, have become acquainted with the NetDay organization through the activity generated in our home congressional districts by grassroots NetDay projects. I was proud to have had the honor of joining fellow Houstonians in the kickoff of the ceremony for the Houston independent school district's NetDay '96. I was happy to serve as the honorary chair for that event and under the leadership of our superintendent and our assistant superintendent for technology, the superintendent being Ron Page, the assistant superintendent being Dara Ann Burrow, and many volunteers, we can claim it as a success.

Albeit a success in many of our districts, we realize that we are just beginning, and so as a member of the Telecommunications Conference Committee, the Reform Act of 1996 which the 104th Congress passed, I am proud that my colleagues join together to insist that there must be universal telecommunications access to every school and library and classroom in this Nation.

Fortunately, for HISD, because of our program, 79,975 students now have Internet access in the elementary, junior, and high school. I say that it is still not enough. This was accomplished with the assistance of 652 volunteers who contributed their time to the neighborhood schools. The efforts of sponsored volunteers, students, teachers, and HISD personnel saved the Houston independent school district \$28,000. With our school district's decision to hold NetDay '96 connection projects for each Saturday in the month of October, they ensure that every targeted school within minority and majority communities received an equal opportunity to have their neighborhood school library receive the necessary wiring for Internet access. With the entire Houston community support, we can reach the goal of universal access for all of Houston's children by the year 2000.

But we must go further than that, and we come to this Congress to go beyond our respective constituencies and localized communities. We must work toward universal access to the Internet. We must be vigilant in our efforts to promote software and hardware innovations. When I talk to my teachers, they emphasize that the infrastructure is so very important that they need the software. We must not forget that. We must have our children accessing material that is valuable and valued. I have learned that there are a number of software and hardware technologies which if employed will also block the ability of our young users to access Web sites that may not be appropriate for them.

In addition, the use of network systems by school districts can also provide protection for the Internet's youngest and most valid users. We in Congress must work to provide these important protective features to users of the national information infrastructure as educators work to assist us in guiding our children successfully toward the 21st century job marketplace.

That is where the work will be. Silicon Valley will not be Silicon Valley. It will probably be Silicon Nation. And I believe that we should not cease from searching for additional innovative ways to protect our children as we also work to provide them with the much needed skills for today and tomorrow. It is a fact that by the close of this century 60 percent of the new jobs will require computer skills that are currently held now by only 20 percent of our population. The work we do today will pay off for our children.

From Alabama to Wyoming, the NetDay organization has many places they can call home. In the State of Alaska the Anchorage school district reports that 70 percent of Alaska's students wired several schools as part of NetDay. In the State of California, the launching site for the entire NetDay effort, over 75,000 volunteers wired over 3,500 schools last fall.

The call that I raise up today and the call that I hope is heard: Are you listening throughout the Nation and can we do any less? Well, in the State of Texas a hundred schools were wired. Most of them were in the city of Houston. We obviously need more activity in the entire State of Texas as well as all over America.

It is evident from our first NetDay year that States have gone at varying degrees of success in their NetDay efforts. We still have a lot of work to do before every school is connected to the Internet. As a parent and a Member of Congress, I will continue to work toward a safe and secure Internet environment in which we can provide educational opportunities for our children.

That means, and we must get a little direct here, I do not think any of us would claim any opposition to the first amendment. I hold myself out as someone who vigorously defends the freedom of speech, but I can assure you I

will go a long way to working toward ensuring that we deny the proponents of pornography and obscenity the access to our children who are using the Internet.

I believe this important resolution that I offer today, hopefully as my colleagues have joined me in cosponsoring it, will go a long way in communicating the important role that NetDay plays in our Nation. This NetDay organization is promoting friendship and cooperation. It is certainly promoting the opportunity for all of us to work together.

□ 1545

It is important as well that we provide access to the superhighway. As we do that, it will be good that we as Members of the House of Representatives can show wholehearted support for the NetDay organization which has provided and should provide access for all children, rural, suburban and urban, regardless of whether they are poor or well off.

Yes, NetDay has proven it is possible to be inclusive when implementing public and private partnerships of this magnitude. I would like to thank my colleagues who signed on as original cosponsors of this resolution, and I thank you for your commitment to our Nation's children and I look forward to your great participation in what we do further.

Besides applauding and congratulating those who have participated in NetDay, emphasizing the grassroots aspects of providing elementary children and middle-school children with access to our computers, with applauding those who have given labor and materials and resources, and encouraging parents to be part of this, we also resolve in this resolution to do several things. That is, of course, to congratulate the organizers and sponsors and coordinators and volunteers of NetDay.

Also, NetDay should be used as a positive model for communities throughout the Nation. NetDay should continue to be used to assist students and parents and teachers across the Nation so that the Nation's children may be ready to obtain the benefits of computer networks and the Internet. We are resolving to strengthen their education and begin careers with more skills and opportunities, thus enabling them to compete more successfully in the global market. And then we resolve that businesses, unions, parents, teachers and school employees throughout the country should consider organizing NetDay activities to provide similar opportunities for the children in their communities.

The House of Representatives supports NetDay's commitment by way of providing the Nation's elementary and secondary schools with the technology, the technological infrastructure needed to help the Nation's children succeed.

Interestingly enough, we captured the spirit of the President's remarks,

but I will applaud him for acknowledging last evening that we must bring the power of the information age into all our schools. He said, last year I challenged America to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000 so that for the first time in history a child in the most isolated, rural town, the most comfortable suburb, the poorest inner city school, will have the same access to the same universe of knowledge. I ask you to support and complete this historic mission.

I am very gratified, Mr. Speaker, that there are those who have worked long years in this area and certainly come from communities where technology is a key element of their representation.

So I have been joined on the floor today by my colleague on the Committee on Science, the gentlewoman from Maryland [Mrs. MORELLA], who has served very ably in trying to network herself and provide the kind of synergism and energy in generating the technological infrastructure that we need not only for our children but for all Americans, but I am gratified that she knows that the emphasis of accessing the Internet on behalf of our children is a key responsibility that we have in the U.S. Congress.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Maryland [Mrs. MORELLA].

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for yielding, for arranging this special order, and for sponsoring this very important sense of Congress resolution to recognize the outstanding achievements of NetDay.

Mr. Speaker, every child in America deserves equal access to a quality education. Providing this access can be a real challenge in the midst of tight budgets, especially in small, rural and poor inner city schools. Every child and every school across the country must be afforded the opportunity to take advantage of everything the information highway has to offer.

Now, during the last Congress, I worked to include in the Telecommunications Act language that would provide schools, libraries, and rural health care facilities with affordable access to the Internet. The Federal, State, local joint board which was set up by the Federal Communications Commission has already recommended substantial discounts for public and nonprofit schools.

In conjunction with our work in Congress, thousands of volunteers also have joined together to wire our Nation's public schools to the Internet. NetDay is an exciting grassroots effort to ensure that all of our schools have access to the Internet.

Most schools just simply cannot afford advanced telecommunications services. Last year, less than 3 percent of classrooms in the United States had access to the Internet. By making access to schools affordable, and through the efforts of thousands of individuals

and dozens of corporations, schools all over the United States are being afforded the opportunity to become wired to the Internet. In our great Nation so rich in information, we can no longer rely on the skills of the industrial age.

Telecommunications will excite young minds and provide all children access to the same rich learning resources, regardless of where they live. Telecommunications can help us provide a level playing field for all Americans to utilize the information superhighway. Through NetDay, volunteers are ensuring that the emerging telecommunications revolutions do not leave our critical public institutions, our private and nonprofit schools, behind.

I applaud the outstanding achievements of NetDay and the tireless work of our Nation's volunteers. Wiring our schools to the Internet is in the Nation's best interest and will bring equity to our educational system. Well educated and highly skilled individuals are the major resource of any modern society, and NetDay efforts in our Nation's communities will provide all Americans with skills that they need and the opportunities that they deserve to achieve their fullest potential through a quality education.

This Friday, February 7, is the first anniversary of the signing of the Telecommunications Act, and there will be a press conference to announce that NetDay will be held on April 19. I encourage everyone to join the NetDay volunteer effort and help ensure that our Nation's schools are wired. My State of Maryland will be so involved, and I will, and I hope that all Americans will in some way be connected with the access to the Internet.

Again, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Texas, not only for this special order and the resolution, but her commitment, through her terms in Congress, and I hope she will stay on the Committee on Science. We have not totally organized, so I am not sure, because she has always been very valuable on that.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the gentlewoman, and may I inquire of the gentlewoman, just a very brief inquiry. It is, I think, worthwhile as we have this opportunity to present this special order, that though we acknowledge it in friendly terms that we are both at least now and with party affiliation on opposite sides of the aisle. But I think it is very important that this is acknowledged as a bipartisan effort to really prepare us.

We have all set bridges and visions for the 21st century, and I am sure we are all committed. But what does that actually mean? And as we fast approach or speed down the superhighway, I think it is important, and of course balanced budget amendments or balanced budget, that we recognize that when people are productive and working, that is half the battle of the economy. This access to the Internet, this learning process, and I guess I inquire of you, is so key to preparing us

to be steady and strong in the 21st century.

Mrs. MORELLA. There is just no doubt about it. We also know that 6 out of every 10 new jobs that will be created as we enter the new millennium are going to involve technology and are going to involve the importance of knowing something about Internet. We also know that our children, from first grade on, know how to use a computer. Now, why should they all not have access to this information? It is a library in their school, it is a library in their own home, in the club house; it is critically important that they have these skills. So again, I applaud you, and of course it is bipartisan. Everybody should agree with it.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank you for your kind words but also for your leadership.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you certainly an esteemed Member of the freshman class, the gentleman from Memphis, TN [Mr. FORD], who probably more than anyone, knows the value, having sped fast along the superhighway himself of technology, of the importance of sharing this very important tool to our whole Nation.

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to join the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] in this effort to commend those who have participated in this NetDay 1996 and to congratulate those for helping to build that bridge to the 21st century.

As a Member of Congress especially dedicated to youth and one that serves on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, NetDay 1996 cannot have a more committed advocate than me. Let me first, though, take this opportunity to thank our President for the extraordinary challenge that he issued to all of America, including Democrats and Republicans in this Chamber, last night.

I was particularly excited to hear his emphasis on education and his calling to all Americans, including all in this Chamber again, Mr. Speaker, a call to action, to respond to the needs of our young people to help prepare for better and brighter tomorrow.

NetDay 1996 is this Nation's challenge to participate in the success of our youth's lives. Every parent, teacher, clergy member, neighbor, business leader, business employee, computer systems administrator, every single member of society can participate and take on the community responsibility to positively affect children's lives.

In 1996, Mr. Speaker, 100,000 NetDay volunteers installed wiring infrastructure to connect 25,000 elementary and secondary schools to the information superhighway. Parity and access to the Internet is fundamental to realize the true benefit of the information superhighway.

That is why I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, for we demonstrated the courage and the wisdom

in this Chamber to reform welfare. I would hope that we could exhibit that same courage, wisdom, decency, and show the same temerity in empowering our teachers and classrooms to prepare our children for the future.

In that vein, let me applaud the success of the two Illinois students and their classmates and teachers, brought to our attention last evening during the State of the Union Message, for they are examples of excellence that should be admired and replicated throughout this Nation.

In that vein, let me also speak in support of establishing national standards, not to create another level of Federal bureaucracy or additional levels of bureaucracy, Mr. Speaker, but to make and understand that education is as important a national security issue as any issue that we confront here in this Congress. The syndrome of inferiority and shortcoming that has beset many of our Nation's schools, let us pledge here in this Chamber, let us pledge today to responding to the call of action that the President issued last night that we will transform that syndrome into an atmosphere and environment of success, to expectations of success for our young people.

As I close, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas and thank the cosponsors of this NetDay legislation. For there is no more important issue to America's competitiveness as we move into this next century, Mr. Speaker, than ensuring that every young person is afforded the opportunity, affording the best opportunity to be exposed to the quality education that we here in America can afford.

In that vein, I challenge every citizen to become a part of this effort. No school should be without its own assembly of volunteers from every hill and every hamlet. We must afford our children an opportunity to be first in the world. Mr. Speaker, this is the call to action and this young Member from Tennessee is ready to respond.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Tennessee for a clarion call. Clearly, for this to be a movement in the U.S. Congress, leaders like HAROLD FORD are going to have to be right in the mix. And clearly for this to be both accepted and acceptable, we are going to have to reach across the barriers and the divides of our rural and urban centers of our southern cities and northern cities, of our communities that may be called barrios or may be called ghettos, or may be just called places for people to live.

So I accept the challenge certainly and hope that when we begin to talk about issues of balancing the budget, that there will be priorities, and that is why the balanced budget discussion cannot be done in a vacuum. This message this afternoon on the Internet is as much about that issue as it is about making sure our children have access to the Internet.

□ 1600

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the honorable gentlewoman from Michigan DEBBIE STABENOW, whose State certainly has received a great economic boon from an original technology: the automobile.

I am very gratified that even with the importance of her obligations to her own immediate industry and technology dealing with the people mover, if you will, she is committed to science and technology as a member of the Committee on Science.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, I thank so much the gentlewoman from Texas for yielding to me on this important subject, and also for her excellent work on behalf of children, in promoting education on behalf of children.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievements of NetDay, and to endorse the resolution presented by the distinguished Member from the State of Texas. Like my colleagues, I am committed to seeing that our schools and libraries are equipped with the tools that our children need for the 21st century. Today, that means access to computers and access to the Internet.

As I have frequently said at home in the great State of Michigan, there is more computer power today in the average gas station than the average classroom, and that must change if our children are to succeed in the world economy.

Unfortunately, too many schools and too many libraries do not have the basic infrastructure necessary to link themselves to the information superhighway. All too often the cost of wiring our public schools and libraries is prohibitive, given the limited fiscal resources available to the States and local governments.

For example, it has been estimated that it would cost more than \$1,000 per classroom to install the basic wiring needed to access the Internet, in addition to the costs of purchasing computers and printers and software, which is also estimated to be in the nature of thousands of dollars per classroom.

Mr. Speaker, we simply cannot wait 20 years to provide the infrastructure and the basic level of technology that our children need to be successful. The founders of NetDay recognize this critical need, and I salute them. They also recognize that government alone cannot fulfill the objective, and in fact we must challenge our communities, the private sector, the universities, the labor unions, parents. All of us, working together, must come together in order to make sure our children have what they need in our schools.

NetDay is a model example of the public-private sector partnership that this administration spoke of and that I wholeheartedly endorse and am working on behalf of. Already I am in discussions in Michigan, in the Eighth District, with our private sector community, with our universities, parents,

local schools, so we too can have our children benefit from those activities that have been created by NetDay. I am excited about this adventure, and I pledge to act as a catalyst in my communities in the Eighth District in Michigan on behalf of the children in the Eighth District and on behalf of the children in the Nation.

I encourage my colleagues and my constituents to join myself, to join the leadership here today in supporting NetDay 1997.

I appreciate very much the opportunity to address the House on this matter. I thank the gentlewoman again for allowing me to participate today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Michigan, and I am gratified that she will be setting the wheels moving in Michigan in helping her students.

Something that I had mentioned, and I applaud the gentlewoman again, this is not going to be easy. Our businesses that are prosperous, that may not be geared toward computer business directly, are really going to have to be part of providing the resources and assisting us in making good on our pledge.

Let me acknowledge locally a relationship that I am sure the gentlewoman is working on where our local Bell Co. has provided lower rates for teachers to surf the Internet for up to 100 hours a month. One of the key points is that our teachers must likewise have the training to be able to train the youngsters, and I have seen as much joy in our teachers who have now become computer literate or excited or have access, and then in their ability to teach. We must not leave that partnership out between child or student and teacher. I hope our business leaders will join you, as you have asked them to, in helping you promote this effort.

Mr. Speaker, let me acknowledge as well another leader in this area. That is NetDay cofounder, Mr. Michael Kauffman. We appreciate the effort that he is engaged in, along with Mr. John Gage, cofounders of NetDay. They obviously had an idea that would set a spinning wheel, a light spreading out across the Nation, and we are gratified now to applaud them here in Congress, but also to send out their reach even further than they might have expected.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Maryland Mr. ELIJAH CUMMINGS, coming from Baltimore in the State of Maryland and also the State legislature, is an avid promoter of issues dealing with youth and children in his legislative record; but coming from a State that has a strong technological history and also a strong historic relationship with the Federal Government, I am gratified with his commitment to educating the inner city child, who if we abandon and leave by the wayside, ravaging around the edges of technology, we are not doing the job of creating opportunity for all Americans. The gentleman from Maryland, ELIJAH

CUMMINGS, has already made good on that promise to help the least of the children in our community.

I yield to the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. ELIJAH CUMMINGS.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I thank the gentlewoman from Texas and I commend her on her hard work and leadership on this as a member of the Committee on Science and the conference committee on the Telecommunications Reform Act of 1996.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the outstanding achievements of the NetDay project. This past October during NetDay East, over 140 schools were wired in my home district of Baltimore City alone. A second phase to be wired is planned for the spring of this year.

We must bring the 21st century into every classroom in America. Technological literacy is essential to succeed in the new economy. We must provide all students access to a computer, good software, and trained teachers. I encourage local businesses, public organizations, educational institutions, parents, teachers, and community members to participate in this effort by volunteering to help link our schools to the information highway, place computer equipment in classrooms, and provide training.

With 40 million people currently using the Internet and 100 million users expected by 1998, the time has come to avail our schools of this very valuable resource. We need to come together as a Nation and focus on the development of our children and communities. I want to stress the importance of equipping our children with the tools to compete successfully in the 21st century.

As we near the beginning of the 21st century, a knowledge-based economy is emerging, what many people call the new economy. The fastest growing industries, both domestically and globally, include microelectronics, telecommunications, computers, and biotechnology. In the 1950's, three out of every four Americans had manufacturing jobs. Today, fewer than 1 in 6 do. Recent studies show that the rates of return for industries that invest in knowledge and skill are more than twice those of industries that concentrate on plant and equipment.

Perhaps the most important transformation brought by the new economy is the changing nature of work for Americans. We now live and work in a knowledge-based economy where we succeed because of what we know, what we create, how we manage information, and how we organize ourselves to deliver it.

By the end of the decade, 60 percent of our Nation's jobs will require skills that only 20 percent of the existing U.S. population has. Many of these will be technologically based. Our new concern is not unemployment, but unemployability. With the ability to make goods and process information, white students, but only 39 percent of

African-American students, use computers in school. African-American students also have less access to computers at home, 36 percent of white students are in families that own computers, while only 15 percent of African-American students have access to home computers.

Make no mistake, technology alone is not the panacea for all of our educational system's ills, but technology is a valuable tool which, when combined with a good curriculum and good teachers, can improve our children's education. The continuing leadership and initiative must come from local communities, cities, school boards, and the private and nonprofit sectors, and it is critical that the African-American community get involved. African-Americans need to recognize the importance of using these technologies to improve education, as well as to equip students with the necessary skills to perform tomorrow's jobs.

African-Americans, historically concentrated in agriculture, personal service, and blue collar occupations, are now disproportionately displaced in the emerging Information Age. The good news is that a few African-American entrepreneurs are taking advantage of telecom and information technologies. But there is still very little computer software geared to minorities. There are still relatively few minority firms with a presence on the World Wide Web.

I cannot overstate the importance of exposing our young people, especially those living in traditionally underserved areas, to such technologies as the Internet, which open a whole new world for them which may inspire learning.

In order for the NetDay project to be fully successful, it is imperative that minority and rural communities are involved. Now is the time to commit to helping underserved minority schools. The longer we wait, the wider the gap between these kids and the kids who are technology-fluent expands. I want to thank the gentlewoman again for her leadership.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, and particularly Baltimore, really for his strong emphasis about being frank about many of our children living in inner city America, particularly our African-American children who would not be able to access this new technology beyond that access opportunity from adults and family members and leaders of their community.

This raises the question of the challenge that I started out with. This message is about children and technology, but it is also about balancing the budget and priorities. Interestingly enough, in fiscal year 1996 I offered an amendment to increase the funding of the National Telecommunication Information Administration to provide more dollars for access to the Internet to our rural and urban centers. We did not find

enough commitment, if you will, to realize the importance of ensuring that effort at that time.

I will again be raising the issue of ensuring that there is sufficient funding, but I recognize and applaud, as I have come to do today, the private sector's involvement in making sure that we have access. It is important as we do that, that we include not only those so actively involved that I applaud from the majority community, but Asians and Hispanics and African-Americans.

So I have committed, as I did last year, to continue to put together presentations on how to capture the 21st century marketplace through the Internet, and emphasize the value of minority entrepreneurs and women being some of the providers of this technology. It is all about interlocking. It is all about building on partnerships. As I close my remarks at this time, it is about welfare reform.

How joyous have I seen welfare reform participants, or those who will have to be part of welfare reform, when they have gone through a computer class and have become computer literate and are ready to go out in entry-level positions as a data entry clerk; or, might I say, as the President called last evening for a national crusade for education standards, maybe, I say to the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] we will be testing our children on computers. Therefore, if we are doing that, far be it from us to deny the opportunity to those children to be able to not only test educationally, but as well to ensure that they know how to access the tool upon which they will be tested.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. (Mr. COBLE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas? There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I started with the President's remarks before I introduced the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] because I wanted to ask him, paradoxically, was he involved in the articulation and certainly the creating of that call, the national crusade for educational standards.

The gentleman from New York, MAJOR OWENS, who is an original cosponsor of this resolution that I offered today, is a graduate of Morehouse College and Atlanta University, but he comes to us as a librarian. I imagine he has pored over many pages and recognizes what technology can do for learning.

More importantly, I have watched the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] speak eloquently and without rest on the issue of educating children, on the issue of providing education, on the issue of providing education for providing opportunity.

□ 1445

This resolution that I will file today is only the beginning of action items for funding, for partnership, for prevention of pornography and obscenity, for access by children, all legislative agenda items that we will have to submit to. But the key element that Congressman OWENS brings to this discussion today is his unabiding and overwhelming commitment to education.

I am delighted, and I yield to the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] on this matter and on the question of education.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas and congratulate her on the vision she has demonstrated by having this, by putting forward this resolution and having this special order to alert us to the fact that this resolution on NetDay needs our support. The gentlewoman from Texas is very much on target. This, of course, is a vital component of the education effort that must go forward, and I sat here, just as she did last night, and was quite moved by the President's speech, certainly the part about education, and was certainly moved by the fact that when he spoke about a bipartisan approach to education, there was thunderous applause here on the floor and everybody got up on both sides. We can look forward to a very productive 105th Congress in terms of education.

We must congratulate ourselves, those of us who insisted for the last 2 years that the Congress of the United States listen to the commonsense of the American people. They said over and over again that we want education to be a high priority. There were people who would not listen in the last Congress for a long time. They came here and they insisted that, first of all, we might consider eliminating the Department of Education, just wipe it out. Then they talked about massive cuts in Federal aid to education. I think in 1995, the appropriations bill, there were proposals to cut almost \$4 billion from the Federal education budget. We did a turnaround and moved from that low point of proposing a cut of almost \$4 billion to the appropriations bill of 1996, where the majority Republicans in this House proposed, and I congratulate them, a \$4 billion increase. It was almost a \$4 billion increase. I congratulate the majority. I congratulate Congressman GOODLING, who is head of the education committee and certainly played a major role in that. The children of America will benefit.

Let us lay aside partisan considerations. It helped the Republicans to win the election. We will talk about that at a later date. They were brilliant in their understanding, finally, that commonsense dictated that the Congress Members take a strong position on education.

I hope that that brilliance will endure and go on. The spirit of NetDay, as a part of whatever we do on education, the spirit of NetDay must be kept alive. The spirit of NetDay is par-

tially a spirit of volunteerism. It is also a spirit of understanding the role of telecommunications and modern education technology in our educational system.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me appropriately, as the gentleman has done, applaud the President for being pronounced and enunciating very clearly the message of education as well, and I keep coming back to this theme because I can assure you that will you be on the floor of the House over these next 2 years, as you have been in the past, trying to prioritize and convince people that balancing the budget is important but that it is absolutely imperative that we invest in children and in education.

I say this because I do not want NetDay to be taken away from, though I applaud the private sector involvement that will encourage it, that we will have to make hard decisions. I hope we are not giving lip service, far be it from me to claim that of any of my colleagues, but that we realize that though we will not be reckless in spending money, there will have to be some shifting of funds and it is worthy of us to do so to create the work force, of which then we will not have to claim that they are on welfare, they are unemployable or underemployed. I hope people are listening to say, they have something here today. If they educate, they will prevent them from the trials and tribulations that many have passed through in years past.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman is very much on target. All of these things are inextricably interwoven. You cannot have education go forward unless you have a commitment from the Federal Government through the budget and the appropriations process. I just wanted to talk for a minute about what I mean when I say the spirit of NetDay must go forward. There are some States that have not had their NetDay yet.

In New York State, we had NetDay on September 21. I think it was a little premature. And I want to say to the people who were in charge of NetDay that it was basically a failure for New York City. I congratulate all the Governors across the country who have assumed responsibility and become very active and become the drum majors for the NetDay effort, but the Governor of New York announced that 3,000 schools were wired in New York State. I went looking for the schools in my district, which is a district that has 70 elementary and secondary schools and 10 high schools. I could not find but one school that had been wired on that day.

I said maybe it just passed over us and the rest of New York City, which has more than 1,000 schools. New York City has more than 1,000 schools, and I looked for schools that had been wired on NetDay in New York City and we found less than 25 that had really been wired. Wiring in NetDay terminology is

the wiring of 5 classrooms plus the library of the school. That is the definition of wiring. It did not take place in even 25 schools in all of New York City.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that I address this same issue in another part of the House, and at this time I will yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS]. He will continue commenting.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COBLE). The Chair cannot recognize with that request. The gentleman from New York can request a 5-minute special order on his own time.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, is this some new rule for 1997 because in the past we have done this?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That has been the practice for a long, long time.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, it has been done regularly on the floor of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will rule that the gentleman from New York may be recognized for 5 minutes on his own time if he requests unanimous consent to do that.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, is it because—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. If the gentlewoman wants to yield to the gentleman for the balance of her time, she needs to remain on the floor. Otherwise, the gentleman from New York may request and the Chair will grant him a 5-minute special order.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I will at this time allow the gentleman to continue and will come to the floor again, if time causes me to ask for a change.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman understands that she cannot leave the floor. She must stay on the floor.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I do understand that. Let me at least, as I am staying on the floor, thank all of those who participated on this very important occasion and as well to emphasize the clarion call that was made.

I would further support for the NetDay resolution from all of my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS]. I will be studious as to my time element.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] has 13 minutes remaining.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman and I respectfully request from the leadership of both parties, please clarify this and not have a double standard on the floor because we certainly did this in the last Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. If the gentleman will suspend a minute. The Chair will say to the gentleman from New York, this has been the rule for as long as the Chair has been here. That has been a good while so we can look into that at a later time.

Mr. OWENS. I would appreciate that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the spirit of NetDay, I said, has to be kept alive because even after NetDay takes place as it did in New York City on September 21, you find that it was basically a failure in terms of the number of schools that were wired. Let us keep it going in order to get schools wired.

After the headlines and the public relations brouhaha is over, let us keep the spirit where volunteers assemble, volunteers take advantage of the fact that we have a national NetDay operation which purchases equipment very cheaply and makes it available, all that should go on. We are trying to make that happen in my district, the 11th Congressional District in Brooklyn.

We established, because of the failure of NetDay in our district, we established a project called Central Brooklyn NetWatch. central Brooklyn NetWatch is a joint project sponsored by my office in conjunction with the Husain Institute of Technology. NetWatch is a volunteer project utilizing the free services of the Husain Institute of Technology to assist the schools of central Brooklyn in completing school wiring for telecommunications services. Launched on October 23, National Education Funding Support Day, NewWatch is an attempt to guarantee that the inner-city schools of central Brooklyn will not be left behind as we move the education processes and methodology into the 21st century.

Here are volunteers, and we started a project of just trying to wire 10 schools in 10 weeks. Let me show you what inner-city schools are up against across the country. We found it difficult to wire 10 schools in 10 weeks because the wiring problem meets the construction and repair problem. The asbestos problem in New York City stymies the process of trying to wire the schools. You cannot bore holes in the schools' walls and ceilings unless you have assurance that there is no asbestos there.

We had a crisis in New York City, 3 years ago, where schools were kept closed for 3 weeks before they opened because they were trying to deal with the asbestos problems. Many of us thought the asbestos problem was over. It is still very much there in many of our schools. That is one of the reasons why we wired so few schools on NetDay.

Now we need the President's construction money. The President's program on construction is a vital part of trying to go forward with telecommunications improvements. So it is all interwoven and you need to go forward on that. I would like to conclude, since I know the gentlewoman wants to go.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like the gentleman to get his additional 5 minutes. So I would ask the Speaker if the gentleman can get his additional 5 minutes on his own time and this way I can leave the floor. Then he can get an ad-

ditional 5 minutes as opposed to having to try and conclude at this point.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. By unanimous consent, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, if the gentlewoman wants to leave the floor and then Mr. OWENS, the gentleman from New York, can request a 5-minute special order, in which case the Chair will grant that request. Is that what the gentlewoman wants to do?

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, that is what I would like to do.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all those who have participated and will join me in support of NetDay and the access of children to the Internet.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce a sense-of-the-Congress resolution regarding the outstanding achievements of the NetDay organization.

I, along with many Members of the House, have become acquainted with the NetDay organization through the activity generated in our home congressional districts by grassroots NetDay projects.

I was proud to have had the honor of joining fellow Houstonians in the kickoff ceremony for the Houston Independent School District's NetDay96.

I also served as honorary chair of the Planning Committee for the Houston Independent School District NetDay event.

Under the leadership of Dr. Rod Page, superintendent of the Houston Independent School District, Daryl Ann Borel, assistant superintendent for technology, and her staff, the H.I.S.D. NetDay project was a success.

As a member of the conference committee on the Telecommunications Reform Act of 1996, I was pleased to see the intent of the universal telecommunications access provisions of that law being fulfilled through the H.I.S.D.'s NetDay project.

Because of the Houston Independent School District's NetDay Project 72,975 students now have Internet access in the libraries of their elementary, junior, and high schools. That is still not enough. This was accomplished with the assistance of 652 volunteers who contributed their time to neighborhood schools. The efforts of sponsors, volunteers, students, teachers, and H.I.S.D. personnel saved the Houston Independent School District \$28,860.

With H.I.S.D.'s decision to hold NetDay96 connection projects for each Saturday in the month of October, they ensured that every targeted school within minority and majority communities received an equal opportunity to have their neighborhood school library receive the necessary wiring for Internet access.

With the entire Houston community's support we can reach the goal of universal access for all of Houston's children by the year 2000.

As we work toward universal access to the Internet we must also be vigilant in our efforts to promote software and hardware innovation that will make access for our children as safe as possible. I have learned that there are a number of software and hardware technologies, which if employed, will block the ability of young users to access websites that may not be appropriate for them. In addition, the use of networked systems by school districts can also provide protection for the Internet's youngest users.

We in Congress must work to provide these important protective features to users of the national information infrastructure as educators work to assist us in guiding our children successfully toward the 21st century job marketplace.

I believe that we should not cease from searching for additional innovative ways to protect our children as we also work to provide them with the much needed skills for today and tomorrow.

It is a fact that by the close of this century 60 percent of the new jobs will require computer skills that are currently held by only 20 percent of our population. The work we do today will pay off for our children.

From Alabama to Wyoming the NetDay organization has many places it can call home. In the State of Alaska, the Anchorage School District reports that 70 percent of Alaska's students wired several schools as part of NetDay.

In the State of California, the launching site for the entire national NetDay effort, over 75,000 volunteers wired over 3,500 schools last fall.

While in the State of Texas 100 schools were wired, the majority of which were in the city of Houston, TX. We need more activity in the entire State of Texas, as well as all over America.

It is evident from our first NetDay year that States have garnered varying degrees of success in their NetDay efforts. We still have a lot of work to do before every school is connected to the Internet.

As a parent and a Member of Congress, I will continue to work toward a safe and secure Internet environment in which we can provide educational opportunities for our children. That means also working to deny the proponents of pornography and obscene material from having access to our children using the internet.

I believe this important resolution will go a long way in communicating the important role the NetDay organization is playing in the promotion of universal access to the information superhighway for all of our Nation's children.

It is good that we, as Members of the House of Representatives, can show our whole hearted support for the NetDay organization, which has provided and should provide access for all children; rural, suburban, and urban, regardless of whether they are poor or well off. Yes, NetDay has proven it is possible to be inclusive when implementing private and public partnerships of this magnitude.

I would like to thank my colleagues who have signed on as original cosponsors of this resolution. I thank you for your commitment to our Nation's children, and I look forward with great anticipation, as many of you do, to the NetDay '97 events.

At this time I would like to read the resolution into the RECORD.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, NetDay is a tremendous opportunity to ensure that all of our children will be able to compete in the high-technology world of tomorrow. I would like to commend NetDay and its organizers for the tremendous efforts that they have made in the last year to wire all of our Nation's schools to the information superhighway. Through NetDay, 20 percent of U.S. schools were wired to the Internet in 1996 alone. Almost every community in the country, including my own, have been able to reap the benefits of this organization.

NetDay is the perfect partnership between businesses, government, educational institu-

tions, and local communities that provides ongoing support for our schools. NetDay is made possible through the technical support of companies such as IBM, and Bell Atlantic who provide the technical skill to wire schools, financial sponsors who purchase the wiring packages for classrooms, and thousands of volunteers who give up their evenings and weekends for our children. This effort demonstrates the powerful impact that voluntarism can have on our community. Usually, connecting a classroom to the Internet costs approximately \$1,000. NetDay has been able to bring this cost below \$400.

The Internet is transforming the way we live, communicate, study, and conduct business. On the Internet, the educational opportunities that are open to our children are limited only by their own imagination. Students can browse a library in Europe as easily as they can browse one just down the hall. More importantly, resources which were once only available to affluent suburban schools can now be accessed by students in remote rural areas or poor inner city areas. In the future, our children's access to the information superhighway will not only be a determining factor in whether or not America can remain competitive, but whether we will truly be able to remain the indispensable Nation.

President Clinton has set a goal of wiring every school in the country to the Internet by the year 2000. Thanks to service organizations such as NetDay, and similar smaller programs throughout the country, we are well on our way to achieving that goal.

#### MORE ON NETDAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. Owens] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, what I am trying to say is that the spirit of NetDay must be kept alive. The spirit of last night's thundering applause for the President when he spoke on education must be kept alive. We cannot do that unless we recognize there are some hard problems that must be overcome. The President's program on construction and repair is a vital part of being able to wire the schools. You cannot have the telecommunications, which will benefit schools greatly.

It will allow schools to expand beyond books and pencil and paper and the limitations and get into what our young people are already into. They look at television a great deal. They look at videos. Are they going to respond to teaching that is done using the techniques that they are aware of and exposed to in their environment outside the schools?

One important part of it is to pass the President's initiative on school construction. He has an initiative which calls for up to 50 percent interest subsidy for new school construction and renovation. He has another initiative which calls for \$20 billion in school construction spurred by \$5 billion in Federal jump-start funding over 4 years, which will be discussed at greater length in the future.

□ 1630

But that is absolutely necessary for the telecommunications movement to go forward that is encouraged by NetDay to take place.

There is another item that you must all be alerted to: the education rate for telecommunications services; affordable access for all schools and libraries. This Congress in 1996 passed a telecommunications bill which the President signed into law on February 8, 1996. The President signed this law which reformed the Nation's telecommunications laws that will increase competition and lower prices for all consumers, including libraries and schools.

In this law was a mandate from Congress which said that the FCC had to find ways to give discounts or special consideration to libraries and schools in providing telecommunication services. On November 7, 1996, the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service unanimously recommended that schools and libraries receive discounts for telecommunications services, Internet services and internal connections.

The recommendations call for discounts that range from 20 to 90 percent, with an average discount of 60 percent. The FCC has until May 1997 to develop the rules for implementing the recommendations of the joint board.

What am I talking about? I am saying that in the poorest schools and rural areas and in inner-city communities the poorest schools may get up to a 90 percent discount, 90 percent on their telephone bill, on their bill for Internet on-line services, on the initial connecting bills. It may happen if the FCC follows through on the recommendations that have already been received.

I think everybody should write to the FCC or should write to the telecommunications company and thank them for cooperating and understanding that we cannot go forward with the education of all Americans unless we have this kind of provision which lowers the cost of telecommunications services for all schools.

It is very important that we support the recommendations from the Federal-State joint board because the FCC has until May to develop the rules and vote on these rules.

Please understand that the spirit of NetDay that the gentlewoman from Texas, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, has put forth so appropriately, the spirit of NetDay should go forward in many ways, but one way we can carry the spirit of NetDay forward is by letting the FCC know that we want the recommendation for the 20 to 90 percent discount on telecommunication services to be passed as rapidly as possible.

The schools which you need to help most, the poorest schools in the United States, are the schools which have the most difficult problems in teaching. They will not be able to benefit from