

why working families should be denied the same educational opportunities that the liberal Washington elite's own children enjoy, innovative Governors and mayors throughout the country are moving forward with school choice.

Democrats say they are not really against working families. Of course, they simply do not mind keeping families trapped in bad schools, for liberals prefer instead promises to reform these bad schools through the magic of the Federal Government. Many of these politicians have idealistic visions about how working families can cope with Government-owned schools in which children do not feel safe, where dumbing down trumps excellence, and where burned out teachers rotate in and out of classrooms more often than the Yankees try new managers.

Mr. Speaker, they propose to, get this, pump more money into the very same Government schools that have failed them year after year after year, with no mention of changes in structure or in methods.

A generation of illiterates does not deter Washington liberals in their misdirected intentions. Everyone at their cocktail parties is in agreement that denying school choice for everyone else's children is a victory for the Washington bureaucracy. Republicans have a different idea: School choice empowers children and their families.

#### HOUSE SHOULD HEED AMERICA'S CRY FOR CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mrs. MINK of Hawaii asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I take this time again to call upon the leadership of the House of Representatives to listen to the cries for reform from the people of this country.

The Republicans are always saying that they are on the top of the issues that the people cry out for. I cannot think of anything that is more of concern to the people of this country than the articles that they keep reading in the newspaper about hundreds of thousands of dollars that are coming into our national parties and the huge political committees out of control, without regulation, without accountability.

Mr. Speaker, we know that these contributions are having a serious impact not only upon the kind of corrupt legislation that sneaks through this House at midnight without our knowledge, but also a corrupting influence on the public's attitude about elections.

For ourselves, when we put out our campaign solicitations we put right on it that the limitation is \$1,000 per election. The PAC's know they have \$5,000. Why can we not regulate soft money and ban it completely?

#### HOUSE SHOULD REPEAL GIVE- AWAY TO BIG TOBACCO INTER- ESTS

(Mrs. ROUKEMA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, 95 to 3. That was the vote in the United States Senate yesterday to repeal that special midnight multi-billion dollar windfall for the big tobacco companies.

Mr. Speaker, the handwriting is on the wall here. It is now time for the House to follow suit. I would be willing to bet that my colleagues did not know that that provision was in the final version of the bill. We had no idea that it was there. In fact, we had to read about it in the newspapers.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind my colleagues that I am circulating a letter to Speaker GINGRICH asking that he schedule an up-or-down vote on repeal of this onerous provision. If my colleagues oppose this secret giveaway to big tobacco, sign my letter. They should go on record now and show their constituents that they certainly do not support the middle-of-the-night, under-the-table procedure that was used to enact this provision.

I ask the Speaker to right that wrong now. The handwriting is on the wall. Let us follow the action in the Senate.

#### CAMPAIGN FINANCE SYSTEM IS BROKEN AND NEEDS FIXING

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the American people are talking, but the Republican leadership is not listening.

Mr. Speaker, the people are telling this Congress that they are sick and tired of big money flooding into the halls of Government, and they are fed up with special interests taking priority over the national interests. Mr. Speaker, most of all, they are fed up that the Republican leadership still refuses to act.

Mr. Speaker, let us hold hearings, review the good bills that have already been drafted, and pass meaningful campaign finance reform legislation.

Mr. Speaker, they say that "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." I say that our campaign finance system is broke and it needs fixing.

#### SCHOOL CHOICE AND EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS WILL GIVE STUDENTS HOPE

(Mr. ADERHOLT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, for many of our country's poorest children, education is their one ticket out of poverty. In fact, even children in truly horrible schools manage to make

it out of their destitution by relentless determination and plain old hard work.

But, Mr. Speaker, children should not have to pass through metal detectors on their way through the schoolhouse door. If kids are more worried about becoming victims of violence than about getting an "A" on the next exam, how can we expect them to perform their best?

Mr. Speaker, in the face of school violence and disorderly classrooms, to whom can the kids turn? Why, their parents, of course. But what if their parents lack the resources to pull them out of horrible schools?

Mr. Speaker, while the special interests join together in saying too bad or offer up worthless promises, conservatives offer these kids hope in the form of school choice and education savings accounts.

Mr. Speaker, hope is a commodity in short supply in many of our Nation's poorest communities. School choice and education savings accounts give kids and their parents a reason to hope.

#### DEMOCRATS PUSH NATIONAL EDUCATION AGENDA

(Mr. WYNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, today Democrats want to improve education in America. We want to do it because education is the key to our democracy. We want to do it, more importantly, because education is the key to our children's future.

In the first instance, Democrats believe we need national standards. The fact is that algebra is the same whether a student is from Maine, Missouri or whether they are from my State of Maryland. We need to be able to measure whether our students can master algebra and other subjects so they can compete against their foreign counterparts. We need national standards.

Second, we need school construction funds. We hear the Republicans jump up and say, oh, schools are a local issue. Yes, Mr. Speaker, they are a local issue. But the fact again is that local communities need help. We have crumbling schools. Almost a third of our schools need repairs. They need to fix broken windows and leaking roofs. We have overcrowded schools all over America.

Mr. Speaker, we here in Congress have a duty and responsibility to help local communities. Families play the most critical role, but families cannot build schools alone. Families cannot repair roofs alone. We need a national education agenda that the Democrats are pushing.

#### QUESTIONS ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. THUNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

□ 1030

## LOCAL SCHOOL CONTROL

(Mr. METCALF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I once asked the Washington State superintendent of public instruction a question: What would happen in the classrooms of our State if we cut your budget 50 percent? His answer, most of what our office does is to counsel and help local school officials to cope with all the Federal rules and regulations.

This is a very good answer. The very best and most simple thing we could do to improve education is to eliminate Federal rules, regulations, and endless bureaucratic redtape and return control of local school districts and school power to school boards.

## COMMUNISM AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

(Mr. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, there are few issues more important to the future of our Nation than public education. That is why I was amazed and deeply disappointed that yesterday a Republican House Member actually on the floor of this House compared America's public schools to the Communist legacy. To mention our public schools in the same breath with the idea of communism is extremism at its worst. It is the kind of extreme statement I am sure that would make Joseph McCarthy proud.

In my opinion, this Republican statement ranks right up there with the John Birch Society calling former President Eisenhower a Communist. I would suggest this is the type of extremist belief that has caused great problems for the modern day Republican Party.

I am proud that the Democratic Party, based on the values of Thomas Jefferson, not Carl Marx, believes public education is a vital American institution, not something related to the Communist legacy.

## AIDS

(Mr. GANSKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about something that will be voted on today. Despite some recent successes, AIDS continues to ravage our country. But even as public education campaigns have helped discourage some high-risk behaviors, needle sharing remains one of the most significant modes of HIV transmission.

Mr. Speaker, the battle against AIDS will continue to be uphill until we can reduce the transmission of HIV through shared needles. Numerous studies have shown that needle exchange programs hold promise as a means to slow the spread of AIDS.

## AUGUST IN WASHINGTON

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton has just returned from a 3-week vacation on Martha's Vineyard. We all hope the President got some well-deserved rest, but in case he did not get a chance to pick up a paper or watch the news, here is some of what he missed during the last 3 weeks.

First of all, Paula Jones got her date in court. It was also revealed that Vice President GORE used his soft touch to raise some hard cash at the White House on the taxpayers' dime. It was also reported in the news that his former Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Espy, was indicted on 36 counts of garden variety corruption and unethical behavior. And finally, the Whitewater prosecutors obtained another guilty plea from a witness. Augusts are usually pretty dull months here in Washington, but not with this administration.

## EDUCATION IS THE GREAT EQUALIZER IN AMERICA

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, there are certain ideas that are quintessentially American: Freedom of speech; freedom of religion; the notion that every American child, rich, poor, boy or girl, every American child is entitled to a public education. It is one of the things that makes this Nation great.

So, frankly, I have been dismayed and, quite frankly, disgusted by the assault on public education being waged by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, quite frankly, I could not believe my ears when I heard the gentleman from Colorado refer to public education as "a monopoly," "government-owned schools," and even making reference to public education and public schools in this country as part of a "communist legacy."

Mr. Speaker, they should be ashamed. Access to public education is one of the most precious and fundamental privileges of American life. It is irresponsible, it is simply wrong to imply that America's public schools are "Communist."

Mr. Speaker, I urge my Republican colleagues to stop their efforts to not only defund but, in fact, to degrade American public schools and American public education. It has been the great equalizer in this great Nation of ours.

## IMPROVING EDUCATION SHOULD BE OUR TOP PRIORITY

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, we have no more sacred responsibility than to devote our full collective energy to improving education all across this Nation. For starters, we need to commit today to the highest possible academic standards for our children. Today students will be entering a highly competitive work force that will demand greater knowledge and skills. High educational standards are the key to preparing our children for the global economy of the 21st century.

Second, we need to begin rebuilding our crumbling schools. A recent GAO report has found that one-third of American schools need extensive repair. Our children deserve to attend class in an environment that is conducive to real learning. Finally, we, as a Congress, must commit to the cause of reducing overcrowding in schools.

A new Department of Education report found that 52 million children have enrolled in schools this fall, threatening to make the problem of overcrowding a national crisis. We should do all we can to help local school districts deal with this challenging issue. Democrats will continue to make education our top legislative priority.

I call on my Republican colleagues, I plead with them to stop the obstructionism, to join with us in our efforts. Let us put our kids first.