

tests, he warned the American people. He put it this way:

Any set of test questions that the federal government prescribed should surely be suspect as a first step toward a national curriculum. . . . In its most extreme form, [Joseph Califano went on to warn] national control of curriculum is a form of national control of ideas.

We could have a long debate about the potential evils of national control of ideas, but it is pretty clear to me that none of us believes that Washington, DC, should control ideas. I think all of us understand that if Washington, DC, controls things, it generally does not do them well. As a matter of fact, what this country has controlled from Washington, DC, has not been exemplary. It has been an example of what to avoid rather than what to embrace.

When you are talking with individuals about the so-called tests which they would impose, you have to wonder whether Washington's imposition of tests would be something like Washington's attempted imposition of the standards for history, which they tried to develop at the end of the last decade and early in the 1990's.

The National Endowment for the Humanities sought to develop a set of history standards telling us what we should know and what we should teach. What was interesting to me is that the standards tended to be far more politically correct than they were historically correct.

When you are thinking about mathematics, I do not think we should think about that which is politically correct or historically correct. We should think about things that are arithmetically correct.

But here is what happened to the national history standards. The national history standards were more interested in those who were politically correct.

The standards slighted or ignored many central figures in U.S. history, particularly white males. To name a few, Robert E. Lee was left out, Thomas Edison and the Wright brothers were left out, Paul Revere was left out, so we could have many, many references to the Ku Klux Klan, so we could have references to heroes from other continents.

The truth of the matter is the U.S. Senate understood what was happening there and voted against those standards. I believe that these standards were rejected unanimously in the Senate. George Will attacked the failed history standards as "cranky anti-Americanism." It didn't surprise the American public. The American public has witnessed the Federal Government go awry, time after time after time on issue after issue after issue.

The proponents of the proposed national tests have indicated that their interest is in the whole math curriculum. As a matter of fact, when we found out what they were talking about with the whole math curriculum we discovered they were talking about

a rejection of computation. Computation is 3 times 6 is 18; 3 times 18 is 54; 4 times 18 is 72. They reject that. One whole math proponent was quoted in the Wall Street Journal as having said we can't ask students to say 6 times 7 is 42, put down the 2, carry the 4. They said that is discriminatory. Most students can't do that, they are too dumb. That is ridiculous. Our students are smarter than that. They are not that dumb.

As a matter of fact, the only thing that will dumb down American education is if we have low expectations. I have studies that show when you have low expectations you get low performance. Here you have people designing the tests who want to run away from the ability of American students to compute. They want to supply everyone with a calculator so no one has to know the multiplication table and no one has to do things in his or her head. I think such dumbing down of America's educational performance would be inappropriate.

Most importantly, it is fundamental that we maintain in this great land the ability of moms and dads to be at the focal point of educational policy and development and not bureaucrats in Washington, DC. It is fundamentally important that we maintain local control of education rather than Washington control.

As we are working our way to see whether or not we can have an appropriations bill that maintains this balance, I want to say to the U.S. Senate that we have an obligation to stay here and work until we do protect the rights and opportunities of the next generation for a decent education by making sure that their parents are in charge, that local school boards and States are in charge, and that we don't forfeit the prerogatives of education policy to bureaucrats in Washington, DC, who would impose a kind of mindless "dumbed down" national curriculum which would fail to have the diversity and creativity and energy—especially the energy—that comes from local involvement that we need.

I intend to do whatever I can and everything that is possible to make sure that we protect that prerogative. I hope Members of this body and Members of the House will join me in doing so. As we are seeking in these moments to reach an agreement with the White House in this respect, I hope it will be their understanding that a plan to have a uniform stifling environment promulgated from Washington is not a plan for a prosperous America but is a plan which would pull the educational rug out from under the feet of our children and would destroy our capacity to compete in the next generation.

I yield the floor.

Mr. JEFFORDS. I ask unanimous consent I may proceed for 10 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH of Oregon). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FIRST STEP ON AN UPHILL ROAD

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise again today to speak about the state of the District of Columbia public schools, an issue that is extremely important to me. And I am happy to say, that for the first time in the months that I've been bringing this issue to the attention of my colleagues, that there is some good news to report.

Behind me there are two articles from yesterdays papers declaring the news that the advocacy group Parents United has settled its 5-year old lawsuit against the District over school repairs. I want to commend Parents United, Judge Kaye Christian, Gen. Julius Becton, and the many staff who were finally able to come to an agreement. The settlement outlines how repairs for these schools can take place as quickly as possible, with the least interruption of the school year as possible.

On paper, that is a good first step. But in concrete terms, the only thing this deal has done is to stop unnecessary school closings, which are clearly having a detrimental effect on morale and achievement. What about the money and the orderly process for seeing that these repairs get accomplished? Look at Dr. Brimmer here and see what it boils down to: Congress. It boils down to us.

Yes there is included in this settlement a commitment on the part of the control board to allocate money that the city borrows for school repairs, but let me remind my colleagues that unless the city has a sustainable dedicated revenue stream to be used for bonding credit, who knows how much the city will be able to borrow? In years past the city was considered essentially bankrupt, allowing for zero borrowing. How will the school system be able to execute repairs on schedule with an orderly process when they can't project a consistent budget?

Let's look at the money that is needed to get the schools fixed. Based on a GSA report, and the D.C.P.S. 2010 long range facilities master plan—we need a total of \$2 billion to get the D.C. schools repaired to code and modernized. The D.C.P.S. plan is a solid one, and it is broken into three phases: stabilization, functionality, and modernization. The total cost is estimated at \$200 million a year over 10 years. Will Congress appropriate that kind of money? I think not—and history shows us so.

Look at the money that D.C.P.S. had available—through congressional appropriation and city borrowing—for school infrastructure improvement over the last few years: In 1996—\$14.9 million; in 1995—\$21.1 million; in 1994—\$9.5 million; and in 1993—\$8.8 million.

As you can see, Mr. President, this yearly allocation falls far short of \$200 million. In fact, the average amount of money the District was able to spend on school repairs, over the last 10 years was \$13.4 million. If we keep driving money to the schools at that rate it

will take the school system 150 years to meet their 10 year plan. How many children will have to suffer if we wait 150 years?

There is a way for Congress to act responsibly. We must give the schools a dedicated revenue stream to bond with so that the \$2 billion goal can be met. But at present Congress has its hands tied by its own actions. In 1974 when Congress created home rule we denied Washington the authority to be able to do what every other major city in an interstate area can do—and that is tax its non-resident workers. This is not some new fangled idea. It is what every other city in America can do to make sure its infrastructure and services are viable. I will speak about how Washington can accomplish this and a larger goal in a minute.

But let's return to what happens when the schools don't have the money for repairs. The school year can't start on time. The upside of the severe disruption to the school year that has taken place is this September and October is that the focus of attention to the plight of our Nation's capital school system has never been greater. We have a lot of issues to deal with as national leaders, and bringing the focus to one school system is no easy task. But this is the school system of our Capital City—the school system that should be the flagship for education in our country, not the sinking vessel it has become. And as the leadership that created the control board, and created the emergency school board of trustees, and appropriates the city's funds each year we are responsible for turning this ship around.

Now, let's look for a second at the academic ramifications of a school system in decay. Again, a piece of good news: the District of Columbia Public School system has a new chief academic officer, Arlene Ackerman, and I had the chance to meet with her last week and enjoyed that opportunity very much. Ms. Ackerman has done what any good manager would and prescribed an evaluation to see where the students in her charge are in terms of national standards. I have taken this information, which was released in the Washington Post last Thursday and let's see how that headline reads: "Tests Indicate Many Students in D.C. Won't be Promoted. . . ."

Now, I know this is appalling, but let me take you quickly through some of the actual test results in reading and math. These statistics are based on the Stanford 9 Achievement Test that was administered last Spring.

As Arlene Ackerman said in her remarks when releasing these sorry statistics, "The lives of our children are at stake." And let me state, for everyone listening, these children, the children of the Nation's Capital, are our children. Every Member of this body has a responsibility for their well being. And as you can see from these statistics, we are not living up to that responsibility.

Is there a connection between Congress' annual appropriation process, the D.C.P.S. infrastructure emergency and these unfortunate academic test scores? You bet there is. As we saw earlier, every year that Congress appropriates far far less than the schools need for infrastructure is like giving a dying man a drop or two of water. Eventually the systems just wear out. In the process, you get low morale, low academic achievement and outraged parents and students.

Look again at this article. That \$487 million is only part of the \$200 million a year I mentioned earlier. How are we going to get there? The city needs to have a dedicated revenue stream so that they can bond for infrastructure improvement. Where will that dedicated revenue stream come from?

A nonresident income tax that benefits the tax-payer, the Washington Metropolitan Region and the District schools is the answer. With my proposal, the economy in our "Golden Crescent"—the area stretching from the District to Annapolis and as far west as Winchester, VA—gets an enormous boost. This bill creates an education and training partnership that would make it possible to fill the estimated 50,000 available jobs in the D.C. metropolitan area that rely on information technology skills. Filling these jobs would boost our regional economy by \$3.5 billion annually. More jobs = a stronger tax base = more consumer spending = more home buying, and so forth.

Leaders in the private sector know the direct correlation between those appalling test scores I just showed you and their bottom line. They know the cost in decreased productivity when jobs go begging for lack of skilled employees. They know how much it costs to start recruiting from all over the country and, some cases all over the world.

The private sector I am speaking of resides in northern Virginia and southern Maryland. The payback to the counties in these States, if we fill these jobs and inject our local economy with that \$3.5 billion a year will be manifold. Far greater than the outlay the nonresident income tax demands. And in the process we will be able, as a country, to feel pride in every aspect of our Nation's Capital.

I know the pride I feel each time I fly back to Washington, especially at night, and see the beautiful monuments, all lit up. They symbolize this great country and the founding fathers who upheld the integrity and mission this country is built on. But I say to my colleagues, these monuments are made of stone. The living testament to the American system of government is its children. Flesh and blood and the inheritors of all that our Founding Fathers dreamed of. If we as U.S. Senators cannot make the future a great one for the children of America's capital, then our pride in this city and its monuments is fraudulent. We must find

a solution, and I challenge my colleagues to review my proposal or show me a better one.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. INHOFE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I understand that the pending business will be amendment No. 1602 to S. 1269.

RECIPROCAL TRADE AGREEMENTS ACT OF 1997

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1269) to establish objectives for negotiating and procedures for implementing certain trade agreements.

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 1602

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Amendment 1602 is the pending question.

Is there further debate?

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 1602) was agreed to.

Mr. INHOFE. I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to table was agreed to.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, the amendment that we just agreed to is an amendment that addresses the very competitiveness issue that is facing us right now. It is an amendment to the fast-track legislation. What it does, is to delay the implementation of severe changes in the ambient air standards, until such time as the science justifies it. It does impose a 4-year moratorium. I think it is very significant that this be made a part of this legislation.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we be in a period of morning business until the hour of 5:45.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE GEORGE BUSH LIBRARY

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, this afternoon, at this hour, we are dedicating the George Bush Library and the George Bush School of Government at Texas A&M University, which is in my hometown, and a school that I taught at for 12 years. It is a place that is very close to my heart.