

Gephardt
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (TX)
Greenwood
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Herger
Hill (IN)
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoeffel
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hyde
Inslee
Isakson
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jefferson
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kaptur
Kelly
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
Klecza
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kuykendall
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
Largent
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Luther

Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCrery
McGovern
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
Meehan
Menendez
Metcalf
Mica
Millender-
McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Morella
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Ose
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pascrell
Paul
Pease
Pelosi
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rangel
Regula
Reyes
Reynolds
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Rothman
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush

Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Salmon
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Schakowsky
Scott
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shinkus
Shows
Shuster
Simpson
Sisisky
Skeen
Skeltion
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stabenow
Stearns
Stenholm
Stump
Sununu
Sweeney
Talent
Tanner
Tauscher
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman
Tiahrt
Tierney
Toomey
Towns
Traficant
Turner
Udall (CO)
Upton
Velazquez
Vento
Vitter
Walden
Walsh
Wamp
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Wexler
Weygand
Whitfield
Wilson
Wolf
Woolsey
Wynn
Young (FL)

Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)

Udall (NM)
Visclosky
Waters

Weller
Wicker
Wu

NOT VOTING—22

Bereuter
Burr
Cooksey
Davis (FL)
Doyle
Emerson
Hulshof
Hunter
Kanjorski
Kasich
Larson
Meek (FL)
Mollohan
Murtha
Myrick
Payne

Rahall
Scarborough
Sessions
Watkins
Wise
Young (AK)

□ 1103

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules.

SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT
SCHOOLS SHOULD USE PHONICS

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 214) expressing the sense of Congress that direct systematic phonics instruction should be used in all schools, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON RES. 214

Whereas the ability to read the English language with fluency and comprehension is essential if individuals are to reach their full potential;

Whereas it is an indisputable fact that written English is based on the alphabetic principle, and is, in fact a phonetic language;

Whereas the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) has conducted extensive scientific research on reading for more than 34 years, at a cost of more than \$200,000,000;

Whereas the NICHD findings on reading instruction conclude that phonemic awareness, direct systematic phonics instruction in sound-spelling correspondences, including blending of sound-spellings into words, reading comprehension, and regular exposure to interesting books are essential components of any reading program based on scientific research;

Whereas a consensus has developed around scientific research findings in reading instruction, as presented in the 1998 report of the National Research Council, Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children;

Whereas the Learning First Alliance composed of national organizations such as the American Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of School Administrators, the American Federation of Teachers, Council of Chief State School Officers, Na-

tional Association of Elementary School Principals, National School Boards Association, National Parent Teachers Association, and National Education Association have agreed that well sequenced systematic phonics instruction is beneficial for all children;

Whereas more than 50 years of cognitive science, neuroscience, and applied linguistics have confirmed that learning to read is a skill that must be taught in a direct, systematic way;

Whereas phonics instruction is the teaching of a body of knowledge consisting of 26 letters of the alphabet, 44 English speech sounds they represent, and 70 most common spellings for those speech sounds;

Whereas reading scores continue to decline or remain stagnant, even though Congress has spent more than \$120,000,000,000 over the past 30 years for title I programs (of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.)) with the primary purpose of improving reading skills;

Whereas the 1998 National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) found that 69 percent of 4th grade students are reading below the proficient level;

Whereas the 1998 NAEP found that minority students on average continue to lag far behind their non-minority counterparts in reading proficiency, many of whom are in title I programs (of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.));

Whereas the 1998 NAEP also found that, 90 percent of African American, 86 percent of Hispanic, 63 percent of Asian, and 61 percent of white 4th grade students were reading below proficient levels, many of whom were in title I programs (of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.));

Whereas more than half of the students being placed in the special learning disabilities category of Special Education have not learned to read;

Whereas the cost of Special Education, at the Federal, State, and local levels exceeds \$60,000,000,000 each year;

Whereas reading instruction in far too many schools is still based on the whole language philosophy, to the exclusion of all others and often to the detriment of the students;

Whereas the ability to read is the cornerstone of academic success, and most colleges of education do not offer prospective reading teachers instruction in the structure of spoken and written English, and the scientifically valid principles of effective reading instruction: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) phonemic awareness and direct systematic phonics instruction should be used in all schools as a first and essential step in teaching a student to read;

(2) pre-service professional development of reading teachers should include direct systematic phonics instruction; and

(3) all Federal programs with a strong reading component should use instructional practices that are based on scientific research in reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MCINTOSH) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MCINTOSH).

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution 214 expresses the importance of

NAYS—65

Aderholt
Allen
Baird
Barcia
Berry
Bilbray
Borski
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Chenoweth-Hage
Clay
Costello
Crane
DeFazio
Dickey
English
Evans
Fattah
Filner
Gibbons
Green (WI)
Gutknecht
Hefley
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hutchinson
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Johnson, E. B.
Klink
Kucinich
Latham
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Markey
McDermott
McNulty
Meeks (NY)
Moore
Oberstar
Pallone
Pastor
Peterson (MN)
PHELPS
Pickett
Ramstad
Riley
Rogan
Sabo
Schaffer
Slaughter
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Tancred

using proven, scientifically based reading instruction in the classroom, in preservice teacher training and in Federal education programs.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING). Although he could not attend when this was discussed in committee, the gentleman has given his full support for this.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. What the resolution says basically is a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that direct systematic phonics instruction is one of the necessary components of an effective reading program.

I think all of you who are here probably have been taught using many methods, including, I imagine everyone, phonics. My wife is a first grade teacher of 43 years. If she were told that she could only teach phonics, she would probably tell them where to go. If she was told she could not teach phonics, she would tell them where to go. If she was told she had to teach whole language, she would tell them where to go and how to get there. If she was told she could not use whole language with all of her other methods of teaching reading, she would tell them where to go and how to get there. But the important thing is, it is one of the important components in the teaching of reading. I think everyone here would agree with that, because that is probably the method that was used, and it is scientifically based.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his support and his willingness to discharge this bill from committee and commend him for his help in getting it to the floor today. I also want to express my appreciation to him and his staff for focusing on quality, research-proven techniques in teaching reading in the Student Results Act, title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which passed recently; and also in the Reading Excellence Act which passed last year.

The need for this resolution is clear: American students are not reading as well as they should and some are not able to read at all. The 1998 National Assessment of Education Progress, the NAEP test, has found that 69 percent of fourth grade students are reading below the proficiency level. Let me repeat that. Sixty-nine percent of fourth graders in America are not reading up to standard. Minority children have been particularly hard hit by reading difficulties. According to the NAEP test, 90 percent of African-Americans, 86 percent of Hispanic Americans, and 63 percent of Asian students were reading below the proficiency level. That is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. What we need to do is make sure that we focus on doing the best we can to teach those children how to read. What that means is that they cannot read history, they cannot read literature, they cannot

read science in order to understand their other classes. No wonder they become frustrated, no wonder they disrupt the class, no wonder they drop out of school.

At least half of the students being placed in the special learning disability category of special education have not learned to read. The cost of special education, Federal, State and local, is exceeding \$60 billion a year. If only a quarter of those students are there because they cannot read, it represents more than \$15 billion of effort at local schools. Just think how many schools could be built or computers purchased or books bought or teachers paid if these students were taught to read in the first grade.

The cost to those who never learn to read adequately is much higher than that. Job prospects for those who cannot read are few. Americans who cannot read are cut off from the rich opportunities of this Nation. The tragedy is that students who cannot read often end up in juvenile hall, or on the streets, susceptible to gangs and drugs, or as school dropouts.

But the good news is that this is a problem we can fix. According to Dr. Benita Blachman, one of the leading researchers in reading instruction, "direct, systematic instruction about the alphabetic code, phonics, is not routinely provided in kindergarten and first grade, despite the fact that, given what we know at the moment, this might be the most powerful weapon in the fight against illiteracy."

□ 1115

As she said, this is perhaps the most powerful weapon in the fight against illiteracy. In fact, the evidence is so strong for systematic phonics instruction that if the subject being discussed was, say, treatment of mumps, there would be no discussion. We would take care of it, we would have a plan and the children would be saved. The solution is to teach children to read the first time around.

According to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the ability to read depends on one's understanding of the relationship between letters and speech sounds that they represent. Systematic instruction on phonics teaches this skill, 26 letters used to symbolize about 44 speech sounds and the most common way they are spelled.

The research in reading makes it clear that all students can benefit from phonics instruction and that about one-third of all students need explicit training in phonics if they are to learn to read at all. That means one-third of our young people today, if they do not get instruction in phonics, will never be able to read. That is something that we cannot afford to leave unaddressed in this House.

For children who do not receive reading instruction or even reading exposure at home, phonics instruction is essential if they are to learn to read.

Mr. Speaker, according to the American Federation of Teachers, "Phonemic awareness instruction, when linked to systematic decoding and spelling, is the key to preventing reading failure in children who come to school without these prerequisite school." That is, those children who have not learned to read at home."

The NEA states, "Mastering basic skills is important. Children need to know their phonics." They are right.

It is not surprising that support for this approach is becoming widespread in the education community, from the National Education Association to the American Federation of Teachers, the National Parent Teacher Association, the Council for Chief School Officers and numerous other education groups which form the Learning First Alliance. They have concluded that well sequenced systematic phonics instruction is beneficial for all children.

Phonics is now being promoted by the scientific and some in the education community as an essential component of effective reading instruction.

On a personnel level, I will share with my colleagues in the House, I have heard so much from parents and teachers about the success experienced by their children who have received explicit systematic phonics training. I have got with me today several statements by Title I teachers, one in Indianapolis, on the effectiveness of phonics instruction in teaching children to read.

Mrs. Linda Jones, who teaches learning disabled children in 6th, 7th and 8th grade says, "Since I've been using the Direct Approach," phonics, "my children are very excited about learning. One of my major problem students has become the best student in the class. Now everyone enjoys coming up to the board. We pull words out of reading comprehension exercises. Now we are pulling words such as 'hyposensitize' out of the dictionary," states teacher Stuart Wood.

I also have a letter from a teacher at Allisonville Elementary School in Indianapolis. She tells me how her student from Africa, a little boy that I actually had a chance to meet, who knew no English when he came to that class, his name was Filimon Adhanom, and Filimon did not know how to read, did not know how to write, did not know how to speak English, and he learned those skills in her classroom with phonics instruction.

In this letter, a summer school teacher in the same district tells how her school kids were behind in reading, and they caught up after just 15 days, with just 25 minutes a day of phonics instruction.

In this letter a parent says, "I am writing because I know the pain of a child that attends school every day and cannot read. I am writing to you, Mr. Congressman, because 10 years later I see the joy of independence in that same child who can now read."

I could go on and on. I have a lot of these letters, and they all tell the same

story. And it just is not in my district or just in Indiana. This story is being repeated in every community across America.

That is why I introduced this resolution. It is my hope that it will encourage the use of this successful technique in classrooms across America.

Believe it or not, despite the wealth of scientific evidence supporting systematic phonics, despite the anecdotal evidence that I talked about today, there are in fact children today in America who are not receiving this type of instruction, teachers who do not have the benefit of this learning tool. There are schools in my own state which are having to use their scarce funds to instruct newly hired teachers how to teach phonics because they have not been taught in college or in their teacher training courses.

This resolution is aimed at getting the word out, getting the word out about the need for phonics instruction, the need for our children of all backgrounds to have this instruction so they can have the ability to learn and to read. Many students will not get a second chance.

Andrea Neal, a very gifted writer for the Indianapolis Star, put it this way: "It is reasonable and necessary to require elementary teachers be trained in the most effective phonetic programs. To do otherwise is to commit educational malpractice on our children."

We need to start teaching kids to read. Phonics is the way to make sure that happens. As the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) said, it is one of the ways in which teachers need to be able to teach.

So while Concurrent Resolution 214 contains no mandate, I hope it will convey an important message to schools and teachers and children and their parents all across this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, once again I am befuddled, bewildered, but mostly amazed by the explanation given by the chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce of what this resolution does.

He says it is only one of many methods that can be used to teach reading. But I am reading the resolution itself, and it says "direct systematic phonics instruction should be used in all schools as a first and essential step in teaching a student to read."

Mr. Speaker, this resolution states that phonics-based instruction should be used by all schools in their efforts to teach children to read and should be included in pre-service teaching requirements.

What other insulting gimmicks will the Republican leadership think of next? This resolution ignores the volumes of research on reading instruction that shows the need for a balance between phonics and whole language instructional techniques. This resolution also takes the unprecedented and

demeaning step of placing Congress in the classroom by dictating a particular curriculum choice, regardless of the view of our teachers, principals and superintendents at the local level. Is this what Republicans mean when they say Washington knows what is best for local communities?

Mr. Speaker, when our committee considered the President's America Reads legislation during the last Congress, we learned from witness after witness that a solely phonics-based curriculum or solely whole language based curriculum is not effective in teaching children to read.

Last year, reading instruction experts testified before our committee that a balanced approach, using phonics and whole language, is the most effective and proven way to teach children to read.

What is most objectionable about this resolution is its forcible intrusion into the classroom through a Federal endorsement of what should be locally determined curriculum.

Why does the Congress need to make an affirmative statement that phonics and phonics solely should be utilized in schools? I say that anyone who votes for this resolution dictating how teachers and local school boards should teach reading should never again speak of local control of our schools.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to oppose this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER).

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I would remind the previous speaker and others who are considering this matter that the resolution before us is a sense of Congress resolution and in no way represents any sort of mandate or dictate or requirement at the Federal level, merely a statement of opinion based on some simple observations from the scientific community and the academic community that phonics works and should be preferred.

Let me give you a perfect example of an expert who speaks forcefully on the matter. This is a letter that I received from the Colorado Commissioner of Education.

"I am writing in response to your recent inquiry," which was about this bill. "I strongly support the need to redress the balance in American reading instruction. Sadly, over time, that balance has tilted against phonics, which throughout our history has been a foundation of solid reading skills."

"The proper interaction between the 44 sounds, or phonemes, and the 26 letters of the English language is something that must be well understood by all who would aspire to teach our young children. Tragically, by their own testimony, our reading teachers in overwhelming proportion have not received this training in anywhere near the measures needed."

"Today, at the national and state levels, there is broad consensus that

teacher training must be dramatically redesigned. Nowhere is that redesign more needed than in the area of reading, the essential foundation for all learning. Furthermore, ensuring that every teacher possesses a strong grounding in phonics must be at heart of our redesign in reading."

"Being most grateful for your outstanding work on behalf of Colorado children, I remain sincerely yours, William J. Maloney, Colorado Commissioner of Education."

I would submit there is one more expert that should be considered, and this expert is like many throughout the country, this is a grandmother who sent me an e-mail on this very bill. Here is what she says.

"I would like to go on record that I have six grandchildren in Larimer and Weld Counties in Colorado, and I must tell you that the two that are in Weld County (Eaton School District), are excellent readers, which teaches phonics. The four here in Larimer County (Ft. Collins schools) are terrible readers, not taught phonics. Thank you."

That letter is from B. Bessert of Fort Collins.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER).

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member from the State of Missouri for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to articulate some deep reservations and concerns about this resolution. Certainly, as a parent of three children, I want my children to be able to read; as a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce I want the scientific community to be able to make recommendations to our local school boards and to our teachers on what method works best; and as a Member of Congress, we certainly want to share with the American people some of our ideas on this.

But as a Member of Congress, I am very hesitant to say that I am the expert on reading here in Washington, D.C., and our local school boards should prioritize and use this as the first method of teaching our children in Indiana, in Nebraska, in Georgia, in New Jersey and throughout the country, as to what we should be telling our first grade and second grade teachers we think this is the priority, that we think this is the first way you should do this; we think this is our preferred method, so you should do it in all 50 states. I do not think that is our role, quite frankly.

Now, if the resolution read, as it does in the third resolved clause, "all Federal programs with a strong reading component should use structural practices that are based on scientific research in reading," period, I think we could all agree to that. But the first resolved clause, probably the most important resolved clause, says "Direct systematic phonics instruction should be used in all schools as a first and essential step in teaching a student to

read." All schools, the first and essential step.

□ 1130

I am here to stand up for my local school boards and my local teachers and my local parents and say, you guys should figure this out. I am not sure we should be telling them the preferred way, the priority.

Additionally, the National Academy of Sciences study issued last year recommends a combination of methods, that phonics and whole language should be blended for our young people. Now, could we say that? I am not even sure we should say they should be blended.

I think that the third resolve clause, saying that all Federal programs with a strong reading component should use instructional practices that are based on scientific research in reading, and not dictate to our local schools what should be taught first, what should be taught in all schools, what should be priorities, what should be preferred, I think that goes a bit too far for our local school boards and our local parents.

Let us continue to give them the choices and the discretion, so I have reservations and caveats about this resolution.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN).

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, we have experts who will tell us one thing and then another, and that is not the test. The test is experience: what happens when we teach phonics?

California went through this for the last 50 years in K through 12 education. In the thirties in Pasadena and other "progressive" schools they banned phonics. In one of the major cities in Los Angeles County in the fifties they had banned phonics.

A friend of mine who was a fifth grade teacher kept two erasers in her hand. One was when the principal came through the door, to wipe out the phonics she had put on the blackboard. That went on for a year or so. At the end of that year, achievement tests were given. The principal said to her, "Mrs. Patterson," her name was Isabel Patterson, "Mrs. Patterson, you just have a very unusual, unique class. In this whole city of 350,000 people, your class has been 25 to 50 percent ahead of every single other class in this school system."

Mrs. Patterson just smiled and said, "Thank you, Principal." He praised her teaching and all that. He did not know she was teaching phonics. She was the only one in the whole city who was teaching phonics. That is why her students were way ahead of every student in that city.

That school district now has adopted phonics, and so have most districts in California. They are through with what went on in the thirties. I think when

we realize that this individual was not only an outstanding teacher, she was also becoming an entrepreneur. With her limited funds she started buying houses. She gave \$2 million to the Isabel Patterson Child Development Center at California State University, Long Beach.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS).

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Missouri, for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, in a couple of days I have one of the most important meetings on my schedule for the next couple of months. It is with a person named Ms. Jordano. Ms. Jordano is my daughter Jacqueline's first grade teacher. My wife and I are going to the parent-teacher conference. When we go to the parent-teacher conference, we are going to listen to what she has to say, because we respect her ability after years in the classroom to know about how to teach a first grader how to read.

Today I find myself in a different role. We are giving unsolicited advice to the reading teachers of America as to how they ought to teach reading. We certainly are entitled to our own opinion, but I think to offer that opinion as an institution is an abrogation and overstepping of our authority as the Congress of the United States.

I would consider voting for this resolution on one condition. If we are going to take responsibility for determining reading curriculum for the teachers of America, let us give the teachers of America responsibility for determining other questions about education. Let us let them decide whether to fully fund the IDEA. Let us let them decide whether to put 100,000 qualified teachers in classrooms across America. Let us let them decide whether to fix the crumbling school buildings that exist in communities across America, and build new schools. Let us let the teachers of America decide whether we should make a true national commitment to pre-kindergarten education, which we do not presently have. Let us let them decide whether we should increase Title I funding, as many of us advocated on this floor just a few weeks ago.

I suspect if we yielded that authority to them, that they would vote in favor of all those things for education. I suspect the majority will not want to do that. For that reason, we should get back in our proper role, defeat this superfluous amendment, and pass real education legislation to improve America's schools.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD).

(Mr. UNDERWOOD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my dismay and disappointment that this House is taking up an entirely unnecessary resolution endorsing phonics instruction and criticizing whole language reading instruction.

As a former dean of a school of education and a teacher trainer who included a discussion of the fundamental underpinnings of various teaching strategies in several courses that I taught for nearly two decades, this really does take the cake. This is one of the most preposterous resolutions I have ever seen about a teaching strategy.

Different teaching strategies work for different people for different reasons. Teaching strategies have a psychology base and a philosophical base which is continually tested and tempered by practice and by classroom trial and error, by experience in unique and diverse communities around the country.

To quote something that is frequently said on the other side, "The best decisions about education are left to individual communities, to individual teachers in classrooms, to the local situation," of course, except when it comes to phonics versus whole language.

I cannot imagine why a national legislative body would spend its time on this issue, which is hotly debated and should be hotly discussed in classrooms and in schools of education around the country, but a subject for congressional thinking? Neuroscience, applied linguistics, phonemes, phonics, morphemes, syntax, grammatical rules which are psychologically real in our minds, to speech events, understanding speech events, how many people here are equipped to understand the meaning of these terms and debate them with comfort and assurance?

What is next, a resolution on new math, a resolution on creationism, a resolution on the role of lab work in science courses, a resolution on direct instruction, a resolution on our favorite surgical technique in medicine, on our favorite offense to be used by football teams around the country, a resolution on the superiority of walking over running in exercise?

The best way to teach reading is an issue which belongs in research institutions. It is a matter which is best left up to classroom professionals and for communities to sort out.

This resolution, as my colleague, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) pointed out, is so absurd, it is the one time that perhaps I really wish I could vote on this floor so I could vote against it.

Written English is a crazy language in written form. The companion measure to this should be to go back to that earlier movement in the earlier part of this century when we tried to make English totally phonetic. That would

really facilitate phonics, and then we would have to spell phonics F-O-N-I-K-S.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), a member of the committee.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise for a couple of reasons. The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) made some very great statements, and he referred to the resolve clauses, but he neglected to refer to the amendment which appears at the end of that page which, in my judgment is effective, as one who is a big advocate for children, because it amends the whole code, which says that phonics is one of the necessary components.

The truth of the matter for any of us who have been in education, this debate today is like many debates that go on in America between whole language advocates and phonics advocates. I will tell the Members, both of them are right. Both of them should be included. This says our teachers do have the choice, and it is very important.

I rise today because I want to pay tribute to the United States Department of Education for providing us in Georgia with a Goals 2000 grant which allowed us to develop the phonics-based Reading First program in Georgia under Dr. Cindy Cupp, which enabled our Title I schools, after its implementation, to raise our children across the board by higher than the 25th percentile in each and every category.

Phonics is one, but not the only one. It should be included and not excluded. With the amendment, this resolution ensures that we recognize it as a methodology, it is not a curriculum, and we encourage schools to use all the best methods to teach our children.

I commend the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MCINTOSH). Most importantly of all, I commend this Congress for focusing on America's number one problem in public education. That is, the poor reading performance of our children as they leave the third grade.

We should give our teachers every resource to meet the needs of every child, whether it be whole language or whether it be phonics-based.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, I would respond to the gentleman from Georgia, who said that the amendment to this bill corrected what the problem was. It does not.

An amendment that amends the title, and that is what this amendment or footnote at the end of this resolution says, is "concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that direct, systematic phonics instruction is one of the necessary components of an effective reading program."

That is just in the title, it is not in the body of this resolution. It has no effect whatsoever on what is in this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and would like to share with them some of the materials I have put into the RECORD.

The first is a statement from Indiana State Senator Teresa Lubbers, who is an expert on education, having been a teacher herself and worked mightily in that area in our State Senate. She has worked to improve the performance of Hoosier students, and she is absolutely convinced that our success depends on our ability to produce competent teachers.

She goes on to say, one ingredient of that is, "I am also convinced that phonics awareness is the preferred and proven way to teach reading. We do our children a disservice when we allow them to move ahead without a mastery of reading, which ensures frustration and failure throughout their school years."

Mr. Speaker, I would mention again the statistic I said in my opening statement: 67 percent of our fourth graders in America are below standard in reading. That is unacceptable. This resolution says, let us do everything possible to make that work for them. Phonics is one of the ways in which teachers can do that.

A second statement that I would like to enter into the RECORD would be from Linda Wight Harmon, who is a parent. She talks about her eldest daughter, Catherine, who uses the skills of reading in the second grade, where she learned phonics from a private tutor in a computerized language program.

Another is a list of several success stories from teachers in our public schools in Indiana.

The letter that I mentioned earlier from an elementary schoolteacher in grade one, Ms. Kristi Trapp, who talked about her student from Africa, the young man who was not able to read at all but was able to learn in her school; then also another teacher from that same school, Mrs. Karin Jacob.

Finally, we have several other things from parents. One of them is from Diane and Bill Walters, who talk about the never-ending story of trying to get Justin, their son, to be able to read, and several statements that were prepared for the interim study committee in the Indiana State Senate, one from Ms. Diane Badgley, another came from Peggy Schafir, another from Susan Warner.

All of these parents and teachers talk about the success of phonics for their children. That is what we are talking about today, is the children of America and how we can help them learn to read.

Finally, I include for the RECORD a list of commonly asked questions about reading instruction that was prepared by Dr. Patrick Groff, who is a board member and senior adviser to the NRRF.

The material referred to is as follows:

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT READING INSTRUCTION

(By Dr. Patrick Groff, NRRF Board Member & Senior Advisor)

Q: What Do Children Need To Learn In Order To Read Well?

A: Four main things: (1) phonics information and how to apply it to recognize words; (2) familiarity with the meanings of words; (3) the literal comprehension of what authors intended to convey; and (4) a critical attitude toward what is read.

Q: What Is Phonics Information?

A: The relationship or correspondences between how we speak and spell words. The individual speech sounds in our oral language generally are represented regularly by certain letters, e.g., the spoken word—rat—is spelled r-a-t.

Q: What Is A Phonics Rule?

A: The rule that a speech sound is spelled frequently by a certain letter (or cluster of letters), and in no other way. For example, the speech sounds /r/-/a/-/t/, in this order, are spelled r-a-t over 96 percent of the time. Children apply phonics rules to gain the approximate pronunciations of written words. After this, they usually can infer the normal pronunciations.

A: How Does The Application Of Phonics Information Work?

A: The child first perceives the individual letters in a word, e.g., rat. He or she then "sounds out" this word by saying its three speech sounds, /r/-/a/-/t/. As children's skills grow in phonics application, they can quickly recognize frequently occurring letter clusters such as at (as in fat, cat, mat, etc.).

Q: How Is Phonics Information Best Taught?

A: In a direct, systematic, and intensive fashion. Here both teacher and pupil know precisely what are the instructional goals, and the skills to be learned are arranged into a hierarchy of difficulty, and adequate practice for learning to mastery is provided.

Q: What About Children Who Can Recognize Individual Words, But Whose Reading Comprehension Is Relatively Poor?

A: These children are lacking in one or all of the following: (1) background knowledge in the topics they attempt to read; (2) knowledge of the meanings of words in these topics; (3) ability to make inferences about the content being read; and (4) ability to follow the organization or structure of the text that is pursued. Teaching for these children should concentrate on these matters.

Q: What Is The Relationship Of Knowledge Of Phonics Information and Reading Comprehension?

A: Nothing develops the quick and accurate (automatic) recognition of written words better than does proper phonics instruction. Then, nothing relates more closely to reading comprehension than does automatic word recognition. The ability to recognize words automatically allows children to direct their mental energy when reading toward the comprehension of written material.

Q: My School Tells Me That My Child Has Been Taught To Apply Phonics Information. But He/She Still Has Difficulty Recognizing Words. What Is The Problem?

A: It is highly probable that your school actually teaches phonics information in only an indirect, unsystematic, and non-intensive manner. Since many of today's schools do not teach phonics skills sufficiently nor suitably, home instruction often becomes necessary.

Q: Isn't The Spelling Of English Too Unpredictable Or Irregular For The Application Of Phonics Information To Work Well?

A: No. True, there are notable exceptions to some phonics rules, e.g., the pronunciation and spelling of tough. Nonetheless, the

notable successes of direct and systematic phonics programs disprove the above charge.

Q: My Child Reads Slowly, But Accurately, At The Same Speed Both Orally And Silently. Is This A Matter Of Concern.

A: Accuracy in reading almost always is a more important goal than rate of reading, especially with beginning readers. Very high rates of speed in reading, in fact, are illusory. They inevitable are simply scanning or skimming, rather than true reading. Even the average university student actually reads around the same speed, orally and silently.

Q: Isn't It True That Many Children Cannot Learn Phonics Information?

A: To the contrary, rarely is this so. Only the small number of children with genuine central nervous system dysfunctions experience significant difficulty learning properly taught phonics information.

Q: My Child's Teacher Says That "Sight" Words, Recognized As "Wholes," Must Be Learned Before Phonics Instruction Is Begun. Is She Correct?

A: No. The assumption that children recognize words by "sight," that is, without using their letters as cues to their recognition, is not substantiated by the experimental research. Individual letters are the cues all readers use to recognize words. For example, we know cat and rat are different words because we see that their first letters are not the same. "Sight" word advocates never answer the question: "If children recognize words as wholes, how are the wholes recognized?"

Q: What Is A Reasonable Time Schedule For Children To Develop The Ability To Recognize Words Independently, Without Someone Else's Help?

A: With proper phonics teaching it is justifiable to expect the normal child to reach this state by the end of grade two. More apt pupils can become self-sufficient in reading at even an earlier age. Reading independently means the ability of children to read without help any topic they normally can talk about or otherwise understand.

Q: I Have Heard About The "Look/Say" Method Of Teaching Reading—Is This A Valid Approach?

A: No. "Look-Say" methodology assumes that if children are given enough repeated exposures to words as "wholes," they will learn to identify them as "sight" words. Phonics teaching is de-emphasized and delayed. "Look-Say" suffers the same basic weakness as any other "sight" word method.

Q: What Are The Best Ways To Test My Child's Reading Abilities?

A: First, listen to him or her read aloud. If he or she guesses at words, some additional direct and systematic phonics instruction is called for. Then, jot down critically important parts of the story your child reads aloud. Have him or her retell the story. How many consequential points were omitted? If this is more than 20 percent, discuss ahead of time with your child the topic and the special words of the next story he or she reads. Unfamiliar words and topics are the greatest handicaps to reading comprehension.

Q: Is The "Language Experience" Method Effective For Reading Development?

A: In this approach children dictate sentences to teachers, who transcribe them on large sheets of paper as children watch. It is theorized here that anything children can so "write" they also easily can read. Since most LE programs do not teach phonics directly, systematically, and intensively, they do not prove to be a superior way to teach children to read.

Q: I Have Heard That Children's Guessing At Words, Using Sentence Contexts As Cues To Word Identities, Can Substitute For The Application Of Phonics Information. True Or False?

A: False. The use of context cues is a relatively immature and crude means of word recognition, utilized extensively only by beginning readers. Able, mature readers generally recognize words automatically, not through the use of context cues.

Q: Won't The Intensive Teaching Of Phonics Information Cause Reading Comprehension To Be Largely Ignored Or De-emphasized In Schools?

A: This is an unverified apprehension. Intensive phonics instruction simply develops a necessary tool for the expeditious realization of the ultimate goal of reading: to comprehend literally, critically analyze, and enjoy and appreciate written material. In fact, intensive phonics teaching is the most felicitous and quickest way to create independent readers, i.e., children who can readily comprehend any written topic about which they can talk or think.

Q: Does Teaching Children To Syllabicate Long Words Help Them To Recognize These Words?

A: Yes, with proper teaching. Children readily can identify the number of syllables in a spoken word. Thus, they correctly will say there are four syllables in interesting. Teaching dictionary syllabication of words to help children read them is not the most productive practice, however. A better procedure is to teach children to first identify the vowel letters in long words, and then to attach the consonant letters that follow. The syllabication of interesting thus becomes int-er-est-ing. Manipulate becomes manip-ulate.

Q: Books Called "Basal Readers" Are Widely Used In Schools. Are They The Best Means By Which To Teach Phonics Information?

A: These books, given grade-level designations, are accompanied by instructional manuals for teachers. Unfortunately, they generally do not teach phonics information adequately. With rare exceptions, they do not teach enough phonics information to prepare children to recognize quickly and accurately the words they present in their stories. It has been found that almost any basal reader system is improved by the addition of intensive phonics teaching.

Q: Many Schools Now Tell Children To Use "Invented Spelling." Are There Any Dangers In This Practice?

A: Yes. To avoid frustrating these young pupils, they should be provided words to read that their phonics training has prepared them to recognize. Also, long and convoluted sentences should be avoided. As children's reading abilities grow, these controls can be relaxed progressively.

Q: It Is Said That Literacy Instruction Should Be "Integrated." What Does This Mean?

A: Literacy consists of writing as well as reading ability. It greatly reinforces a child's ability to recognize a word if he or she learns to spell and handwrite it immediately after learning to identify it. Urging children to write this word at this time in original sentences has the same desirable effect.

Q: My School District Has Adopted The "Whole Language" Approach To Reading Development. What Are Its Views On Phonics Teaching?

A: Whole Language advocates insist that reading instruction must not be broken down and taught as a sequence of subskills, ranging from the least to the most difficult for children to learn. They assert that all reading skills of every kind must be learned co-instantaneously. Therefore, whatever phonics information individual children may need to know they easily will infer on their own as they read "real books." Since children supposedly best learn to read simply "by reading," no direct and systematic

teaching of phonics is necessary. It is important to note that there is no experimental research evidence to support this view of phonics instruction.

Q: What Is The Whole Language Theory Regarding Reading Comprehension?

A: The Whole Language (WL) approach urges children to omit, substitute, and add words—at will—in the materials they read. It also encourages children to "construct" idiosyncratic versions of the meanings that authors intended to communicate. It is a "pernicious" practice to expect children to give "right" answers regarding word identities and the meanings of written text, a leader of the Whole Language movement admonishes teachers. As with their views on phonics instruction, the proponents of Whole Language offer no empirical verification for their opinions about how reading comprehension should be developed. The most unfortunate consequence of Whole Language teaching is that children are not made ready by it to read critically. Since children in Whole Language classes are not always expected to gain the exact meanings that authors intended to impart, they are not prepared to examine them critically.

Q: Shouldn't Children Who Speak Non-standard English (e.g., "I Ain't Got No Pencil. They be Having' My Pencil.") Learn Standard English Before Being Taught To Read?

A: While mastery of standard English is required in many jobs, it is not expedient to wait until children who speak nonstandard English learn the standard dialect before teaching them to read. Moreover, there have been successful reading programs with non-standard speakers, who usually are children from low-income families. Taking time out of reading programs to deliberately try to change children's dialects neither is an economical use of this time, nor particularly effective in developing reading skills. Learning to read standard English, fortunately, does have the desirable side effect of teaching children how to speak standard English.

Q: Some Schools Say They Are Teaching "Metacognition" In Their Reading Programs. Is This A Necessary Or Valuable Practice?

A: Metacognition refers in part to children's conscious awareness of how well they are progressing, during the actual time they are reading. For example, children would ask themselves, "Does what I am reading make sense to me? If not, why not?" Schools that emphasize this overt self-examination by children of their reading and performances find that pupils learn to comprehend reading material better than otherwise is possible.

Q: What Is An Effective Way For Parents And Other Interested Parties To Find Out If Their Schools Are Teaching Reading Properly?

A: The first question to ask of schools is, "Have you adopted the Whole Language approach to reading development?" If so, describe how it is conducted." If the answer is yes, it usually will be the case that pupils are not being given proper instruction in word recognition nor reading comprehension. Then, ask to see the syllabus for teaching phonics information that teachers are required to follow. Determine if phonics information is being taught directly, systematically, and intensively. Calculate how adequately children are prepared, through phonics lessons, to recognize the words in the stories they are given to read.

Q: I Have Discovered That My School Teaches Reading Improperly. Now What Do I Do?

A: The policies for reading instruction ordinarily are set by the central office staff of the school district. It is delegated to do so by

the school board. Ask these officials to defend in writing the defective reading program they have sanctioned for use by teachers. Particularly, request citations of the experimental research on which this unsound reading program is based. If you have found that the unsatisfactory reading program is the Whole Language approach, you will receive no such list of experimental research studies, since the empirical research does not support Whole Language. In this event, demand that your school board make a public policy statement as to whether the district's reading programs must be based on experimental research evidence. Few, if any, school boards will say otherwise. Then, remind the board that it logically cannot continue to authorize the use of the Whole Language scheme. Your appearances at board meetings, and letters to the media will give you added opportunities to convey this message.

APRIL 13, 1999.

To Whom It May Concern:

Filimon Adhanom is a student in my room who came from a remote area in Africa. The language he speaks we can not find an interpreter for. He came to me this year with no English background and no school experience at all.

Each day in my classroom, we would work on the sounds on the "Smart Chart" as a whole group. Each day Filimon would sit and listen. During our "Smart Chart" time each day I would allow the children to come up and say the sounds of a certain row. Then one day I happened to call on Filimon just to see if he was catching on and to my amazement he could say the whole column of sounds. He earned a star for his effort and before long he knew all the sounds on the "Smart Chart".

Soon after this Filimon starting sounding out words he really didn't know the meaning, but because of the sounds he had learned from the chart he now can read, sound out most words, spell, write, and even spell big daddy words that have three syllables. The "Direct Approach" to phonics gave Filimon the key to unlocking the world of English and how it works.

I feel that the Direct Approach to Phonics is a necessary tool to helping not only ESL students, but all students high or low. It has been one of the most encouraging programs I have seen for years. I wish every child could have the opportunity to work with the "Smart Chart". It gives each child a key to unlock the world of letters, sounds, and reading.

Sincerely,

MS. KARIN JACOB.

The following statements were given by Hoosier parents before the Interim Study Committee of the Indiana State Senate.

TESTIMONY FROM DIANE BADGLEY

I'm writing because I know the pain of a child that attends school everyday and can not read. I'm writing because 10 years later I see the joy of independence in the same child who can now read and has been given a choice to his future. I have learned, children don't fail, adults fail children.

Kyle started preschool at age 3, I helped in the school, we were fortunate enough to not have me away at work. This allowed for a lot of time for one on one interactions and reading. I was always told that if I read to my children every day they would become readers. It worked well for Kyle's older sister Jodie. She was reading before she entered the first grade.

Throughout preschool, kindergarten and first grade Kyle struggled with knowing the names of all the letters in the alphabet. In second grade we tried to get him to under-

stand the letters on a page can be sounded out to make words. This seemed impossible and painful for all of us including the school. As a result of daily embarrassment and the need to fit in, Kyle was able to memorize some books, so it appeared he was reading. However, after testing, the Public School recommended Special Education placement.

Kyle was removed from his second grade class and placed in a smaller class with children with all different emotional and physical special needs and with a teacher who thought she knew how to help him. This is when emotional struggles started for Kyle. In his world he was not only failing academically but also socially. I assured Kyle the placement was temporary, because he would be taught to read in this class and then be able to rejoin his friends.

But, in third grade he was still not reading. When Kyle was invited to sleep overs at a friend's house, he refused for fear he would have to play games that required reading (Monopoly, Clue, Charades), or take a turn reading jokes out of a joke book, or read a scary story at midnight. Once, Kyle tried going to a sleep over. He hadn't been there long when we got a call asking us to pick him up. He was behaving badly. You see, Kyle would much rather be seen as a bully than a dummy.

Kyle was promoted each year. Each year, he struggled with reading and with his peers, they teased him, they couldn't believe he couldn't read. He was passed on year after year because of Special Ed. Accommodations and adaptations—books on tape, an aide to write his essay tests, reduced spelling list, untimed test—and working through recess and lunch to get all the work done. But still not reading enough to be independent. I kept thinking what year will they focus on the reading?

One day when he was in fifth grade, I found Kyle's older sister reading him a note from a girl in his grade. That was when I realized, "This is all wrong. He will never fit in unless I find a way to teach him to read. He needs to be out playing during recess, eating lunch with other kids. Playing games at sleep overs, playing on the computer, reading and writing his own love notes."

My husband, Keith, is a director of a department for a plastics company in Richmond, Indiana. Keith admitted to me that the would never hire Kyle—his own son—unless he learned to read. Even in a maintenance position, Kyle would be a safety hazard in the work place.

I realized then, as Kyle's mother, I had nothing to loose. I signed a home schooling form and enrolled Kyle in a private reading clinic. The clinics reading instruction is based on the 30 years of NICHD (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) research. Kyle learned how to break apart words into sounds. For him, this was the key that unlocked the door. He went every day with homework on weekends. It was intensive, but it was like magic. Kyle wanted to go! He was reading on grade level in 6 months!

This experience taught me that Kyle did not fail reading all those years, the system failed Kyle. I am not asking public schools to teach all children Physics X, we are talking about reading. We know now because of the NIH research all children can learn to read, it is our responsibility to teach them.

Since Kyle's success, I have attempted to help other parents and schools with their children. Kyle is in High School now, and is still reading on grade level and is on the academic track. I have been unable to stop telling my story and have started 'Parents' Coalition for Literacy. My board is made up of businessmen, an attorney, a pediatrician, college department heads, primary and sec-

ondary teachers and parents. We now know it will take a whole community to teach ALL children.

How well one reads sets the foundation for future success in school, work and relationships. Because our family was financially able to help Kyle build that foundation, he is ready to face the future. Our hope is that all Indiana children will have the same choices.

TESTIMONY OF SUSAN L. WARNER

Good Afternoon. I'm Susan Warner, and I want to thank you for taking the time to have this important discussion about reading. I title this humble effort "Bill's Story." My six year journey to learn about the teaching of reading began when our son showed difficulties in speech. We took three year old Bill to his school for speech testing. This coincided with the pre-school teacher noticing that Bill didn't always "hear" her. Bill did have chronic ear infections as a toddler, so we had his hearing tested. In both sets of tests, he was pronounced, "just fine," and we were temporarily relieved. In kindergarten he passed all of his "sounds" of the alphabet test. I taught him "hooked on phonics" in hopes that it would help him learn to read, but nothing worked. I was beginning to learn about the difference between "phonics" and "phonemic awareness." By this time Bill's happy disposition was gone, and it was a huge undertaking just to get him to the bus stop because he hated school.

First grade testing revealed that Bill tested "borderline" by state guidelines. He did not qualify for an IEP, because the results of testing did not show a two year grade deficit in learning yet. Private testing confirmed that although Bill possessed an IQ of 109, he had difficulty processing auditory information. We still wonder why the state guidelines are structured to allow children to fail.

Again, on our own, we found a program called Fast Forward which Bill completed the summer before second grade. The second grade teacher was confident that with intensive phonics he would make progress. It didn't take long to see that Bill was still failing and frustrated, and needed help. Through a friend, we hired Linda Mood Bell clinicians. It was no surprise that Bill now at age 8, was reading far below his ability.

It is difficult to express what the Linda Mood Bell program has done for our son. After eight weeks he was finally reading. The LMB tutors were my son's lifeline. Without them, Bill would have failed school at second grade. Bill made gains in every area. When his principal and teacher came to observe, they could not believe his progress. Bill started to be his funny self. I knew that we were making progress, when he went from saying that tutoring made him want to say the "CH—" word, to after 8 weeks saying that he wanted to say the "SH—" word. Unfortunately, the rebuilding of his self-esteem will probably take years.

Last week Bill earned his first "spelling star." We are using the tools that the LMB program has taught us. Unfortunately, he is still behind after spending over \$25,000.00 in testing and remediation, and we have a long road ahead of us. Instead of working to pay this off, my days are spent driving back and forth for the purpose of expensive remediation. However, it is a small price to pay because our son no longer looks at the pictures in a book to figure out a word. What happens to children who don't have Pat and Susan Warner for parents?

I am so proud of Bill. He has persevered through things that no child should have to experience. From the humiliation in front of his peers, to some thinking that he was just lazy, and everyone telling him that he could

learn to read, when he could not. He will be tested yet again this month to see if he qualifies for an IEP.

The good news is that in PHM, we TOPA tested all of our kindergarteners in the spring. We have identified children who have a lack of phonemic awareness. They will get Earobics, and some will get Fast Forward. We are looking to incorporate Structures of Intellect into our gym curriculum. Our teachers are being trained in programs such as Linda Mood Bell, Language, and Wilson. This type of early intervention will make a difference.

As an elected school board member, I will continue to support programs for early intervention. The new accountability legislation demands results. I hope the state will help pay for results. I intend to be accountable, but schools need your support.

Recently, I leafed through the contents, and indexes of text books pertaining to the teaching of reading at a local college. I found little to support the current research about teaching reading. I returned Monday to check, and found two books that did explain phonemic awareness. Unfortunately these were masters degree texts. It should be no surprise, that many children don't learn to read. It is a crime.

I will continue to channel my energy into improving the way we teach children. It is how I avoid being consumed by what has happened to my son, by a state system, that should protect children. I urge this committee to please take steps to show us that you support improvement too. Thank you.

TESTIMONY OF DIANA, BILL AND JUSTIN WALTERS

There is a popular child's book, titled, "The Never Ending Story". Well, this is our sons never ending story.

Today Justin is sixteen, his story began over nine years ago. Justin comes from a two parent home he has a older sister, a dog of his own and a pony. Justins parents are both college graduates. He has had a well rounded family life and social life. We believe we did "all the right things", we began reading to Justin and his sister daily at a very early age. Nursery school with French class, music, and art began at age three. We waited the extra year to begin our son in school. Justin began his first year at age six. His class had 60 students all in one huge room. Two teachers one aid. We parents volunteered weekly to help. Even at this young age his teacher chose to put Justin in the lower reading group. Why? He had not even begun to read yet. I was a twice a week volunteer I saw the other students picking up books and just read. Was our son not doing the same? I was told not to worry, some catch on sooner than others just go home and work on the alphabet and read to him. Allow him to enjoy reading.

Justin began first grade at Madison in the Penn Harris Madison school district. We noticed at once that Justin is not able or did not respond to reading his first grade books out loud to us. He preferred that we read them to him. He enjoyed the stories but he had no knowledge of how to sound the words out. We were told after questioning the teacher not to worry that he understood the concept, just to keep reading to him, and point to the words, he would "catch on." We did this every night after school, we believed that the educated teacher knew how to teach reading.

By the third grade we grew even more frantic. Justin was doing well in most classes, keeping up, even doing better than average in Math, Science, History. He had great friends and the teachers thought that he was a wonderful kid. He was very intelligent for

his age. He was a great kid. One thing still stood out, he could not read the books he brought home. His father and I took turns reading his school books for him, Justin continued to listen and remember what we read.

Justin was fortunate enough at this time to have a substitute teacher. To our surprise she stopped me in the hall at school one volunteer day. Asking me if I had noticed that Justin was having trouble reading, perhaps he had a reading disability. This was the first time that a teacher had come to me, this was the first time anyone had said the word disability! Was this why he could not "Catch On"? This substitute suggested that the school have Justin tested. With her help we were able to go through the channels to have Justin tested. The tests showed that Justin did have more than a two year lag in reading, while being average and above in the others subjects. We were told that he must have a reading disability, but, when asked what, these teachers and experts could not tell us. Justin could be given a I.E.P. Individual Educational Plan, and put into a government paid program, "Chapter One". This class was for forty-five minutes with twelve or fifteen other students. The teacher was a aid said to have taught reading in New York State. We were also told that we should be very happy for these accommodations. We were hopeful that this was the solution for Justin, these were "trained educated" people in charge of our sons education.

By Justin's fourth and fifth grades years the school corporation sent a part time Learning Disability teacher out to our school. Justin received 45 min. daily reading help. This same teacher would also read Justin's tests for him and work sheets. When asked how he was doing, she said that Justin had some kind of reading disability but was not sure what. When asked about Justin's lack of phonics and his inability to sound out words, she said that he was fine in that area.

Justin was now going into the Middle School. His L.D. teacher was concerned that he would not make it in a regular class without modifications. She was scared that he would get lost. So, it was suggested that he be put into direct services for all his classes.

Justin's first day was a nightmare. He came home in tears, asking "what had he done so wrong as to be put in that room" he described the classroom as kids who did not care, they stood on tables and sat under them, they yelled and some cursed. He was scared. Justin was not in the L.D. program for a behavior problem or a attention problem. He just could not read to his grade level. Within minutes of Justin's arrival home his new teacher called. She asked the same question, "why was Justin in her room" it was clear he did not belong there. She suggested that he go back into the regular class room but that he could go to her for help. When he could find her and when she had time. She has twenty-one or more other students. Justin was also given 45 min., daily direct reading time with a untrained aid. He was told to read to her, and if he tried hard enough that he would read better. He read, she corrected his misread words. This went on for sixth and seventh grades. During this time we had continued trouble with the teachers of Justin's classes even taking time to read his I.E.P. We were told by one that they had too many to read and she for one did not have time to read them. Justin struggled and tried to cope. We continue to question and to seek help.

By Justin's eighth grade year he had lost his friends, he believed that they were embarrassed to have a friend who could not read. His best friend of eight years stopped calling, stopped coming over. Justin would sneak into the L.D. room for help, hoping that none of his friends would see him.

After about a month of school, we decided that we needed to help, and save our son. We enrolled Justin in a newly opened private school. He needed quality teachers who would give him a quality education. We believed that the I.E.P. was just a bad fitting Band-Aid. It helped him to cope but did not deal with his real issues. We did not have much time in Justin's educational life to save him.

Justin had a great year. The school tailored better to Justin's way of learning. He had wonderful caring teachers. Justin's self-esteem rose. He saw that he could learn. But, Justin still was not reading anywhere close to grade level. We were still trying to keep up with all his reading at home. This school lasted only for one short year, but while still open, in the spring the school offered space to a language program called "Linda Mood Bell".

We decided to have Justin tested, the results told us Justin was in the eighth grade trying to cope at a First Grade reading level. No wonder Justin could not take notes, read his school books, or even write verbal instructions down. This program was a intense phonemic awareness program, after researching this method we learned that there had been great success with teaching a non reader with this program. We planned to begin as soon as possible. To Justin's misfortune, the school after one year lost its support and funding. It closed and with it we lost the reading program, before he was able to begin.

Justin returned to the public school system, again with a I.E.P. In his ninth grade year, he still read between first and a fourth grade level, trying to again "keep up".

In November of that year, we and Justin, decided that he could not cope any longer. Justin had to read that was the bottom line.

We, along with other parents from this area having the same problems with the schools reading or non reading programs, decided we needed to take drastic measures. After doing our own research we continued to read over and over that a non-reader would greatly benefit in a phonemic awareness program. Sharing the expense of air flight, room and board, local transportation, plus a hourly fee we parents brought teachers from the Linda Mood Bell program back.

With the agreement of our school system Justin would attend a four hour daily intensive reading program. Every morning he would go to the one on one program, working with the Linda Mood Bell instructors. At noon we would drive him back to High School for his required classes. Justin did this for four months; at the end of this time Justin was tested again. He tested at eighth grade reading level with a fifth grade spelling level. In some tests he even tested higher. He was able to read! He was able to see a new word and break it down and sound it out. He felt good about himself, he really could be taught to read. He was not a failure.

That summer he attend summer school catching up on missed required classes. He then went to one to two hour sessions daily with a Linda Mood Bell teacher that I brought back for the month of June.

Things are not perfect yet, he still needs encouragement, Justin continues working with a tutor out of the school system, so he may receive the correct reading program suited to give him the optimal help. He has continued to increase his reading skills. We feel Justin has been a victim of our school system. He was not to blame but he is the one person suffering the consequences.

He has not given up, he continues to meet teachers with little understanding of a person who learns differently. This year, Justin's Sophomore year of High School, Justin's father and I met a teacher at Open

House she made comments intended, we believe, to compliment Justin. Her words were, "never would have known Justin was a L.D. student, he does not look like one." When she realized our surprise at her words she stuttered, "But he works so well with the other students". I did not know whether to laugh or cry. We have done a lot of the latter so this time we will do the first.

Since the first few days of school we have painfully watched Justin read and take and retake his drivers test. Three times, with only one over the minimum missed, on the third try he was so nervous he could not drive to the testing site. He knew if he missed it again he would have to wait a month to retake the test, and not be able to drive without a adult. Justin chose to have the test read to him this time, in the license branch in front of everyone, he passed 100 percent.

We will continue to fight for and give Justin love and support. It will be a "Never Ending Story".

Justin now reads notes left by us, and he leaves us notes written by him with correctly spelled words. I save every, "Mom took lunch money. Please call for hair cut." What sweet words for a parent to see and read.

TESTIMONY OF KRISTI TRAPP

I used a phonetic approach (Smart Chart) with all of the first grade students that attended summer school. A test was created to allow students to demonstrate knowledge of phonemic awareness. Students verbally displayed knowledge of long and short vowels, vowel teams, blends, and diagraphs. It also provided a means of evaluating their use of phonetic rules. Decoding and word attack skills were evaluated too.

Almost every student had mastered the entire chart by the end of summer school. These results reflect using a phonetic approach for 15 days, twenty-five minutes each day. The phonetic approach is called "Direct Approach".

Pretest Average—50 percent.

Posttest Average—89 percent.

FIRST GRADE TEST RESULTS

Pretest (percent)	Posttest (percent)
56	95
12	62
64	91
69	87
30	89
93	100
29	82
14	69
58	78
85	100
58	91
87	100
76	93
55	87
27	93
58	87
56	96
6	67
37	78
28	78
75	98
45	96
40	93
69	98
44	98
62	87
33	93
56	95
85	98
23	76
38	85
30	93
36	75
40	75
36	89
27	89
64	95
82	98
65	89
65	93
40	85
69	91
87	98

FIRST GRADE TEST RESULTS—Continued

Pretest (percent)	Posttest (percent)
45	93
51	80
29	76
44	85

I have seen a dramatic improvement in where my kids are this year using the phonetic approach compared to last year without it. I gave the first theme test for our reading series and was shocked to find almost all of my students in the "A" range. The students have more confidence in their independent reading and writing skills. I spoke at a PTO meeting recently about my reaction, my students reaction, and their parents reaction to using the Phonetic Approach. The parents at the meeting seemed to all be in favor of this approach after hearing the difference it is making. Several parents during conferences shared that "their kids knew so much more than their older kids did at this age because of the strong phonetic foundation we are providing". That made me feel so proud of what we are doing. One parent told me that her fifth grade daughter was struggling with spelling and that she might have her first grader help mark the spelling words for her sister. A first grader helping a fifth grader that is unbelievable isn't it? Hopefully we will receive the funding so that grades 1-5 will be able to use the Smart Chart. My students are so enthusiastic about using the Smart Chart that they often break into chanting the sounds on the chart.

USING PHONICS THROUGHOUT THE CURRICULUM

I use phonics all day long. It is not an isolated activity. We use phonics in reading, spelling, math, social studies, science, and health. When we are learning about a new subject and big words are involved we need to know what they mean and be able to read them. We used word attack skills on the more difficult words before we actually read in subject area. That way the kids will know the difficult words in advance and be able to comprehend the story much better.

DIRECT APPROACH—SUCCESS STORIES

I incorporate vocabulary words from content area subjects. We talk about analyzing words by dividing them into syllables, marking the letter sounds and using our chin and hand to count syllables. It's very exciting!

—Mary Lyon, Longfellow Middle School, 6th Grade Title I Reading

I teach Math to 6th graders, but I work with the Reading teacher to pull out words from the Math book. (ex: data, information). I help students decode so they can then do the Math.

—Burnedia B. McBride-Williams, IPS #28, 6th Grade Math

Before reading a comprehension page, we scan and pull out any words which may be "stumbling blocks". We mark them on the board and use them in sentences. Then we are better prepared to read for meaning.

—Dorothy Mason, Title I Reading, IPS #44

When my son was in first grade, he used to say, "I hate school, how old do you have to be to quit?" He was so frustrated because he couldn't read. The school did not "believe" in phonics. When my son learned The Direct Approach, he got the "tools" he needed to read. The logical approach made sense to him. He started reading on his own instead of me reading to him. With only one year of the smart chart, in second grade, he scored 4th grade reading equivalency on the Stanford Achievement test! Pretty amazing!

—A happy mom!

Each Monday, the class writes their spelling words phonetically. As I put the marks on the words on the board, the kids are telling me what marks to make. They have learned the chart so well, that if I forget a mark, they give about half a second before saying, "Mr. Schwitzer! You forgot the (missing mark)!" It's incredible! The first week of November, half the class got 100% on their spelling tests.

—Lou Schwitzer, Grade 4, IPS #44

I teach 7th grade Title I Reading. After a slow start, when my students felt the phonics tape was a little too "first grade" for them—I gave them several multiple syllable words. The students struggled with the larger words, so we began at the intermediate level. Now everyone enjoys coming up to the board. We pull words out of reading comprehension exercises. Now we're pulling words such as "hyposensitize" out of the dictionary! (It means reduce sensitivity to allergens, etc.)

—Stuart Wood, Longfellow Middle School #28

Second grade students are decoding three and four syllable words! After decoding, they are able to spell the words without looking. Our spelling grades have improved greatly. We have had four weeks where we had everyone with 100%! Children get extremely excited and almost fight to come to the chalkboard to mark and spell words! When we use the Phonics Pad worksheets, we do the top part as a class. They call out how to mark the words! They get so excited, they have trouble sitting still! Each child does the bottom part for review. I'm seeing such improvement!

—Ruth Esther Vawter, IPS 107, Grade 2

Since I've been using the Direct Approach, my children are very excited about learning! One of my major problems has become my best student. We use the smart chart to mark and sound out any word that we don't know. We can now sound out long words and they're asking for longer words. Comprehension skills are improving because we mark and decode unknown words before reading paragraphs!

—Linda Jones, 6, 7, 8 L.D.

So far, we're doing 1 or 2 words we call "challenge words" or "third grade words." If I don't have one on the board, they ask where their word is. I call them "Detective Smith" (their last names) as they "decode" words!

—Reta Cunningham, IPS #109, Second grade

I teach 8th grade boys. The very worst reader in my room loves to use the yard stick to lead the smart chart drill. (He sometimes balances on his chin to point!) The boys try to "beat" the "lady on the tape!" Marking their spelling words really helps them focus on each sound.

—Public School Teacher, Middle School

An easy game to play for reinforcing the sounds on the smart chart is called "Make these letters grow". I write _ame on the chalkboard. The children create word families such as blame, came, fame, etc. Phonics works!!!

—Shirley J. DeNoon, IPS #57

My students love to use the words "macron" and "breve".

—Janet Johnston, IPS #109, Grade 1

READING FAILURE

My name is Linda Wight Harmon. I'm a product of Indiana public schools and to this day I make my living using reading and writing skills I learned in first grade and analytical skills I learned as a college business major. My husband is Tim Harmon, the managing editor of the South Bend Tribune. To this day, he uses skills he learned in the first

grade and later the Indian University School of Journalism.

Our eldest daughter is Catherine. Today, she uses skills she learned in SECOND grade from private tutors and computerized language programs. She is now a self-sufficient, very motivated fourth grader in her Montessori classroom. She has an average IQ, a whopper vocabulary, an inquisitive mind, naturally curly hair, books in her backpacks, the best reading comprehension in her class, notebooks scribbled with stories . . . and a well-developed fear of failure from first grade.

That was the year that no one at a National Blue Ribbon school could teach an editor's daughter to read.

She started out eager, but quickly lost her spirit when her first spelling list—words like watermelon, apple, red, green—was a complete mystery. She had no idea that letter linked to sounds, something her Kindergarten teacher warned us about in our previous town. Even then, she couldn't tie her shoes, couldn't tell left from right, couldn't count to 30. Twice she'd had hearing tests because she didn't hear everything we said to her.

But the principal at the new school calmed our fears. She assured us her teachers knew what to do. They put Catherine in a special "Discover intensive Phonics" class. It went right over her head. By Christmas, she could not tell the difference between the words "as" and "apple." Next, the teachers put her on an early intervention list, which meant she was observed for three of the four remaining months while the teachers did nothing. She grew increasingly frustrated. She couldn't write. She couldn't read and the children in her class pointed that out to her. The teachers gave her easier work. Nightly, she cried herself to sleep, dreading the next day of failure.

That summer, we took her to a neuropsychologist in Indianapolis. In 45 minutes, he told us our daughter had a profound learning disability. In three hours, he had pinpointed her deficit as a lack of phonemic awareness, a common, easily-detected problem in non-readers. He found her reading level to be "Kindergarten-9th month" and that, unless she was properly instructed, she would and, I quote, "Never really read."

He told us the approach that would best address her deficits was Lindamood-Bell, a multi-sensory, structured approach that focused on auditory processing, but he doubted we could find it or, for that matter, any other method to teach dyslexics to read. He told us: "You need to get Catherine some hobbies."

Armed with an IEP, she went back to the Blue Ribbon school for second grade. She sat alone in the hall and listened to tapes of a teacher as she followed along with her finger. She was seated next to a smart girl who was assigned to read work-sheets to Catherine and spell the answers. She went to the resource room for a half hour a day. She felt stupid. She cried herself to sleep. She begged not to go to school. Tim and I more than once carried her into class in our pajamas, leaving her sobbing in her seat. And it got worse. She talked about hating her life and wanting to die. Then one morning, waiting for bus and sobbing, she threw up her breakfast . . . into my hands.

It was then that I saw how clearly this Blue Ribbon school was teaching my daughter pre-bulimia skills, not pre-reading skills. Catherine has never been back to a public school.

My mother, my husband and I have spent hundreds of hours researching the right way to teach this child to read, using the prescription of the National Institutes of Health research, something her teachers had never

heard of. Catherine has spent six weeks in a computer therapy program that trained her brain to distinguish sounds—phonemic awareness—then 120 hours with Lindamood tutors who taught her the 44 sounds in the English language and how to link them to letters.

At the end of the fourth week, the tutors said, "Can you get Catherine some books? She's read all we have." At the end of the eighth week, she tested at second grade, second month.

The money I've lost track of—but we've spent well over \$30,000 finding her deficits, undoing what the Blue Ribbon school did wrong, remediating her issues and getting the job done right.

And we're not alone. Lindamood has taught roughly two dozen children to read in South Bend in the last 18 months. But the thing is—all of this could have been done in Kindergarten and first grade. Our daughter—and many, many other children—could have been assessed in the beginning in Kindergarten, taught with other children who needed multi-sensory, systematic approaches and they all could have learned the right way in the beginning, in groups, with a properly trained teacher, in a regular classroom. These approaches have been around a long time. They aren't revolutionary. They don't make people Republicans or Democrats—but I can guarantee they do create the foundation for a literate voter.

But what keeps me up at night—and should you also—is the six kids in Catherine's first grade who were in the same boat, and the two dozen who didn't read that well even with the phonics. Then there are the children in inner city schools—one out of four in the South Bend Community school system is classified as Special Ed. There are thousands of Catherine's in this world, but the incidence of reading failure is MUCH higher than the incidence of LD. With or without Title I funding, with or without literate parents, with or without upscale suburban tax bases, with or without breakfast, our children are not learning to read because their teachers do not have enough tools and the teachers aren't accountable anyway.

Today, if it weren't for the research from the National Institutes of Health, Rutgers University and Lindamood-Bell, I would be writing to you as the parent of an illiterate child. Instead, I'm here to beg you to stop what I found at one of Indiana's best schools: Ignorance. My daughter's teachers didn't know the early warning signs of reading disorders—I've told you five of them in the past few pages, more than they knew after earning master's degrees in reading from major state universities.

As a parent and as a voter, I do believe that the United States should have the highest literacy rate in the world. It is to our shame that we do not. It is also due to our short-sightedness that we don't do everything possible to teach all children to read in Kindergarten and first grade so they can read their own textbooks, learn in classrooms for the next eleven years and graduate from high school. Instead, we brush the non-readers and poor-readers aside and muddle through, cheating them and their regular-learning classmates out of a first-class education and spending increasing amounts each year helping students who read their own textbooks.

Educators do not heed the educational research from the National Institutes of Health, yet we would sue a family physician who failed to act on half the early warning signs of cancer as established by that same research body. If the education community can't force itself to do the job, then legislators simply must protect the children of this country from needless reading failure and

put educators in the position where they can and do teach all our children to read . . . on time.

LINDA WIGHT HARMON.

"As an Indiana State Senator who has worked for many years to improve the performance of Hoosier students, I am absolutely convinced that our sources depends on our ability to produce competent readers. The world opens to the child who can read and, unfortunately, leaves behind those who cannot. Our obligation is to make certain that every child is given the best opportunity to become a reader. I am also convinced that phonemic awareness is the preferred and proven way to teach reading. We do our children a disservice when we allow them to move ahead without a mastery of reading, which ensures frustration and failure throughout their school years. Anything we can do to prevent this from happening is worth our effort. After all, they don't get a second chance to get this right."

INDIANA STATE SENATOR TERESA LUBBERS.

TESTIMONY BEFORE STUDY COMMITTEE—
INDIANA

Thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Peggy Schafir, and I'm a parent from Richmond, Indiana. I'm here to tell you about the enormous struggle and ultimate success my child encountered in learning to read. Our experience has been very painful, and my purpose for speaking is to prevent other children and families from having to live through that same pain and failure.

I have two children. Ben, who is 16, learned to read as if by magic. Matt is 14, and has struggled with reading most of his life.

Before they started kindergarten, we prepared our boys the best we knew how. We read to them daily. We made sure they saw us reading for business or pleasure. We tried to give them rich experiences—both by exploring new places and things in person, and by discovering them in books. We tried to create a home rich in language and literature.

For Ben, it was enough. For Matt, it wasn't.

At the end of one year of kindergarten, Matt was still struggling with matching sounds to letters. His teacher recommended that we have him repeat kindergarten. We did, and it appeared to work. When he started first grade, Matt knew all of his sounds and letters. He seemed ready to learn to read.

Imagine our disappointment when he did not. At the end of first grade, Matt was not reading. We worked with him diligently over the summer, following all the advice we could gather. In second grade, Matt received extra support at school.

In a sense, it appeared that Matt could read. If we read a book to him, he could read it back to us word for word. But if we took a word out of the book—one he had read easily—and wrote it on a piece of paper, he had no idea what it was. What is more, he seemed to have no idea how to go about figuring out what it was.

By the time Matt reached third grade, we began to experience real behavior problems. We tried everything we could think of. At one point, Matt was seeing a child psychologist, an optometrist (who gave him exercises to improve his visual tracking), and a speech pathologist. But the behavior told us we were still not doing enough. We decided to have Matt tested by a private reading tutor in our community.

In third grade, Matt knew four sight words.

In third grade, Matt became frustrated trying to read pre-primer books.

In third grade, Matt was basically a non-reader.

We learned from the testing that Matt had very poor phonemic awareness. In other words, he could not separate word "dog" into its component sounds /d/ /o/ /g/ or blend the sounds /k/ /a/ /t/ to say "cat". All his hard work learning to match the sounds and letters was important, but he needed more information before letters could convey worlds to him. Matt needed to learn how to hear, order, segment, and blend sounds.

Working with the reading tutor two hours a week, Matt began at last to make progress. By the beginning of fourth grade, he was reading at second grade level. A personal triumph—but still enough of a discrepancy for him to be tested for learning disabilities. We were told that reading was a "high expectation" for Matt. He would always need accommodations. He had to be placed in the "least restrictive environment".

After our first case conference, my husband took Matt to Earlham College for a soccer practice. He was in a hurry, so he drooped Matt off at the parking lot. "You've been here before," he said. "Just find the sign for the Athletic Building, then find the sign for the Coach's Office". Oh, no. Matt would have to read. He looked at his father through the car window and said, "Dad, I can't." That evening, my husband said, "Peggy, we have to fix this. It's going to be up to us."

That began a journey which has taken a lot of our time, our energy, and our savings. It is a journey which has been worth every step.

First, we took Matt out of school (using a home schooling form) and enrolled him in a very intensive reading clinic in Nashville, Tennessee. (I don't want to mislead you about Matt's enthusiasm for this—on the way, he kept kicking the dashboard and screaming, "I am not going to Nashville!") At the clinic, Matt continued to work on his phonemic awareness, and on how to use letters to get information about sounds. The instruction was systematic, explicit, and very intense—Matt worked four hours a day one-on-one with his tutors. Yes, the environment was restrictive, but only for a short time. Matt was at the clinic for six weeks. The alternative of remaining in the world of illiteracy would have restricted him for the rest of his life.

In those six weeks, Matt progressed from a second grade reading level to a fifth grade reading level. He returned to school, and we monitored him very carefully. Occasionally, he slipped, and we enrolled him again in a variety of clinics until he could solidify his new skills.

In total, Matt received 720 hours of remediation. He is now an 8th grader, reading at grade level with 90% accuracy. His reading speed improves daily. Last year, on one of our many car trips to and from clinics, Matt turned to me and said, "Mom, this is the best year of my life. I'm finally getting my dyslexia fixed."

We have our son back. He is happy and confident again. College is a very real option in his future. I want to be honest with you. We have lived through a very severe case of dyslexia. Even so, if we had caught Matt's delay in developing phonemic awareness back when he was in kindergarten, all of our lives would have been very different. Waiting until fourth grade to accommodate and remediate was very expensive, and I don't mean just in terms of dollars. This expense can be avoided.

This is what I have learned as a parent: Reading is an incredibly complex process, which can break down at any stage. To help our children master this process, we must know where they are breaking down as soon as possible. We must know how to address our children's needs, and be prepared to deliver what they need in the amount needed.

My husband and I were fortunate to be able to do that for Matt. I am here today because I hope that every child in Indiana can get that same attention.

Matt's first need was phonemic awareness. In that, Matt was not alone. Poor phonemic awareness is the single most common factor among people who do not read. Please, as you consider policies about reading, remember children like Matt. Think of the Matt that might have been, what the future holds for him now, and share with me the dream that all children will enter the world of literacy.

Thank you. I'll be glad to answer any questions I can.

□ 1145

Mr. Speaker, let me just close and say this does not need to be controversial. It simply says one method that we think is important for our teachers to teach is the use of phonics. They will have complete discretion in their classroom about how they teach, but let us recognize the fact that when 67 percent of our fourth graders are below standard on reading something is desperately wrong. We have to use what the scientific studies say work, that is phonics, and this Congress should go on record today as being in favor of teachers using this as one method in their classroom.

Finally, I would address the Congress in saying this is not a mandate. This is, at its core, a sense of Congress resolution, that this issue is so important that the body wants to go on record urging our teachers to use phonics, urging our teaching training schools to teach phonics as one method among many that they will use to teach our children to read.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MCINTOSH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 214, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Concurrent Resolution 214.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

CLARIFYING OVERTIME EXEMPTION FOR FIREFIGHTERS

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 1693) to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to clarify the overtime exemption for employees engaged in fire protection activities.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1693

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DEFINITION OF FIRE PROTECTION ACTIVITIES.

Section 3 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(y) 'Employee in fire protection activities' means an employee, including a firefighter, paramedic, emergency medical technician, rescue worker, ambulance personnel, or hazardous materials worker, who—

"(1) is trained in fire suppression, has the legal authority and responsibility to engage in fire suppression, and is employed by a fire department of a municipality, county, fire district, or State, and

"(2) is engaged in the prevention, control, and extinguishment of fires or response to emergency situations where life, property, or the environment is at risk."

SEC. 2. CONSTRUCTION.

The amendment made by section 1 shall not be construed to reduce or substitute for compensation standards (1) contained in any existing or future agreement or memorandum of understanding reached through collective bargaining by a bona fide representative of employees in accordance with the laws of a State or political subdivision of a State, and (2) which result in compensation greater than the compensation available to employees under the overtime exemption under section 7(k) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1693 is a simple and noncontroversial bill, introduced by our friend from Maryland (Mr. EHRlich), that would amend the Fair Labor Standards Act to clarify the existing overtime exemption for firefighters. The Committee on Education and the Workforce reported the bill yesterday without amendment and by voice vote. The bill has major bipartisan support in the House and it is supported by both labor and management, who would be affected by the change under the bill.

In addition, the National Association of Counties, the National Association of Towns and Townships, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities are supporters of this bill.

Generally, under the Fair Labor Standards Act, workers are entitled to overtime compensation for hours worked in excess of 40 within a week. The act contains unlimited exemption for overtime, under Section 7(k), for employees of public agencies who are engaged in fire protection activities.

The firefighter exemption allows employees engaged in fire protection activities additional scheduling flexibility in recognition of the extended